



Vi Agroforestry

VI AGROFORESTRY STRATEGY 2023–2027

By 2027, smallholder farmer organisations will have sustainably improved their members' and communities' lives and livelihoods through increased climate change adaptation and resilience, strengthened right to food, and a transformed society with greater equality between women and men.



Photo: Mark Njoroge.

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Nakato Maria. Photo: Mark Njoroge.



About this strategy 2023–2027

Vi Agroforestry recognises that the world is changing faster than ever. Poverty and hunger are increasing. The climate crisis, environmental depletion, financial uncertainty, conflicts, gender inequality, gender-based violence, and continuously shrinking democratic space add to the challenges. Human rights can never be taken for granted. They are indisputable and must be defended and reconquered – every single day.

At the same time, we have seen that working together contributes to resilience. People who organise themselves to defend their own rights are more likely to succeed. We know from experience that people are stronger together. Over the last decade, Vi Agroforestry has partnered with several local organizations spread across Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Rwanda – to be stronger together. In the coming years we will investigate if it will be possible to extend our work also to other partners, stakeholders and regions.

The Vi Agroforestry strategy 2023–2027 is guided by the current situation, lessons learnt from the previous Vi Agroforestry strategy, and an analysis of what impacts emerging trends may have on the results we seek to achieve together with partners and other stakeholders. In this work, we build on our long experience working with agroforestry, climate change, biodiversity and eco-system services.

During the strategy period, Vi Agroforestry will strive

to support member-based organisations to contribute to sustainable livelihoods, increased resilience, and the right to nutritious food for their members and communities. Community mobilisation and strong civil societies are key to rural development. For farmers, their organisations have meant that they can access support and link up to various stakeholders, including authorities, seeking support to continue producing food. Strengthening farmer organisations therefore remains a key priority for this strategy period. It is through sustainable agricultural land management including agroforestry, through strengthening of farmer organisations, and through advocacy that we aim to empower smallholder farmers.

By 2027, smallholder farmer organisations will have sustainably improved their members' and communities' lives and livelihoods through increased climate change adaptation and resilience, strengthened right to food, and a transformed society with greater equality between women and men.

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About Vi Agroforestry

Vi Agroforestry is a Swedish development organisation fighting poverty and climate change together. What started as a tree planting initiative in 1983, is today an agroforestry expert organisation working through local partnerships to run holistic agricultural development projects in East Africa and beyond.

Fighting poverty and climate change

Vi Agroforestry supports smallholder farmer families with the aim to alleviate poverty through sustainable agricultural land management (SALM), including agroforestry. SALM practices allow farmers to use available resources efficiently, increase their yields, and improve their resilience to the impacts of climate change. As a result, they improve their livelihoods and safeguard their right to food. At the same time, agroforestry methods support adaptation and mitigation to climate change, halt deforestation, improve soil quality, increase biodiversity, and help meet the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

Providing expertise

Vi Agroforestry provides expertise in agroforestry, sustainable land management, climate change resilience, adaptation and mitigation within the agricultural sector. This includes collaboration with research institutes and networks, promoting well-proven practices based on scientific research, and engaging policy- and decision-makers to take local ecological knowledge, research, and well-proven practice into consideration in agricultural policy and decisions. This is done in a manner that supports sustainable livelihoods through gender transformative approaches.

Partnerships

Programmes and projects are carried out by local partner organisations in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. Partnership allows local organisations to prioritise actions based on their context. This contributes to sustainability and positive long-term

impacts of the interventions. We define partnership as a mutually beneficial, long-term relationship between two or more parties. By sharing resources and skills, the parties contribute to the attainment of common goals.

Vi Agroforestry works with core partners and technical partners. Core partners are smallholder farmers' organisations. They support their members and safeguard members' rights and interests. Technical partners are specialised in one or more areas of expertise that core partners need. They lend support to the core partners when it is efficient to do so.

Vi Agroforestry also collaborates strategically with regional bodies, research organisations, universities, peer organisations, and others relevant to our results areas. They are engaged for their ability – and sometimes duty – to act in the interest of core partners.

During the strategy period, Vi Agroforestry will continue to support core partners to strengthen their governance structures, efficiency, sustainability, inclusion and more. Our collaborations with local, regional and national farmer organisations go beyond funding. They are mutually beneficial partnerships based on transferring knowledge and characterised by dialogue, respect and local ownership for long-term, sustainable commitment. Partners will grow their capacity to apply a human rights-based approach, contribute to gender equality, build linkages and alliances, as well as diversify their sources for funding. Farmer organisations partnering with Vi Agroforestry will need to show vision and strong governance, and willingness to take a human rights-based approach.

Vision

A sustainable environment that enables women and men living in poverty to improve their lives.

Mission

To fight poverty and climate change – together. Empowering smallholder farmer families socially and economically, building their resilience while enhancing biodiversity and climate change mitigation through sustainable agricultural land management, including agroforestry.

Values

Vi Agroforestry is a human rights-based organisation. Our core values of *non-discrimination, meaningful participation, accountability, transparency, empowerment and continued learning* guide everything we do – both on our own and with our partners.

Target group

The target group is smallholder farmer families – with a special focus on women, youth and children living in a situation of poverty. Vi Agroforestry targets farmer families who

are likely to have limited access to productive resources and opportunities, and who experience food insecurity and the effects of climate change. We reach them through working with member-based farmer organisations.

Geographical focus

Vi Agroforestry is a Swedish development organisation presently working in three East African countries: Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.¹ We focus on where we are most relevant and can make a difference – both in terms of which countries to work in and what areas in the countries. The selection is based on criteria such as an area's vulnerability to climate change, the value we can contribute, and resources available. During the strategy period, Vi Agroforestry will look into expanding our geographical area, both within the current countries of operations in East Africa, and into new countries. This can also mean exploring new cooperation modalities. Special attention will be given to exploring arid and semi-arid areas where agroforestry has great potential to make unproductive lands fertile.

¹Vi Agroforestry phased out operations in Rwanda in 2022 after a board decision to refocus efforts.



Farmer organisations support families to build resilience while enhancing biodiversity and climate change mitigation.

Jane Mwachazi och John Namanaya. Photo: Mark Nyirige.

Objective and strategic targets 2023–2027

Objective for 2023–2027

Sustainably improve smallholder farmer families' livelihoods with a focus in Sub-Saharan Africa but also beyond through increased food and nutrition security, enhanced climate change resilience, improved incomes, biodiversity conservation and greater enjoyment of human rights – most notably the right to food, the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and equal rights between women and men.

This strategy document spells out *how* Vi Agroforestry will work during 2023–2027 towards the objective above through the following strategic targets and results areas.

