

Social Forestry Capacity Development in Sub-Sahara Africa through Knowledge Co-Creation and Information Sharing

T2.27 SMART (Sustainable Modern Acceptable Resilient Technological) Agroforestry Practices for Sustainable Livelihood and healthy environment

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Abstract

Many communities in Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries depend on natural resources for their livelihood and provision of ecosystem services. However, over utilization of forests and woodlands, and unsustainable agricultural practices continue to cause environmental degradation. Recurrent and emerging environmental challenges create a need for knowledge co-creation through comprehensive partnerships and capacity development. Social forestry was therefore identified as an approach that would motivate communities in Africa to invest in sustainable environmental management. To build capacity of stakeholders within SSA in Social forestry, Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI) in collaboration Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) implemented a five-week training course annually in Kenya under the Third Country Training Programme (TCTP). The Programme, which was implemented from 1995 to 2018 evolved in scope to address emerging challenges in Natural Resource Management (NRM) which included: low awareness and adoption of social forestry technologies, and climate change effects. The Programme targeted to train partners from governmental and non-governmental organizations involved in NRM activities. The training curriculum was developed by identifying training needs through; Training Needs Assessment (TNA) and continuous review by applying After Course Evaluation (ACE) feedback by participants. Interactive training methodology comprising of: presentations by various experts drawn from relevant institutions; country reports presentation by participants; group work; discussions; themed field visits to selected farmers or organizations sites; field report writing; and development of implementation action plan. Knowledge co-created through research and development by KEFRI and technical cooperation by JICA provided information for addressing emerging NRM challenges. Paper presentations and discussions informed on concepts and practical application of social forestry technologies. Field visits exposed participants to technologies with high adoptability, while Action Plan development built capacity of participants in activity planning and resource mobilization abilities. Participant's feedback through ACE tool gave important information that was used in identifying; gaps, lessons and emerging challenges; as well as modifying and improving course content to ensure relevance and positive impact of the training. Kenya, having similar environmental conditions with many SSA countries, offered a good learning ground by showcasing practices for addressing environmental degradation and climate change effects.