



Sweet Harvest Zambia

Development Stage



The Sweet Harvest project aims to improve income and food security for rural communities in Zambia by supporting the establishment of market linkages and acting as social enterprise in processing and marketing products and training farmers in regenerative agroforestry practices. Together with reNature, Sweet Harvest has the ambition of lifting a large number of farmers out of poverty using a service delivery concept in an outgrower scheme and upscale impact in a franchise like system with multiple Model Farms and Model Schools for regenerative agroforestry practices. These will help countering deforestation by supplying farmers with sustainable sources of firewood, whilst enhancing livelihoods and producing a range of different food products.

Finance & Planning



€1,700,000

Investment



Gwen Martinez

Initiator



LOCATION:

Choma District, Zambia

SIZE OF PLANTED PLOT:

TBD

SIZE OF POTENTIAL AREA:

20,000 ha

CLIENT:

Sweet Harvest

COMMODITY:

Honey, Pongamia

INDUSTRY:

Food

GOAL:

Increase and diversify income opportunities for rural communities to prevent deforestation with a strong focus on gender equality

MAIN FOCUS:

Smallholder income, food security, forest conservation

PARTNERS:

Zambia Agricultural Research



Assignment

Number of Beneficiaries

The first target group are the 1,500 farmers already connected to Dytech Ltd in a honey outgrower scheme, the second phase will upscale to multiple Model Farms and Model Schools to reach over 20,000 farmers.

Development Challenge

Zambia's rural population suffers from poverty, unsustainable reliance on charcoal as an energy source and a reliance on monocropped maize for food security. Although there is awareness of the devastating effects of deforestation on soil fertility, a poverty trap and lack of alternatives results in an alarming rate of deforestation of 300,000 hectares per year. The Center for International Forestry Research estimates the total cover at this rate could be destroyed by 2030. There is a need for alternative agricultural models that can increase food security, strengthen farmer livelihoods and counteract the rapid loss of forests and soil fertility.

Intervention

reNature will implement a Model Farm and Model School to showcase and provide capacity building on regenerative agroforestry to diversify income, generate a sustainable supply of fuel and make agricultural practices regenerative. These activities will be directly linked to the service delivery model of the company behind the brand name Sweet Harvest, Dytech Ltd. Dytech aims to be a leading processor and exporter of branded organic and fair-trade food products in Zambia. The social enterprise will expand their outgrower model for honey and introduce new commodities such as fruits, vegetables and other tree crops such as pongamia. With increased investment an additional focus will be value adding by branding and processing produce and exporting them under the brand

name Sweet Harvest. Dytech Ltd will support farmers in the transition from maize dominated subsistence oriented produce to diversified, regenerative agroforestry systems and provide services such as the creation of a knowledge center and will act as an offtaker and processor of the produce.

Objective

The objective of this project is to further establish a diversified value chain based on a regenerative production model. Through the outgrower scheme and a tailor-made capacity-building program smallholder farmers are to be empowered to establish productive agroforestry systems that positively affect their livelihoods as well as the local environment.

Financial Details

1st reNature Model Farm: €50,000

1st reNature Model School: €150,000

Investment for processing equipment: €1,500,000

Inspirational Impact

The showcase of regenerative agroforestry practices will prove that sustainable livelihoods for rural communities can be achieved without further deforestation and even while increasing forest cover. It will illustrate that value chain development and nature conservation can go hand in hand and inspire local youth to adopt a sustainable form of livelihood. In addition to popular foreign crops such as avocado and mango, Sweet Harvest aims to incorporate indigenous crops of the area such as African Leafy Greens species and local sweet potato varieties to demonstrate the use and importance of the native vegetation.

Environmental Impact

The inclusion of timber trees will alleviate the need for sourcing firewood for charcoal from forests on communal land which drives deforestation. The inclusion of a variety

of tree species will provide multiple ecosystem services such as carbon storage, biodiversity, soil fertility and increased water retention. The tolerance to droughts of the natural and farming system by conserving the soil and increasing forest cover.

Social Impact

The project has a strong gender equality focus and builds on other activities executed by the Sweet Harvest team to improve female farmer livelihoods and enrollment of girls in schools. Pongamia trees (leguminous trees) will be specifically integrated into the system to encourage communities to adapt from cutting down trees for firewood/charcoal to using the seeds for biofuel and the pods for briquette charcoal production. The project will impact food and nutritional security both directly and indirectly by shifting from production systems mostly focused on maize to one with a diversity in vegetables and fruits and by having more income available to buy food at times of shortage. The diversification of income will increase livelihood resilience to weather related shocks and pests.

Economic Impact

The Sweet Harvest project has a clear strategy for sourcing, processing and marketing the commodities involved in the project. Sweet Harvest already successfully secured offtake agreements for honey with players in the EU and China and would like to expand those opportunities to fruits and vegetables.

The extensive experience of the local project partners in food and trade laws for the international food market in combination with an investment in processing and a strong impact portfolio are expected to provide an attractive opportunity for additional buyers. Dytech Ltd would like to start selling their produce processed and branded and reinvest in the project and its farmers to reach scale and increase impact.

Impact Assessment

reNature offers a range of different methodologies to capture the impact of the project. Those are applied on custom-basis and can be tailored to the needs of the respective project stakeholders. Our expertise and network allows us to measure indicators illustrating the project impact on biodiversity, soil health, farmer income and well-being as well as the climate. For this project in particular, an M&E component could be included in the Model School service.



12,000

Community
Members



73% More

Biodiversity



13% More

Soil Humidity



12 Ton More

CO2 sequestration
per ha/year