Each results area (in green) contributes to one or more of the strategic targets (in blue), as shown in the table below.

Strategic targets for 2023–2027



How the results areas contribute to the targets

Global and regional context

Growing poverty, increasing inequalities, malnutrition, biodiversity loss and climate change

The UN warns that immediate, rapid and large-scale reductions in greenhouse gas emissions are needed for global warming not to exceed 1.5°C in the next 20 years. Currently, the world is not on track to meet the 17 Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 as intended.² This strategy was written when the world has lived with the Covid-19 pandemic for about two years. The pandemic has severely undermined all efforts to end poverty, hunger and inequalities. It has seen democratic and civic space shrink when freedom of movement has been limited, it has kept children away from schools, and it has seen cases of domestic violence rise.

Another outlook on the current situation is the pressure on the environment and natural resources, including land, resulting from a growing population and growing demand. Natural forests are being degraded and converted for agricultural, industry and infrastructure use. Ecosystems are disturbed, become fragmented, and ultimately collapse. Species of animals and plants lose their habitats. Deforestation, destruction of ecosystems and loss of biodiversity threatens our planet, our health and our food production. The world's food systems need rethinking. There is a need to shift all food production to sustainable practices that have positive environmental and social impacts, to reduce deforestation, protect indigenous plant and animal species, and increase biodiversity.

Inequalities on the rise

Even before the pandemic hit, Vi Agroforestry's target group was facing an uphill battle. Eighty per cent of those who lived in extreme poverty lived in rural areas. Out of them, nearly two thirds worked in agriculture.³ The World Bank estimated that the pandemic pushed more than 70 million people into extreme poverty in 2020. Poor people were hit the hardest, and inequalities between rich and poor increased as a result. The trend of shrinking global poverty and inequality over the last 30 odd years was reversed. Projections for 2022 do show poverty reduction, but at a slow pace due to the war in Ukraine and higher prices on food and energy.⁴

Climate change drives poverty

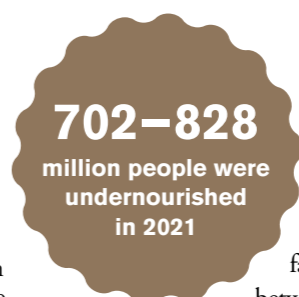
The changing climate is affecting air temperatures and rainfall, making the weather less predictable, and causing more frequent storms, floods, droughts and other extreme weather events. As a result, some crops will not grow under the new weather conditions, harvests are lost, farmlands are destroyed, and farmers are increasingly struggling to make a living from farming. For example, poor seasonal rainfall in late 2021 and early 2022 had Kenya experience the driest and hottest conditions ever measured.⁵ Climate change is, and will continue to be, a driver of poverty, conflict and forced migration.

The right to food is not met

The price of a healthy meal is unaffordable to most people living in poverty. The UN has reported that nearly one in three people in the world did not have access to adequate food in 2021. More than one in ten people on earth faced food insecurity at severe levels. In numbers, between 702 and 828 million people were undernourished. The numbers have been slowly rising since 2014, but rose sharply by about 103 million during the Covid-19 pandemic, and another 46 million in 2021.⁶

Nutrition is key to better grasp how people are affected when the right to food is not met. A healthy, varied diet with enough amounts of proteins, vitamins and minerals is neither affordable nor accessible to a majority of our target group. In addition to making healthy food more affordable, there is a need to create awareness about appropriate food choices, and to promote options that are culturally accepted, desired and produced locally in a sustainable manner.

Zooming in on Vi Agroforestry's current programme countries, more than one in four Kenyans was undernourished in 2020.⁷ That is an improvement compared to the start of the millennium when around every third person faced undernourishment, but worse than 2014 when only about every fifth person in Kenya did so.⁸ The situation looks similar in Tanzania, although with less fluctuation in recent years.⁹



As for Uganda, figures are somewhat outdated. The country has experienced rapid economic growth and a drop in poverty rates over the last 20–30 years. Yet undernutrition and malnutrition have persisted, driven by factors like poverty, high food prices, natural disasters, high fertility rates and limited access to land and education.¹⁰

More people seek refuge

Food insecurity, climate change, environmental disasters and scarce resources are all drivers that pressure a lot of people to migrate both within and between countries. Exactly how many people migrate for these reasons is very hard to estimate.¹¹ Yet many times, these drivers are intersecting with civil and political instability, and cause or worsen violent conflicts. The UN estimated that record high 103 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced at the end of June 2022 as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations and events seriously disturbing public order.¹² 95 per cent of all who fled from conflicts in 2021 did so in countries vulnerable to climate change.¹³ The trend is that more people than ever seek refuge: more than twice as many people are forcibly displaced now compared to ten years ago.¹⁴

Uganda is hosting over 1,5 million people who are refugees and asylum-seekers.¹⁵ Kenya hosts about half a million refugees and asylum seekers,¹⁶ while Tanzania is hosting about a quarter of a million.¹⁷ Whether or not refugees and asylum seekers have the right and opportunity to engage in farming varies between countries and locations. In all three countries, most people who are forcibly displaced live in vulnerable situations where support to improve their livelihoods could make a significant difference.

Development and humanitarian work overlap

The challenges described above must be tackled through a combination of long-term support from development assistance and more immediate, short-term humanitarian aid. The two are linked in a nexus. Humanitarian aid is needed at an urgent stage to relieve a situation. Then development assistance plays an important role to build back better after a crisis, build resilience among communities and prevent further crises. While Vi Agroforestry is not directly engaging in humanitarian work, partnerships with humanitarian actors

might be needed and strategic to engage in during the strategy period. We are also open to exploring partnerships with civilian actors engaging in peacebuilding, to help form a triple nexus between development work, humanitarian assistance and peace work.

Women are to a high degree made responsible for growing, harvesting and cooking food, but very rarely own the farmlands.

Harmful social norms put women last

Looking at households and communities, factors such as age and gender impact what rights and opportunities individuals and groups may have or lack. Women and girls continue to fall deeper into poverty due to the harsh patriarchal practices that limit them from achieving their basic human rights. Women are to a high degree made responsible for growing, harvesting and cooking food, but very rarely own the farmlands. Within families, women tend to eat least and last. Without assets such as land, women are less likely to access facilities such as bank loans. They typically also have limited access to markets, skill trainings and the technology and infrastructure they would need to facilitate their work.

Women in East Africa continue to experience gender-based violence. During the pandemic, many were in lockdown with violent spouses – resulting in almost 50% more reported cases of gender-based violence.¹⁸ Many women did also see their burden of care increase when children were out of school, food items were harder to come by, and family members lost jobs or fell ill. Women are furthermore overrepresented in the informal sector and were more likely to lose jobs and less likely to be compensated through official schemes when the pandemic affected national economies.

