THE WORLD BANK

IFPA-CD WOODLOTS
Investing in Forests and Protected Areas for Climate-Smart Development Woodlots Project

Ministry of Water and Environment
Republic of Uganda

INVESTING IN FORESTS AND PROTECTED AREAS FOR CLIMATE-SMART DEVELOPMENT WOODLOTS PROJECT

Enhancing the Supply of Timber, Poles, and Other Plantation Products in Refugee-Hosting Areas

PROJECT BRIEF - JUNE 2026

NIRAS

ECOTRUST
The Environmental Conservation Trust of Uganda

HAVILAH COMPANY LIMITED

GLI
Green Life International

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Government of Uganda with funding from the World Bank is supporting improved forest resource management in refugee-hosting areas under the **Investing in Forests and Protected Areas for Climate-Smart Development (IFPA-CD) project**. Component 3 of the project was designed to promote the establishment of tree cover in landscapes outside protected areas to contribute to sustainable forest management, enhance landscape resilience, and improve the livelihoods of host communities on both private and customary land.

***The overall objective of the IFPA-CD Woodlots Project is** "to enhance the supply of timber, poles, fuelwood, and other plantation products in refugee- hosting areas through small-scale commercial forestry."*

PROJECT SCOPE

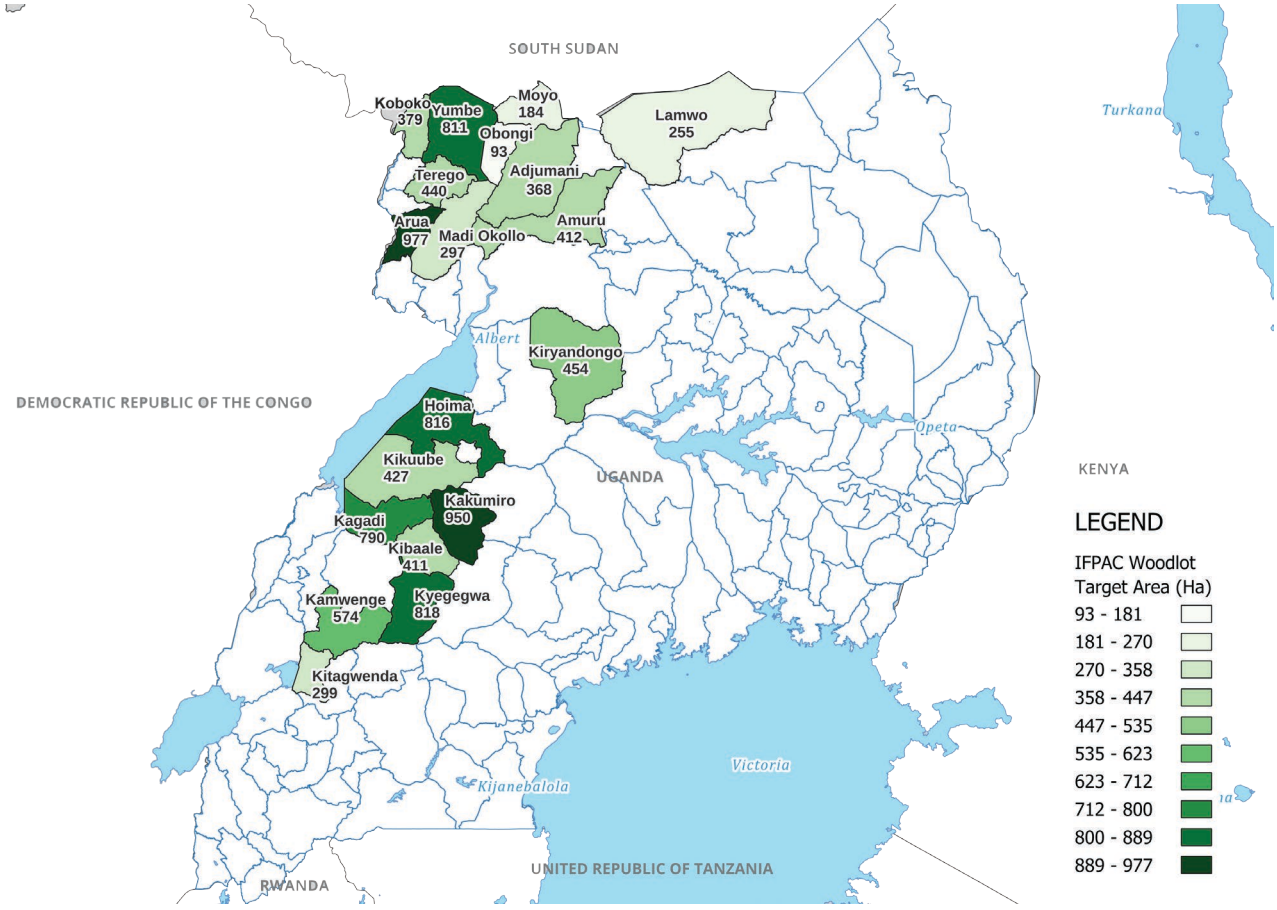


Figure 1: *Map of IFPA-CD Project Districts and Target Planting Area (Hectares)*

The project targets **19 districts** in western and north-western Uganda, either hosting or close to refugee settlements to establish **9,754 hectares** of small-scale private woodlots on host community land. The original project objective was to establish **9,754 hectares** of small-scale commercial private woodlots and reach a total of **39,014 farmers**. However, the delayed Project start-up in October 2025 reduced the implementation period to nine months and necessitated the revision of performance targets.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES, OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

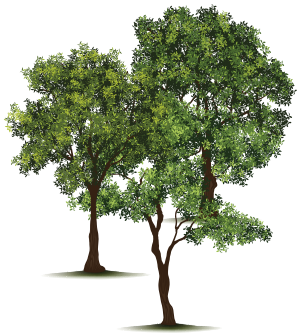
