

# FAO/SPGS 111 Project sees 18,000 ha planted with Forests in 4 years

This year, Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) marks 40 years of its cooperation with the Government of Uganda; celebrating milestones in enhancing agriculture, fisheries, forestry and food security in the country.

A key initiative to this end is the Sawlog Production Grant Scheme Phase III (SPGS III) Project.

SPGS III is a project of the Government of Uganda, being implemented by FAO, with funding from the European Union (EU).

The Project is being implemented in close collaboration with the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE), and it aims at encouraging

private investments in commercial forestry by providing technical and financial support to small, medium and large-scale investors, communities, and public and private institutions.

SPGS III Project started operations in Uganda in 2016 and is currently in its fourth of the five years of implementation, their Phase 111 newsletter notes.

In the Project's newsletter shared with the Ministry of Water and Environment recently, FAO/SPGS 111 reveals that the Project was originally scheduled to end in June 2020 but secured an additional one year of a no cost extension period- meaning that SPGS III will end in 2021 instead of 2020.

“

**FAO, through SPGS III, has supported the Forestry Sector Support Department (FSSD) in the Ministry of Water and Environment, to develop a number of national standards against which quality performance in commercial forestry can be benchmarked**



Women are reaping big from activities supported by FAO and SPGS 111. *Photo by FAO.*





SPGS 111 partners with schools in tree planting activities. *Photo by FAO.*



Support from FAO and SPGS 111 has enabled planting of such trees. *Photo by FAO.*

According to the recently concluded Midterm review, the project has so far made good progress in terms of achieving its set out targets - and these include the following:

**Plantation development:** The FAO/SPGS III Project targets supporting establishment of 23 000ha of forest plantations and so far, the Project has supported planting of 18 000 ha (80 percent of target).

With the no-cost extension, grantees have received an extra planting season within their Grant Support Agreement (GSAs) with FAO.

With the additional planting, the project is confident of meeting the planting target by project end. The project had challenges particularly in meeting targets set for support to woodlot establishment by institutions.

One of the reasons for the low performance is believed to be the requirement of a minimum of five hectares for an institution to benefit from the Scheme. The Project Management Team tabled a request to the Project Steering Committee (PSC) to reduce the minimum area required and this was granted.

Therefore, going forward, any institution desirous of benefiting from project support to establish a woodlot, needs only a minimum of one hectare of land.

FAO is optimistic that more interested institutions and community groups will apply for support.

**Training and capacity building:** FAO/SPGS III has conducted over 25 training courses and over 700 tree farmers (18 percent women) trained in various fields of plantation development.

The demand for training is overwhelming, with many courses oversubscribed. The project has also supported Nyabyeya Forestry College, the only public technical college offering vocation training in forestry, to strengthen its technical capacity to offer hands-on forestry training.

**Research and development:** Through the National Forestry Resources Research Institute (NaFORRI), the Project has initiated research on potential timber species for dryland areas. Multi-locational trials have been established in Nabuin ZARDI, Kiruhura, Kasagala and Kyahi Central Reserve Forests, to research on six dryland tree species, including: *Gmelina arborea*, *Melia volkensii*, *Melia*, *Grevillea robusta*, *Eucalyptus GC 550* and *Eucalyptus GC796*.

FAO, through SPGS III, has supported the Forestry Sector Support Department (FSSD) in the Ministry of Water and Environment, to develop a number of national standards against which quality performance in commercial forestry can be benchmarked.

FSSD is working closely with Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) to develop the Standards and so far, the development of Timber Grading Standards is in advanced stages of being nationalized.

Timber standards will greatly facilitate the ongoing discussions to facilitate timber trade in Uganda.

**SOURCE:** Zainabu Kakungulu- Programme Associate- Training, FAO

- Access FAO's newsletter online via the links below:
- PDFURL: <http://www.fao.org/3/ca6297en/ca6297en.pdf>  
Card page: <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ca6297en>
- Sign up for the subsequent newsletter <http://spgs.mwe.go.ug/newsletter-subscription>

BY COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