Youth who try to engage in agriculture tend to face similar challenges with limited access to land and capital, lack of incentives and opportunities, limited market access and limited skills. The discrimination of women and youth is structural and needs to be addressed through challenging unequal laws, traditions and practices. Women and youth have the right to participate in society on equal and equitable terms.



Mashaka Charles. Photo: Mark Nyoro.

Vi Agroforestry's view on development

Theory of change

In a nutshell, Vi Agroforestry works through local partners to build a strong civil society. We believe that people are stronger together, and that by organizing in democratic, member-based organisations, people have the means to claim their human rights and protect and care for nature and climate to benefit themselves, the planet and future generations.

Spelled out in more detail, Vi Agroforestry works from a human rights-based approach. The right to food, right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and equal rights between women and men are universal human rights. Through our work, we seek to realize these rights for all, making an extra effort to safeguard the rights of women, youth, children and people in a vulnerable situation. All should have choices and agency, have access to socio-economic opportunities, and be able to participate in, contribute to and benefit from development.

Where Vi Agroforestry operates, factors like growing structural inequalities and injustices and the effects of climate change stand in the way of these rights. There is persisting poverty, growing hunger and malnutrition, a rapid loss of biodiversity and more (see the chapter Global and regional context). We tackle these problems mainly in two ways:

- 1** by forming partnerships in our programme countries and in other relevant contexts to empower and capacitate partner organisations to both advocate for farmer families' rights, and support farmer families to have more sustainable livelihoods.
- 2** by using our position as an established go-to expert and actor in civil society to advice on agroforestry and climate change and to advocate for policy changes to address the problems and benefit our target groups.

A key strength of Vi Agroforestry is the trust and respect we have built over 40 years – among partners, decision-makers and donors alike. We are therefore continuing along these two pathways where we have proven to be efficient and where we see that we can continue to make an important difference, but also expand our mandate to advice and cooperate also outside our geographical core area.

Through these two pathways, Vi Agroforestry will continue to work with programs, subprograms and projects in the results areas presented in this strategy to realise the right to food, the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and equal rights between women and men. By contributing to fulfilling these human rights, we strive towards our vision of a sustainable environment that enables women and men living in poverty to improve their lives.



Illustrating the steps in the theory of change:



Approaches to development work

Vi Agroforestry applies the following approaches to development cooperation in all our work:

Human rights-based approach (HRBA)

Smallholder farmers, their organizations and communities are rights holders, according to the human rights-based approach. States, the private sector, inter-governmental organizations, NGOs and others are duty bearers. Duty bearers have a duty to respect, fulfil and protect the human rights of the rights holders. Taking a human rights-based approach means our work must safeguard human rights and empower rights holders to hold us and other duty bearers accountable.

Gender transformative approach

Women and girls are being discriminated because of their gender. This discrimination happens everywhere: in families, communities, the job market, politics, laws and more. Unfair, patriarchal norms affect all levels of society. Vi Agroforestry seeks to transform these norms by designing and implementing projects to address the root causes. Measures include promoting shared power, shared control of resources, shared decision making, and recognition of women's and girls' rights.

Leave no one behind

Vi Agroforestry commits to working in an inclusive manner where no one is left behind – in line with the UN Agenda 2030. This means taking special care to include and empower people in a vulnerable and marginalized situation. We fight the norms and structures in society that shut groups of people out from having influence and enjoying their human rights.

Conflict sensitive approach

To be conflict sensitive, one needs to know the context well, investigate relations between groups and stakeholders. Vi Agroforestry seeks to understand if there are tensions and how our work impacts – and is impacted by – them. Our actions should not add to tensions but help connect people and mitigate conflicts. This requires us to be mindful and alert. We make the extra effort to understand how people in the projects, communities and areas we work in perceive us and our work. We also do in-depth analyses of the context and continuously monitor if what we do (or don't do) have negative side-effects that need to be addressed and mitigated. In situations where current norms discriminate women and

girls or go against human rights in other ways, we will actively work to stop discrimination and stand up for human rights.

Anti-corruption

Vi Agroforestry has an absolute zero tolerance for any type of misuse of trust and or funds. Corruption is misuse or abuse of trust, funds or power for personal gain or for the benefit of a group. It can take many forms and exists at all levels. Petty corruption encourages and lays the basis for large-scale corruption. It is therefore not acceptable to overlook even small misuses.

Vi Agroforestry actively promotes transparency, strong and shared ethical values, trust and good governance. We follow clear rules and regulations and have well-understood internal control routines to prevent corruption. We also strengthen our partners to fight corruption in their own organisations and to expose and fight corruption at all levels in society.

Enabling civic space

Shrinking civic space prevents individuals and groups from organising and mobilising in organisations, movements and other networks to advance their rights, increase their income and secure a sustainable livelihood. We seek to empower people and their organisations to claim civic space and claim their rights. We also lobby decision-makers to enable civil society organisations to impact politics and hold decision-makers accountable.

Local to global advocacy






Vi Agroforestry advocates to lift the priorities of smallholder farmers, ensuring their issues are raised to higher levels, nationally, regionally and globally, and we encourage partner organisations to do or be part of this work. This means we synchronise efforts at all levels when structuring advocacy actions.

Multi-stakeholder engagement

Different actors have their unique strengths depending on their focus areas. Vi Agroforestry seeks to engage multiple actors to contribute to a common goal – both in our projects and in our advocacy. That way we ensure efficiency and more sustainable results. In short, we believe we are stronger together. In the coming strategy period, we intend to increase the work with relevant stakeholders in our areas of expertise and explore new ways of collaborating.

Agenda 2030

Vi Agroforestry has aligned its strategic goals with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), most notably goal 1 No poverty, goal 2 Zero hunger, goal 5 Gender equality, goal 13 Climate action and goal 15 Life on land.

SDG	SDG Targets	SDG Indicator
 <p>1 NO POVERTY End poverty in all its forms everywhere</p>	<p>1.4 By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of 13 property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including micro-finance</p>	<p>1.4.1 Proportion of population living in households with access to basic services</p>
 <p>2 ZERO HUNGER End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.</p>	<p>2.3 By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment</p> <p>2.4 By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality</p>	<p>2.3.1 Volume of production per labour unit by classes of farming/pastoral/forestry enterprise size</p> <p>2.4.1 Proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture</p>
 <p>5 GENDER EQUALITY Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls</p>	<p>5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life.</p>	<p>5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions</p>
 <p>13 CLIMATE ACTION Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact</p>	<p>13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning</p>	<p>13.3.1 Number of countries that have integrated mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning into primary, secondary and tertiary curricula</p>
 <p>15 LIFE ON LAND Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss</p>	<p>15.2 By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally</p>	<p>15.2.3 Net permanent forest loss</p>

Results areas

Stronger farmer organisations

What?