OUTCOMES

Small-scale growers have improved livelihoods following successful development of woodlots

An increased supply of fuelwood & timber for construction reduces deforestation in refugee-hosting area

OUTPUTS

A sustainable supply of fuelwood and timber products are grown and sold in the target districts



Small-scale growers are able to run woodlot business

Small-scale growers are further incentivized to invest in woodlots

An ecosystem of certified nurseries is stimulated in the target districts

ACTIVITIES

Seedlings are supplied and growers plant woodlots with extension support

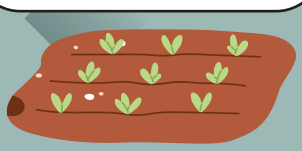
Selected growers are supported to prepare land and request seedlings based on tree variety advice.

Growers develop land management plans including woodlots

Target communities are engaged and farmers informed and empowered to apply for the project

Support to nurseries and 4.5 million seedling orders

Nurseries receive aggregated seedling orders and plant, then deliver seedlings



Nurseries are identified and where necessary supported to gain certification before entering into framework agreements.

PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

Notable progress has been achieved over the 9-month implementation period **(October 2025-June 2026)** across farmer enrolment, training and extension support, seedling sourcing and distribution, and planting activities. **Key achievements include :**

4,010 hectares of woodlots have been established in the April-June 2026 planting season across the 19 districts, with an average landholding size of **0.75 hectares.**

5,334 farmers have established small-scale commercial woodlots (**863 women (16%)/4,471 men (84%)**), including **1,317 youth (25%)**, **857 elderly (16%)**, and **283 persons with disabilities (5%)**.

6,565 farmers (1,046 women, 5,519 men) have enrolled in the project, representing a total of **4,772 ha** of land allocated for small-scale woodlot establishment across the 19 districts.

A total of 37,208 individuals have been directly reached by the project's services.

