GREENER COMMUNITIES PROJECT: REGENERATING MS. OSWALD FARMS THROUGH AGROFORESTRY AND COMPOSTING.

Introduction

Climate Operation is a youth led organisation that educates school going children and communities about climate change,its intersection, soil health and how all of this is tied together with other social issues such as health and gender. We also involve our target groups in tree planting sessions, colouring sessions and community dialogues as a form of furthering climate based education and activism.

The Problem

Currently in Uganda, both small scale and large scale farmers are using industrialised methods of farming. These include tilling the soil and spraying the crops with herbicides and pesticides among other industrial practices. Furthermore there is mass deforestation to create land for agriculture but because the farming practices being used are not sustainable, once the first yield of crops is harvested, the soil becomes barren thus turning into dust. This has led to desertification of once healthy lands which has intensified the problem of food insecurity in the country.

Greener Communities Project

When starting this project, we had two visions, one being to educate farmers about the wonders that come with regenerative farming methods in particular agroforestry, planned grazing and composting. Secondly, we wanted to implement this education practically with a model farm and it's from this farm that we would demonstrate and train other farmers country wide about how to transition from industrial farming methods to regenerative farming methods.

The Model Farm.

For this project, our model farm Ms. Oswald Farms is located in Nsangi, Katereke which is in the central part of Uganda.

Ms. Oswald Farms has a diversity of crops to include bananas, maize, beans and vegetables. It also has a variety of animals such as goats, rabbits, geese, pigs and cows. Prior to this project, the farm sprayed its crops with herbicides and pesticides and occasionally tilled the land prior to planting crops. With these practices, the farm kept realising low farm yields which was not only economically infeasible but also emitted green-house gases.

Method used and results.

Together with the owner of the farm, we have introduced agroforestry systems to the crop farm and by growing a variety of species together, the farm has become more resilient to pests, diseases and extreme weather. When the trees mature in 3 to 4 years the Ms. Oswald Farms can diversify its income by selling both the fruits from the trees and its already healthy food crops while practicing the health and nutrition of their farm.

We also introduced the use of compost gotten from the plant and animal waste on the farm and through this method, the farm yields have increased and the soil health has been rejuvenated as well.