During the strategy period, Vi Agroforestry will work to strengthen the capacity of member-based farmer organisations. In turn, farmer organisations will mobilise and deliver rights-based work including advocacy for the benefit of their members and wider community.

Why?

People organising themselves are stronger together. They can take on interventions, safeguard their interests and claim their rights more efficiently than each individual could do on their own. Farmers who are members of farmer organisations can get support to engage in agribusiness, access market information, access inputs like seeds, access financial services to save and borrow money, and access trainings, learning exchanges and extension services.

In times when civic space is shrinking, farmer organisations help secure space for farmers and civil society in general to speak their mind. In Africa, where agriculture plays a significant role in the wider economy, farmers and farmer organisations are also key to boost development and poverty reduction.

Farmer organisations need to be strong to serve their members well. They need solid democratic governance structures, stable financing, skilled representatives and well-functioning internal structures and systems. This does not come by default for a majority of the farmer organisations. Many organisations find themselves having to step up to provide services to their members, advocate for members' rights, enhance social integration, generate employment, improve livelihoods, manage natural resources sustainably, and protect and restore biodiversity and ecosystems. At the same time, many organisations face challenges that do not allow them to operate optimally.

How?

Vi Agroforestry plays an important role supporting farmer organisations with finance and capacity development. We capacitate organisations holistically in everything from farming methods, to how to form a board of directors, to gender equal participation and governance. Democratic farmer organisations with strong governing systems in place become the platform through which farmers can influence decision-making at all levels and hold authorities and other duty-bearers accountable to fulfil commitments.

During the strategy period, Vi Agroforestry's partnerships with farmer organisations will centre on:

- strong organisational governance where women and men – including youth – have equal representation and influence,
- sustainable agricultural land management (SALM) based on agroforestry – including in arid and semi-arid areas,
- sustainable livelihoods with special emphasis on creating more livelihood opportunities for women,
- gender equality through transforming societies and breaking norms that limit women,
- climate change adaptation and mitigation,
- increased resilience to the effects of climate change and biodiversity loss,
- boosting biodiversity, and
- ensuring food and nutrition security and the right to food.

By 2027

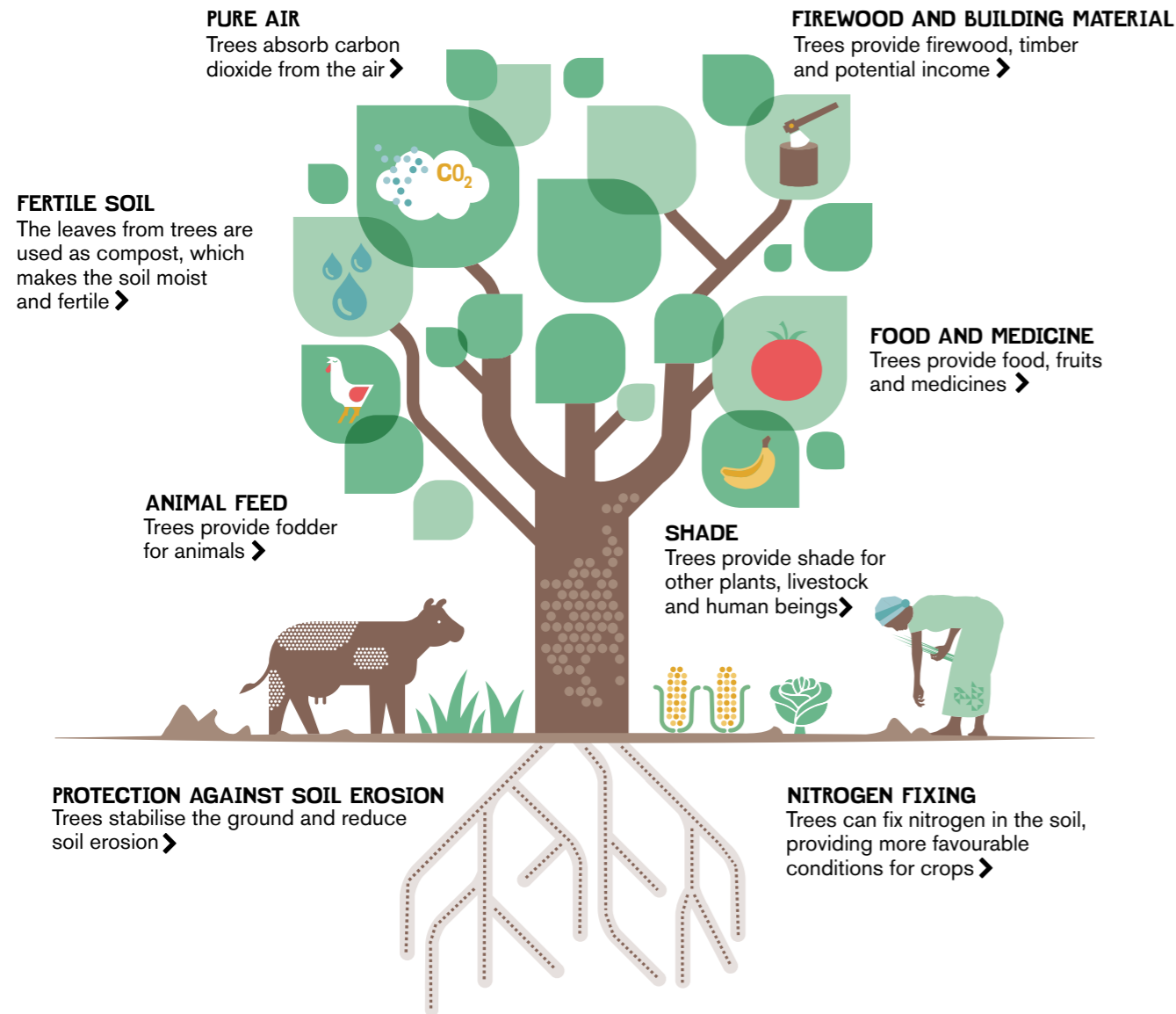
... farmer organisations partnering with Vi Agroforestry will increasingly incorporate democratic, inclusive, and sustainable practices, and efficiently mobilise resources, deliver rights-based services, and advocate for the benefit of their members and wider community in local, national, regional and global forums.

... Farming communities reached by Vi Agroforestry and partners' interventions will increasingly take a rights-based approach, identify and address the root causes of inequalities that limit active and meaningful participation of women, youth (young women and men), children (girls and boys), vulnerable and marginalized groups. Communities will allow these groups to exploit their full potential in sustainable development practices in social, environmental, and economic spheres.