- **7,074** of these were farmers reached directly through seedling distribution interventions and/or extension visits.
- **34,617 individuals** are members of households that have received seedlings to establish small-scale woodlots, contributing to improved livelihoods and long-term resilience.
- **3,726 farmers (695 women/3,031 men)** have been reached through practical training sessions on land preparation, lining out and pitting, and pest management, with highest female participation **(31%) seen in Kagadi,** and lowest female participation **(8%) in Kibaale**

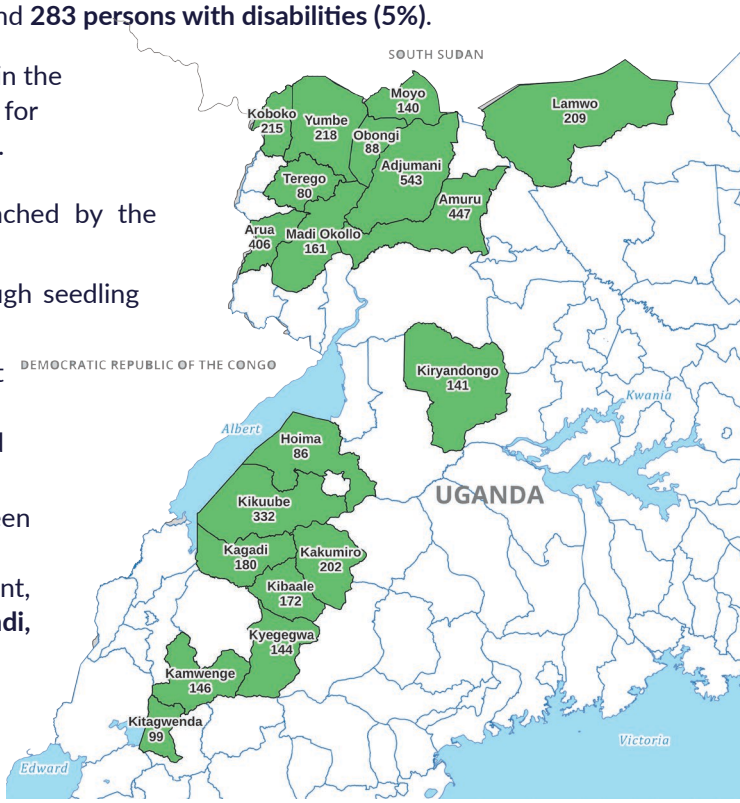


Figure 2: *Map of IFPA-CD Project Districts and Area Planted (Hectares)*

Over 4.5 million seedlings have been distributed to farmers from **over 42 nurseries** across Western and Northwestern Uganda. **Eucalyptus clones equalled approximately half of all planted seedlings (47.8%), followed by pine (25.3%) and teak (10%).** The remaining seedling species constitute approximately 17% of all planted seedlings

Aquasoil technology has been applied to support woodlots establishment under dry conditions, especially in West Nile due to intermittent rainfall, serving as demonstration sites for learning and scaling for climate adaptation.

762 parcels (507 ha) have been treated with pesticides and **297 parcels (186 ha)** with herbicides to strengthen pest and disease management efforts and protect tree establishment.

Over 78 Farmer Voice Radio sessions were carried out to educate farmers on woodlots establishment and management, including topics of land preparation, water conservation, and gender, featuring district officers and local leaders. The sessions reached between **90,000 -150,000 listeners**, with **11,600 individuals** attending parish-level meetings.

Joyce Achero

Investing in Trees for a Resilient Future

In Lamwo District, Achero Joyce is moving away from uncertain crop farming to invest in commercial tree growing as a more reliable future for her family. "You can clear a large piece of land but later on you can fail to even harvest," she explains, reflecting the increasing risks of unpredictable weather.

Instead, she has planted eucalyptus and teak—eucalyptus to grow fast and generate income from poles, and black teak as a long-term investment for high-value timber. "My major vision and hope in these trees is that later when the trees grow... at least I'm sure and certain that I will get money from the sale of the tree products," she says.

For Achero, the impact is simple and personal: "The money that I'm going to get... I may use it for school fees for my children." With the training she has received on how to prepare her land and plant correctly, she is now investing in something she believes will last.

