

# DRYLANDS NATURAL RESOURCES CENTER

## OCT-DEC. 2013 PROGRESS REPORT



### **Background information**

Since 2007, the Drylands Natural Resources Centre (DNRC) has equipped subsistence farmers in the Kenyan drylands to restore their fragile and degraded lands and cushion them against the challenges of deforestation, falling crop yields, and global warming. We have provided farmers with approximately 200,000 tree saplings, as well as the expertise and support they need to cultivate those trees and manage their forests for income generation, soil restoration, and environmental protection. The overall survival rate for these trees, across droughts and shocks over the length of the program, is around 80% and rising. Over 350 smallholder farmers have worked with the DNRC so far, and the backlog of farmers who want to join grows every day.



One of the first farmers working with DNRC (Kiilu)

## **What was done during Q4 2013**

### **A. Woodlots**

During the quarter, 360 farmers were trained and advised on how to dig the holes and layout their woodlots. When the rains started in November, the farmers were issued with 40,000 tree saplings, which they planted in their individual farms. The seedlings included fodder, fruit, fibre, medicinal, timber and fuel trees. DNRC staff continue with follow-up exercises to make sure the tree saplings survive.

### **B. Establishing food forests in schools**

During the quarter, DNRC continued to work with nearby schools to establish food forests for their sustainability in terms of fruits, fuel and income from the sale of timber and other non-timber products. The children were fully involved in by digging the holes and planting including continuous care and management of the food forests. DNRC will continue to provide the necessary expertise and advice to make sure the project succeeds.

On 14<sup>th</sup> November 2013, Lungu Secondary School established their food forests with 260 tree saplings issued by DNRC. Our staff guided the school in establishing the food forest.



Lungu secondary students planting their food forest.

Mutwani Secondary School were given 150 seedlings for their food forests and helped to establish it on 11/21/2013.





Mutwani secondary school students establishing their food forest.

On 25<sup>th</sup> Nov. Maiuni primary schools were also issued with 107 seedlings in addition to over 300 seedlings planted in the previous years.



Maiuni primary schools pupils planting trees in their food forest

### C. End of year party

To strengthen the sense of community, we have at least two get-together parties with all the farmers working with DNRC. This usually happens in June and December every year. The farmers contribute and participate in the organization of the party thus increasing their sense of camaraderie and ownership. On 14<sup>th</sup> Dec. we had our December party. It was colorful, fun, and joyful, with over 300 farmers attending as well as government officials, led by the District Officer. The party was crowned with dances and songs from the farmers.



Farmers receiving food during the party



Farmers dancing

### D. Goals and deadlines for 2014

1. Build an office (by 3/1/2014).
2. Increase tree nursery output from 42,000 to 50,000 saplings before first rainy season (3/1/2014)
3. Maintain the number of DNRC farmers at 400.
4. Diversify farmers' income-generating activities to include baskets, beads and carvings.

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