Linette Khaemba. Photo: Mark Njoroge.

Enhanced biodiversity and climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience



What?

Vi Agroforestry embraces SALM practices, with a special focus on agroforestry where trees are planted among crops. Sustainable Agriculture Land Management (SALM) are practices used by farmers to mitigate, adapt to, and be more resilient against the impacts of climate change.

Biodiversity often increases where SALM is practiced, and the farms and surrounding ecosystems become more resilient to floods, droughts, extreme temperatures, and other effects of

climate change. Agroforestry and other SALM practices also help mitigate climate change by binding carbon dioxide. The practices can be adapted to many kinds of environment (dry, wet, tropical and other). It is sustainable for the environment, for the climate, and for people farming, selling and eating the food. Using SALM practices like agroforestry also generates a range of ecosystem services.

Why?

Climate change is one of the biggest challenges the world has ever faced. Among other things, it has a negative impact on biodiversity and can disturb or even destroy ecosystems. Thriving ecosystems with rich biodiversity can on the other hand withstand the effects of climate change much better than damaged ecosystems with poor biodiversity. We all depend on healthy ecosystems with rich biodiversity to live healthy lives, cultivate food, prevent conflicts over dwindling natural resources, and much more.

For farmers in East Africa and elsewhere, shifting to SALM practices is a smart way to reduce the farm's vulnerability to climate change and increase the yields. Families using SALM practices can grow more food on the same plots of land and depend less on chemicals for their farming. They can eat a greater variety of food, eat more nutritiously, and can sell and earn more.

How?

Through local partnerships with farmer organisations, Vi Agroforestry will support farmers, their families and communities to use SALM practices – most notably agroforestry. This will be done through courses, workshops, learning exchanges and study visits to farms and educational plots using SALM.

The aim is to support ecological and socioeconomic development, strengthen resilience of communities, boost ecosystem services and reduce vulnerabilities by:

- ➔ promoting methods, technology and innovations that lead to increased mitigation, adaptation, and resilience to climate change – especially for women and youth,
- ➔ making the ecosystem services from SALM more visible and appreciated,

- ➔ promoting increased biodiversity and nutritious diets through encouraging the use of indigenous, neglected and underutilised species,
- ➔ promoting soil conservation practices to enhance soil quality,
- ➔ integrating local and indigenous ecological knowledge – ensuring women's participation and benefit,
- ➔ enabling learning and adaptation by disseminating learned lessons through data sharing, building linkages and mobilising resources for upscaling, and
- ➔ restoring and rehabilitating degraded and deforested landscapes for sustainable and healthy food systems,
- ➔ improving water access and availability,
- ➔ increasing work in arid and semi-arid areas deprived of access to water and prone to conflict and thereby also stress nexus work,
- ➔ increasing work and cooperation with research institutions and relevant networks to make research readily available to farmers and their organisations, and
- ➔ further build on our expertise and experience working with SALM, agroforestry, biodiversity, ecosystem services and climate change in a systematic way.

Vi Agroforestry's work and expertise build on scientific evidence and local, indigenous knowledge about species and techniques. On a political level, Vi Agroforestry will advocate for climate finance to benefit smallholder farmers and urge states to adopt policies and practices that help farmers use sustainable practices and stand strong against the effects of climate change.

By 2027

... members of farmer organisations will have increased their resilience through sustainable production methods, enhanced biodiversity, and climate change mitigation and adaptation. Policies and practices will favour their resilience.

... Vi Agroforestry will have reinforced and developed further our position and role as a go-to expert in development cooperation, agroforestry and climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience.

... Communities will have improved and enhanced agroecosystems, biodiversity, resilience, adaptation and capacity to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change.

Increased food and nutrition security

What?

Vi Agroforestry will strengthen farmer organisations' capacity to support their members to access food. Having access to food contributes to food and nutrition security and thereby helps realize their right to food. In turn, eating a variety of nutritious foods is essential for maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Why?

Many farmers are unable to eat a healthy diet, even though they grow food. The broader variety of crops the farm can produce, the better the chances that the family will eat a healthy diet. Rediscovering traditional foods enriches both diets and local biodiversity. Yet only diversifying production is not enough. It is not a given that a farmer family will harvest a good yield each time. As described above, the effects of climate change, including the loss of biodiversity, have negative impacts on farming. Yet in most Vi Agroforestry's target groups cannot afford a varied diet with enough proteins, vitamins and micronutrients.¹⁹ Hence the need to work actively to make nutritious food accessible and affordable for all throughout the year.

How?

Vi Agroforestry embraces SALM practices, with a special focus on the method agroforestry where trees are planted among crops. Sustainable Agriculture Land Management (SALM) are practices used by farmers to be more resilient against the impacts of climate change. Using practices like agroforestry binds carbon dioxide and generates a range of other ecosystem services. Biodiversity often increases where SALM is practiced, and the farms and surrounding ecosystems become more resilient to floods, droughts, extreme temperatures, and other effects of climate change.

An added benefit of producing more food is earning some more money. This helps families afford to buy what they don't produce themselves. Similarly, a bonus from cultivating a greater variety is that there is always something to eat or sell. This gives farmers stability between main harvest seasons.

Farmer organisations will also be capacitated to engage authorities and other duty-bearers for favourable policy implementation to support smallholder farmers.

During the strategy period, Vi Agroforestry will strengthen farmer organisations' capacity to support their members – especially women and youth – to:

- access agricultural, financial, extension and advisory services, and
- sustainably increase and diversify food production and supply, and
- produce sufficient food for themselves and their communities.

By 2027

... members of farmer organisations will have increased their food and nutrition security.

... Policies and practices will safeguard food and nutrition security and help fulfil the right to food for all.

Explaining the concepts food security and the right to food

Food security is achieved when all people at all times have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. In other words, food needs to be available at all times, people need to afford it throughout the year, and all household members must get sufficient portions of healthy meals every day. More and more actors nowadays talk about *food and nutrition security* to really stress how important it is that the food is nutritious.

Looking from a rights-based perspective, *the right to adequate food* is realized when every woman, man, and child, alone or in community with others, always has physical and economic access to adequate food or means for its procurement. To achieve the right to food for all, people living in a situation of poverty, including smallholder farmers, must be acknowledged as rightsholders. States have a duty to respect, protect, and fulfil their right to food.

Sustainable Agriculture Land Management (SALM) are practices used by farmers to be more resilient against the impacts of climate change.



Sustainable and resilient livelihoods

What?

