

SUSTAINING TESO SUB-REGION'S ENVIRONMENT THROUGH TREE PLANTING

PVC believes in the fight against environmental degradation and it has stood up as the leading Organization in Teso-Sub Region, Soroti District, with a Tree-planting project under its theme **“Our Children, Our Environment, Our Future”** One of PVCs' objective is to;

- To develop and promote community based approaches to solve socio economic problems through available resources, appropriate technology, provision of knowledge and skills to enhance the social functioning of persons in socio economic stress, and enable them to cope with physical and social environmental demands.

Under this objective, PVC has a running Tree-Planting Project that is going to be beneficial to climate change and also create sustainability among its project schools and the community in Teso –sub region.

During a review of the school feeding program, it was noted that school are unable to feed or sustain the activity because nearly 40% of their budget is on wood fuel for cooking, that children are mostly sitting on the ground in classes as there are not enough desks, some roof tops in these schools have been blown off by heavy winds and generally Teso sub-region has suffered either floods or drought causing a food crisis in communities, which ultimately affect the learning of a child. Consequently, PVC initiated this Tree planting Project to create sustainability in Schools and communities through planting of woodlots which will later be used to improve on the Schools' facilities, with the wood from these trees, desks will be made, firewood will be available in plenty thus spending the money on other necessities and even these schools and respective communities will be able to sell some of these woodlots to increase their financial capabilities.

Environment is a big challenge to society though so many people in our society choose to ignore. Uganda is an agricultural society, and so the population depends on good environment to churn out enough food for domestic consumption and commercial use. Notwithstanding this, an increase in population will lead to an even higher demand for timber, which can only be got through planting more trees.

PVC is working with the administration of each of its project schools in the fight for environmental protection, it has established **Environmental clubs** in each of these schools, comprising of 15 members per school, with the help of the members of these Environmental clubs, PVC is going to sensitize the community about the need to protect their Environment, through talk shows, Demonstrations, plays, and Tree-Planting.

PVC under its Tree- Planting Project has donated **2,750 seedlings** of Grivillea, Mangoes, Calyandra, Lucina and Jackfruit to its project Schools which include: Agora Primary School, Awoja Primary School, Opuyo Primary School and Dakabela Primary School. It has also donated seedlings to a few other Schools and the neighboring communities of those Schools.

PVC in its struggle to fight environmental degradation has experienced some constraints;

- Funding. There is need for funding for expanding and running of the seedlings nursery and also sensitization, training and publicity.
- Transportation. This is for the seedlings, from the Nursery to the project Schools

- Uncontrolled grazing of animals which has led some of them to eat the Tree Seedlings that had just been planted was also a challenge the project Schools were facing.
- Theft of woodlots being established. This was by the community members in Agora, they kept stealing the seedlings that the students and Administration of Agora Primary School were planting around their School premises. Though this action was not good, it is an indicator of a need for trees in the community and hence calls for us to put a more concerted effort to plant trees beyond the school need.
- Termites keep destroying seedlings.
- Lack of tools and equipment was also another constraint, there were not enough tools to use while planting the trees like hoes, spades, wheelbarrows and pruning saws

Partners for Vulnerable Children is however very grateful to all those supporting the Tree Planting Project, the Schools Administrations, the Community and we send our thanks to the two NGOs who are partnering with us; **Tree Talk** for its donation of seedlings, newsletters and reference books and to **Trees for the Future** for its donations of seedlings, watering cans among others. And we look forward to a continued co operation with the above NGOs and all well wishers.