Table 1: Area planted by district (June 17 2026)

Region	District	Original Target (Ha)	40% target (Ha)	Total Area Planted (Ha)	Percentage of 40% Target Planted (%)
Western Uganda	Kitagwenda	299	120	99	83%
	Kamwenge	574	230	146	64%
	Kyegegwa	818	327	144	44%
	Kakumiro	950	380	202	53%
Bunyoro	Kibaale	411	164	172	105%
	Kagadi	790	316	180	57%
	Kikuube	427	171	332	195%
	Hoima	816	326	86	26%
	Kiryandongo	454	182	141	77%
West Nile-NW	Arua	977	391	406	104%
	Madi Okollo	297	119	161	135%
	Terego	440	176	80	46%
	Koboko	379	152	215	142%
	Yumbe	811	324	218	67%
West Nile-NE	Amuru	412	165	447	271%
	Lamwo	255	102	209	205%
	Moyo	184	74	140	191%
	Adjumani	368	147	543	369%
	Obongi	93	37	88	236%
Total		9,755	3,902	4,010	102.8%

Region	District	Female	Male	Total	PWD	Youth	Elderly
Western Uganda	Kitagwenda	29 (13%)	197 (87%)	226	5 (2%)	41 (18%)	47 (21%)
	Kamwenge	115 (27%)	310 (73%)	425	17 (4%)	99 (23%)	72 (17%)
	Kyegegwa	42 (20%)	163 (80%)	205	1 (0%)	34 (17%)	35 (17%)
	Kakumiro	46 (16%)	243 (84%)	289	18 (6%)	55 (19%)	46 (16%)
Bunyoro	Kibaale	52 (18%)	237 (82%)	289	7 (2%)	60 (21%)	46 (16%)
	Kagadi	74 (19%)	307 (81%)	381	43 (11%)	81 (21%)	72 (19%)
	Kikuube	71 (17%)	340 (83%)	411	22 (5%)	79 (19%)	68 (17%)
	Hoima	42 (18%)	196 (82%)	238	18 (8%)	46 (19%)	59 (25%)
	Kiryandongo	69 (23%)	236 (77%)	305	3 (1%)	62 (20%)	55 (18%)
West Nile-NW	Arua	28 (7%)	401 (93%)	429	36 (8%)	121 (28%)	60 (14%)
	Madi Okollo	22 (12%)	155 (88%)	177	11 (6%)	53 (30%)	30 (17%)
	Terego	8 (6%)	118 (94%)	126	5 (4%)	37 (29%)	16 (13%)
	Koboko	39 (12%)	290 (88%)	329	12 (4%)	59 (18%)	67 (20%)
	Yumbe	16 (9%)	154 (91%)	170	21 (12%)	43 (25%)	33 (19%)
West Nile-NE	Amuru	80 (18%)	354 (82%)	434	32 (7%)	123 (28%)	43 (10%)
	Lamwo	28 (16%)	142 (84%)	170	5 (3%)	32 (19%)	21 (12%)
	Moyo	45 (27%)	122 (73%)	167	9 (5%)	39 (23%)	35 (21%)
	Adjumani	45 (10%)	416 (90%)	461	13 (3%)	239 (52%)	36 (8%)
	Obongi	12 (12%)	90 (88%)	102	5 (5%)	14 (14%)	16 (16%)
Total		863 (16%)	4,471 (84%)	5,334	283 (5%)	1,317 (25%)	857 (16%)

Table 2: Number of farmers with completed seeding orders per district (17 June 2026)

CHALLENGES, LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The project delivered **4.5 million seedlings to 5,334 farmers**, establishing **4,010 hectares of woodlots** across **171 parishes in 19 districts** through a demand-driven, community-based model. Delivery required adaptive and agile approaches in response to dynamic field conditions. Implementation challenges generated important lessons and have informed recommendations to support the sustainability of established woodlots and future forestry programming.

Seedling Availability

- **Challenge:** High demand of fast-growing eucalyptus clones over eucalyptus from seed led to localised shortages, despite generally strong supply arrangements.
- **Lesson:** A decentralised model with multiple suppliers enabled flexibility and preserved farmer livelihood choices.
- **Recommendation:** Strengthen forward planning and maintain diversified, cross-regional supply chains to anticipate demand pressures.

Farmer Readiness & Planting Commitment

- **Challenge:** Historically low uptake and poor adherence to planting standards reduced survival rates in past projects, limiting tangible results.
- **Lesson:** Conditioning seedling distribution on verified land readiness (cleared, lined up, pitted) significantly improved outcomes.
- **Recommendation:** Embed readiness-based targeting as standard practice to improve efficiency and survival rates.