Vi Agroforestry will strengthen farmer organisations' capacity to help members improve their livelihoods through sustainable agriculture and green enterprises. Improvements can include learning how to enhance the quality of a crop, refine and add value to a product, extend shelf life of a food item, or how to access competitive markets and negotiate better prices when selling. Other options can be starting a side-business or taking a part-time job besides farming.

Why?

Improving and diversifying livelihood opportunities is an effective way to fight poverty. Smallholder farmers continue to face significant challenges to their livelihoods. Vi Agroforestry targets farmer families who live in a situation of poverty and are likely to have limited access to productive resources and opportunities. Many smallholder farmer families are incredibly resourceful in the face of challenges. Yet they require innovative options to sustainably produce and sell their crop and livestock products, especially as climate change rapidly intensifies.

How?

Partnering farmer organisations will work with farmers to identify viable agricultural value chains. Where relevant, they

will support and train farmers on value addition and marketing of their produce for an improved income. Members will also be trained on forming enterprises around nature-based solutions such as apiculture.

During the strategy period, Vi Agroforestry will strengthen farmer organisations' capacity to support their members – especially women and youth – to:

- identify viable agricultural value chains,
- strengthen and sustain smallholder farmers' – especially women's and youth's – ability to do value addition and engage in green enterprises,
- create green job opportunities and enable farmers to take on part- or fulltime jobs to increase families' incomes,
- enable farmers – especially women and youth – to access financial services,
- minimize post-harvest losses,
- connect farmers with digital products, services, and innovations to increase productivity and incomes,
- connect farmers to markets and market information, and
- improve farmers' marketing skills.

By 2027

... members of farmer organisations will have increased their skills, incomes and livelihood opportunities through access to services, skills, knowledge and resources.

... Policies and practices will be more supportive of sustainable smallholder farming.

Explaining the words

Climate change is caused by human activities like burning fossil fuels and destroying forests, land use change, emitting carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere. The effects of climate change are many, including hotter temperatures, more erratic and unreliable rainfall, and more frequent and severe droughts and floods.

Climate change mitigation involves all efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere, including capturing and storing carbon dioxide, to slow the rate of global warming.

Climate change resilience is the ability of communities as well as ecosystems to stand strong against the effects of climate change – for instance being able to anticipate, prepare for and respond to floodings or extreme weather events.

Resilience can also refer to the ability to stand strong against, and recover quickly from, other shocks and crises to societies, such as pandemics or economic or political turmoil.

Climate change adaptation refers to activities to adjust to the social, environmental and economic impacts of climate change – for instance grow crops that are more suitable to droughts or warmer temperatures.

An ecosystem is made up of all plants, animals, and other living things in an area, plus non-living materials like water, rocks and soil. Ecosystem services refers to all benefits that nature gives humans, such as drinkable water and clean air.

Biodiversity is the variety of living organisms found in the ecosystem.



Lorna Cherop. Photo: Mark Njoroge.

Advocacy

What?

Advocacy is a strategic process to inspire and demand change in policies and practice. It can take place at local, national, regional and or international level. All advocacy work during the strategy period is anchored in the updated Vi Agroforestry Advocacy Strategy 2018-2030.

The aim is to drive meaningful policy change so that smallholder farmers get their human rights fulfilled and achieve improved conditions to do sustainable farming, especially agroforestry. For decision-makers at national, regional and global level, Vi Agroforestry recommend policy choices and actions that strengthen agroforestry, biodiversity, the right to food, and climate change adaptation, mitigation and resilience.

Vi Agroforestry is an established actor in civil society. We use this position to advocate for policy changes and we encourage partner organisations to be part of the advocacy work. Our advocacy messages draw justifications from evidence generated by our programs and partnerships, primarily in Eastern African countries, but also from other countries. Member-based partner organisations play an important role by creating engagement among their members, mobilising members' support and representing members' interests. To increase the impact Vi Agroforestry also work with research organisations, networks and universities

Why?

As stated above, Vi Agroforestry takes a human rights-based approach to development. This compels us to hold duty bearers such as policy- and decision-makers accountable to smallholder farmers as rights-holders. Through advocacy, we can raise awareness on the many challenges we work to change on the ground. We can suggest improvements and solutions and remind duty-bearers of their responsibilities. Advocacy has the power to reach from the local level to the global. It is often key to impact the policy environment and bring about political change.

How?

During this strategy period, Vi Agroforestry will, together with partners, promote policy coherence through multi-stakeholder dialogues. Such dialogues aim to find win-win solutions where all actors see the gains from addressing the needs and rights of smallholder farmers.

Further approaches and tools for advocacy during the strategy period include:

- Publishing advocacy reports and policy briefs to lend our expertise, ensure accountability from decision-makers, and monitor governments' budget allocations, expenditures, performance, and integrity management.
- Amplifying voices from the field, utilising our partnerships with farmer organisations to offer farmers safe spaces to speak out and carry calls for actions to concerned authorities.
- Working with research organisations, networks and universities to increase impact.
- Building alliances with policy- and decision-makers through direct meetings, field visits, and sharing of advocacy material.
- Media outreach to sensitise decision-makers and the general public to our prioritized issues and present viable solutions.
- Linking the local advocacy to global forums to ensure voices from the region are heard in summits and conferences such as the Africa Union, United Nations and the European Union.

Agroforestry Network, founded by Vi Agroforestry, will be an important part of promoting policy coherence and ensuring research is applied in policy and practice. The network brings together agroforestry experts from different organisations and institutions in Sweden and abroad. It seeks to make agroforestry more recognised among stakeholders in international development assistance, in intergovernmental organisations, among researchers and research funding agencies, in the private business sphere, and not least among parliamentarians.

During the strategy period, Agroforestry Network will arrange seminars, participate in international conferences, publish policy briefs on agroforestry from different perspectives, and seek to engage political and environmental media.

Learn more on agroforestrynetwork.org

By 2027

... Vi Agroforestry will have intensified advocacy actions to lift our core issues and will have made more space for farmer organisations to voice their needs in local, national, regional, and global forums.

... farmer organisations, their members and communities are heard, respected, and given formal space to meaningfully impact policies and practices that directly affect them, their rights, and their livelihoods.

... women and youth are actively and systematically ensured equal say in shaping policies and practices.



Emma och Geoffrey Korir. Photo: Mark Njoroge.



Gaudensia Masese. Photo: Mark Njoroge.



Organisational development

What?

Vi Agroforestry continuously evaluate and learn from all work and strengthen the internal organisational capacity and skills. We strive for a flexible organisational set-up in order to always have the right expertise available for the work with partners.

Why?

Investing efforts into organisational development is essential to be able to work in an efficient and transparent manner, ensure accountability to beneficiaries, and ensure compliance to own and donor standards. Equally important is having a strong workforce in place, equipped with relevant skills to achieve the ambitions in the strategy.

How?

During the strategy period, a particular focus will be on:

→ Finalizing the reorganization of Vi Agroforestry to ensure an organisational setup that is fit for purpose and a staffing that has the suitable expertise to implement this strategy.

- Ensuring effective and efficient workflows from country through regional to head office and board level as well as between country offices and the regional office. The board not only has the overall responsibility for operations but is also well acquainted with it.
- Ensuring Vi Agroforestry's compliance to own and to donor standards at all levels and in all areas (development cooperation, agroforestry, administration, finances and other where relevant).
- Continuously enhancing our internal Project Monitoring, Evaluation, Reflection & Learning (PMERL) system.
- Making organisational learning and competence development of staff a compulsory part of planning.
- Increasing networking at all levels in connection to thematic development, resource mobilisation, fundraising and advocacy.
- Further build on our expertise and experience working with SALM, agroforestry, biodiversity, ecosystem services and climate change in a systematic way.

By 2027

... Vi Agroforestry will continuously evaluate and learn from our work and keep strengthen our internal organisational capacity and skills to meet current challenges. We will keep ensuring accountability to beneficiaries and keep ensuring compliance to own and donor standards.

Communication

What?

Strategic communication creates visibility for the organisation and awareness about the challenges Vi Agroforestry works to address. It also highlights the benefits of agroforestry and other sustainable practices, as well as the gains from supporting farmers to organise to be stronger together. Tailored communication efforts target specific audiences at local, national, regional, and global levels.

Why?

Strategic communication supports the realisation of Vi Agroforestry's objectives and plans. It thereby influences the direction and success of the organisation's work. Through communicating what we do and why, we execute projects and programmes more efficiently, enhance engagement among key stakeholders, interest new partners and donors in our work, and increase opportunities for raising funds.

How?

Vi Agroforestry will continue to communicate through a broad range of communication channels, including websites, newsletters, social media, face-to-face meetings, webinars, reports, policy briefs, opinion pieces in newspapers, brochures, the Vi Agroforestry logotype displayed on project sites, and

much more. The messages conveyed in these channels will be carefully crafted to catch the attention and interest of stakeholders who in one way or another matter to help us move towards our goals.

In sum, behind each communication effort is a clear thought on how to reach certain audiences and motivate them to do something that benefits both Vi Agroforestry and them. Clear communication is also essential to coordinate and motivate prosperous collaboration between partners in a project, as well as between offices, departments, and units.

During the strategy period, Vi Agroforestry's communication will contribute to:

- Building and maintaining good relations with donors, partners, and other key stakeholders,
- enhancing visibility and brand awareness in Eastern Africa, Sweden and selected global policy forums, and in other settings where we want to work,
- supporting fundraising efforts, and
- strategically positioning Vi Agroforestry as the to-go-to expert.

By 2027

... Vi Agroforestry will have established relations with more donors, partners, and other key stakeholders. Our brand will be more known, and we will have reinforced our position as a to-go-to expert.



Fundraising and resource mobilisation

What?

Simply put, mobilising resources means raising funds, raising money. Vi Agroforestry's work is funded mainly through donations from private individuals and companies, and grants from so called institutional donors. Institutional donors include government development authorities such as the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), and multilateral institutions such as the European Union (EU). Among institutional donors are also non-public organisations such as foundations. Vi Agroforestry works actively to ask private individuals, companies and institutional donors for resources – mainly funds.

Why?

Mobilising resources is a precondition for doing the work under all the working areas described on previous pages. Vi Agroforestry operates in an increasingly competitive and results-accountable environment. In order to implement the strategy, Vi Agroforestry will require an adequate level of predictable and long-term funding from current and new donors. Our aim is to increase funds and to reach a more diversified financing. The latter reduces the vulnerability associated with depending on only a few main donors.

How?

Vi Agroforestry will continue to communicate through a broad range of communication channels, including websites, newsletters, social media, face-to-face meetings, webinars, reports, policy briefs, opinion pieces in newspapers, brochures, the Vi Agroforestry logotype displayed on project sites, and much more. The messages conveyed in these channels will be carefully crafted to catch the attention and interest of stakeholders who in one way or another matter to help us move towards our goals.

In sum, behind each communication effort is a clear thought on how to reach certain audiences and motivate them to do something that benefits both Vi Agroforestry and them. Clear communication is also essential to coordinate and motivate prosperous collaboration between partners in a project, as well as between offices, departments, and units.

During the strategy period, Vi Agroforestry will strengthen efforts to ensure sustainable resource mobilisation. Such efforts will include:

- Building fundraising and resource mobilisation efforts on well-researched strategies,
- strengthening relationships with existing donors to increase donations and ensure predictable funding over time, with particular focus on strengthening cooperation with Kf, Coop and the Vi Magazine to find new synergies,
- diversifying where the funding comes from by strengthening relationships with potential donors and applying for grants from new donors,
- building our reputation and brand by showing that Vi Agroforestry is an expert organisation who manages programmes in an accountable, efficient and transparent way,
- demonstrating results that transform lives of our target groups and impact their societies,
- continuing to improve internal tools, trainings and systems to support effective resource mobilization throughout the organization,
- showing a willingness to work with new innovative ways of fundraising and resource mobilisation.

By 2027

... Vi Agroforestry will have successfully implemented this strategy. Sufficient, stable, long-term funding will have helped make that possible.

Endnotes

² UN (2021) Sustainable Development Goals Progress Chart 2021. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2021/progress-chart-2021.pdf>

³ Castañeda, Andrés; Doan, Dung; Newhouse, David; Nguyen, Minh Cong; Uematsu, Hiroki and Azevedo, João Pedro (2016) Who are the Poor in the Developing World? World Bank Group. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/187011475416542282/pdf/WPS7844.pdf>

⁴ World Bank (2022) Poverty and Shared Prosperity 2022: Correcting Course. Washington, DC: World Bank. doi: 10.1596/978-1-4648-1893-6. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/37739/9781464818936.pdf>

⁵ UNEP (2022) On verge of record drought, East Africa grapples with new climate normal. <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/verge-record-drought-east-africa-grapples-new-climate-normal> visited 19 May 2022

⁶ FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO (2022) The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2022. Repurposing food and agricultural policies to make healthy diets more affordable. Rome, FAO. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc0639en>

⁷ FAO statistics for Kenya presented at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SN.ITK.DEFC.ZS?locations=KE> visited 1 November 2022

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ FAO statistics for Tanzania presented at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SN.ITK.DEFC.ZS?locations=TZ> visited 1 November 2022

¹⁰ USAID (2021) Uganda: Nutrition Profile https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2022-05/Copy_of_tagged_Uganda-Nutrition-Profile.pdf visited 1 November 2022

¹¹ See for example the discourse on page 256 onwards in the World Migration Report 2020, published by IOM in 2019, <https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/wmr-2020-interactive/>

¹² UNHCR. 2022. Mid-Year Trends 2022. <https://www.unhcr.org/statistics/unhcrstats/635a578f4/mid-year-trends-2022>

¹³ UNHCR. 2021. Forced displacement in 2021. <https://www.unhcr.org/62a9d1494/global-trends-report-2021>

¹⁴ More than half of them, 53 million people, never left their country of origin, but are internally displaced. Even those who cross a border still tend to remain close by. As a result, a majority – 74% of all forcibly displaced people – were hosted in low- and middle-income countries. Source *ibid*.