Pest & Weed Management

Challenge: Termites and weeds posed significant risks to woodlot establishment, especially for high-demand species vulnerable to termites (e.g. eucalyptus, musizi, grevillea, and teak).

Lesson: Input delivery alone is insufficient—farmer capacity and practical support through extension, training, and the supply of pesticides and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to parish-level stakeholders are critical to success and long-term sustainability.

Recommendation: Integrate ongoing extension services, including hands-on training and provision of basic inputs (e.g. PPE), into implementation models.

Arinyapi Secondary School

Greening Learning Environments in Adjumani

On World Environment Day, *students, local leaders, and conservation partners came together at Arinyapi Secondary School in Adjumani District to plant* **5,000 clonal eucalyptus trees across five acres**, *with support from the IFPA-CD project.*

Located in an area facing extreme heat, flooding, and strong winds, the school's environment posed significant challenges for both learning and landscape resilience. In response, the initiative combined tree planting with practical innovations, including the introduction of aquasoil technology to improve seedling survival under dry conditions.

For the school and wider community, the impact goes beyond planting trees. The woodlot will provide much-needed shade and act as a windbreak, improving the learning environment while strengthening local adaptive capacity.

Weather Variability & Dry Conditions

- **Challenge:** Intermittent rains constrained planting windows and increased the risk of seedling mortality. In a few cases, the survival of seedlings was below 30% and necessitated providing seedlings to farmers for beating-up (re-planting).
- **Lesson:** Close coordination with District Forestry Officers (DFOs) enabled alignment with localised weather conditions and informed planting decisions, complemented by regular monitoring of seedling survival. The use of aquasoil further supported planting under drier conditions.
- **Recommendation:** Systematically integrate local weather intelligence into planning, provide aquasoil (or similar moisture-retention inputs) to enable planting in marginal conditions, and monitor survival rates of treated parcels to inform potential scale-up.

Sustainability

• **Challenge:** The limited project timeframe constrained implementation to a single planting season.

• **Lesson:** Adaptive management approaches were critical to maximising delivery within the available period, including rapid capacity building, targeted recruitment of additional field staff, and close collaboration with local government and implementation partners.

• **Recommendations:** Prioritise engagement with partners best positioned to sustain project gains beyond the implementation period, while also leveraging partnerships with organisations capable of mobilising additional funding to scale successful interventions. Continue investing in community empowerment through training, skills development, sensitisation, and awareness creation, including the use of radio programmes to reinforce best practices and sustain behaviour change.

Intercropping (Taungya) Practices

• **Challenge:** Widespread intercropping, due to entrenched farmer behaviour (taungya) and labour constraints, conflicted with optimal woodlot establishment.

•**Lesson:** Farmer livelihood priorities must be better reflected in project models, including with clear incentives to prioritise woodlots over other livelihood choices (e.g. performance-based subsidies).

• **Recommendation:** Incorporate behavioural and livelihood considerations into design, alongside continued sensitisation on best practice (e.g. buffer zones).

Gender & Land Access Constraints

• **Challenge:** Women and youth faced structural barriers to accessing and controlling land.

• **Lesson:** Targeted engagement at the household level can unlock incremental improvements, and address barriers, but requires proactive and sustained effort.

• **Recommendation:** Strengthen gender-responsive design, with tailored strategies to improve equitable land access and use through behavioural change over longer time horizons.

PROJECT PARTNERS

The Investing in Forests and Protected Areas for Climate-Smart Development Woodlots Project is funded by the **World Bank** and supported by the **Ministry of Water and Environment.** The Woodlots Component, focused on enhancing the supply of timber, poles, fuelwood and other plantation products in refugee-hosting areas, is implemented by **NIRAS** in partnership with the **Environmental Conservation Trust of Uganda (ECOTRUST), Havilah Ltd, and Green Life International.**

NIRAS provides-pre-financing and leads the consortium, leveraging ECOTRUST's community engagement approach, Havilah's expertise in plantation forestry, forestry standards, extension, and Ugandan forest policy, and GLI's knowledge of Uganda's nursery supply chain for poles, timber, and fuelwood.

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