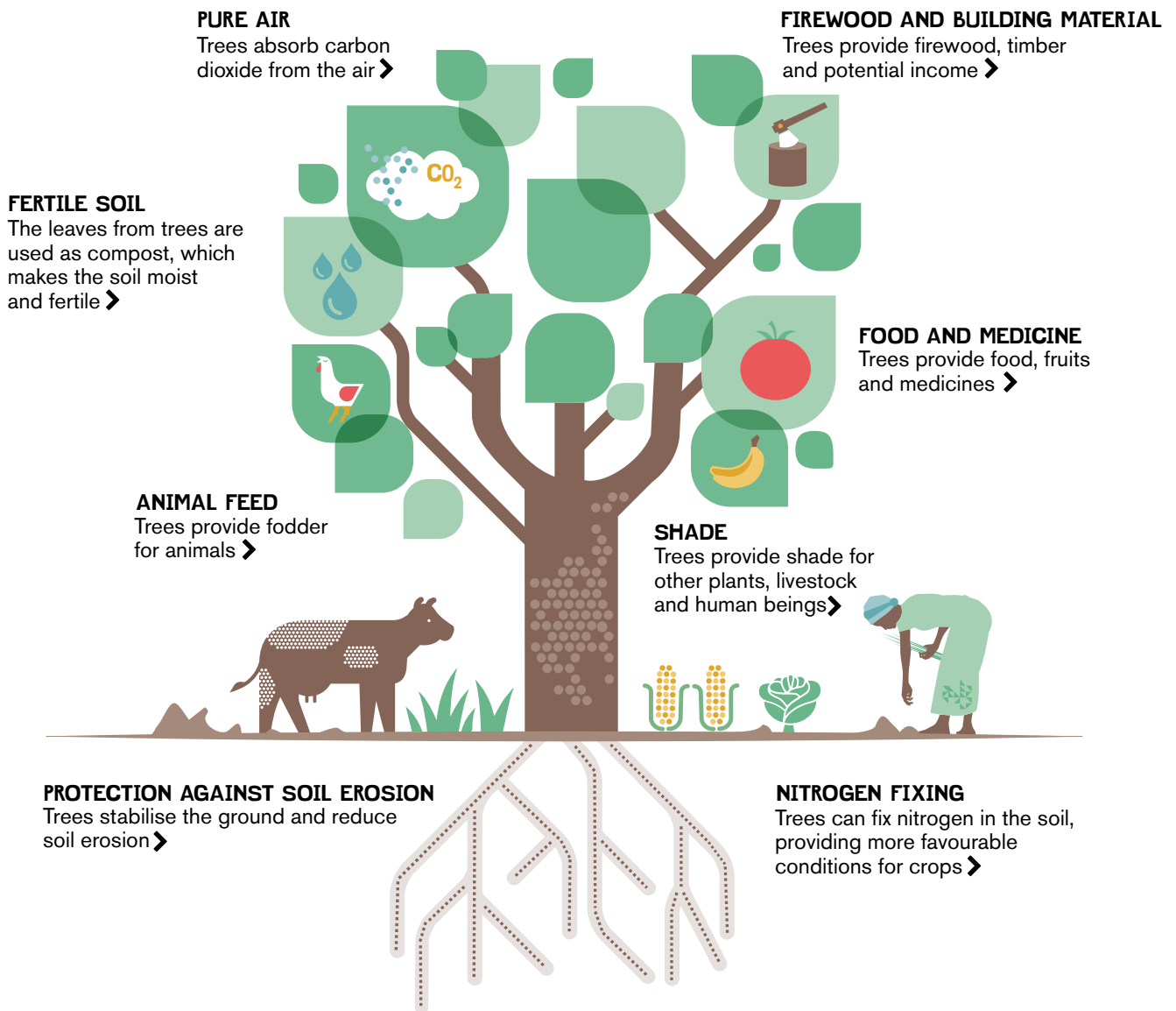
¹⁵ Primarily from South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Burundi, the majority living in the North and South-Western regions and in the capital. Source <https://www.unhcr.org/uganda.html> visited 1 November 2022. Note also that 47 000 Ugandans were estimated to be internally displaced in 2021 associated with disasters, see <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/VC.IDP.NWDS?locations=UG> visited 1 November 2022.

¹⁶ Primarily from Somalia and South Sudan, the majority living in the Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps and in urban areas. Figures from the end of 2021. Source <https://www.unhcr.org/ke/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2022/02/Kenya-Infographics-31-January-2022.pdf> published 31 January 2022. Note also that over 200 000 Kenyans were internally displaced in 2021, see <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/VC.IDP.TOCV?locations=KE> and <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/VC.IDP.NWDS?locations=KE> visited 1 November 2022.

¹⁷ Primarily from Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo, the majority living in the Ndutu and Nyarugusu refugee camps in Kigoma. Source <https://www.unhcr.org/united-republic-of-tanzania.html> visited 1 November 2022. Note also that 47 000 Tanzanians were estimated to be internally displaced in 2021 associated with disasters, see <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/VC.IDP.NWDS?locations=TZ> visited 1 November 2022.

¹⁸ AUC-WGDD, UN Women, OHCHR and UNFPA (2020) Gender-Based Violence in Africa during the Covid-19 Pandemic, <https://africa.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/12/gbv-in-africa-during-covid-19-pandemic>

¹⁹ Vi Agroforestry and We Effect (2021) Fair Food for All. Stockholm. https://viagroforestry.org/app/uploads/2021/09/we_matrapporten_en_2021_web.pdf



Vi Agroforestry embraces SALM practices, with a special focus on the method agroforestry where trees are planted among crops. Sustainable Agriculture Land Management (SALM) are practices used by farmers to be more resilient against the impacts of climate change. Using practices like agroforestry binds carbon dioxide and generates a range of other ecosystem services. Biodiversity often increases where SALM is practiced, and the farms and surrounding ecosystems become more resilient to floods, droughts, extreme temperatures, and other effects of climate change.