

YICE Regenerative Learning Center Project Update



Summary:

Project: Regenerative Learning Center

Location: Kassanda district, Uganda

Total Budget: 40,000 USD

Raised: 25,000 USD (Ashden Grant)

Needed: 15,000 USD

Status: Land secured, Plan approved, Construction started

Main Construction Materials: Used Plastic Bottles

Units to construct: 2 hostels (boy and girls), 1 office, 1 training hall

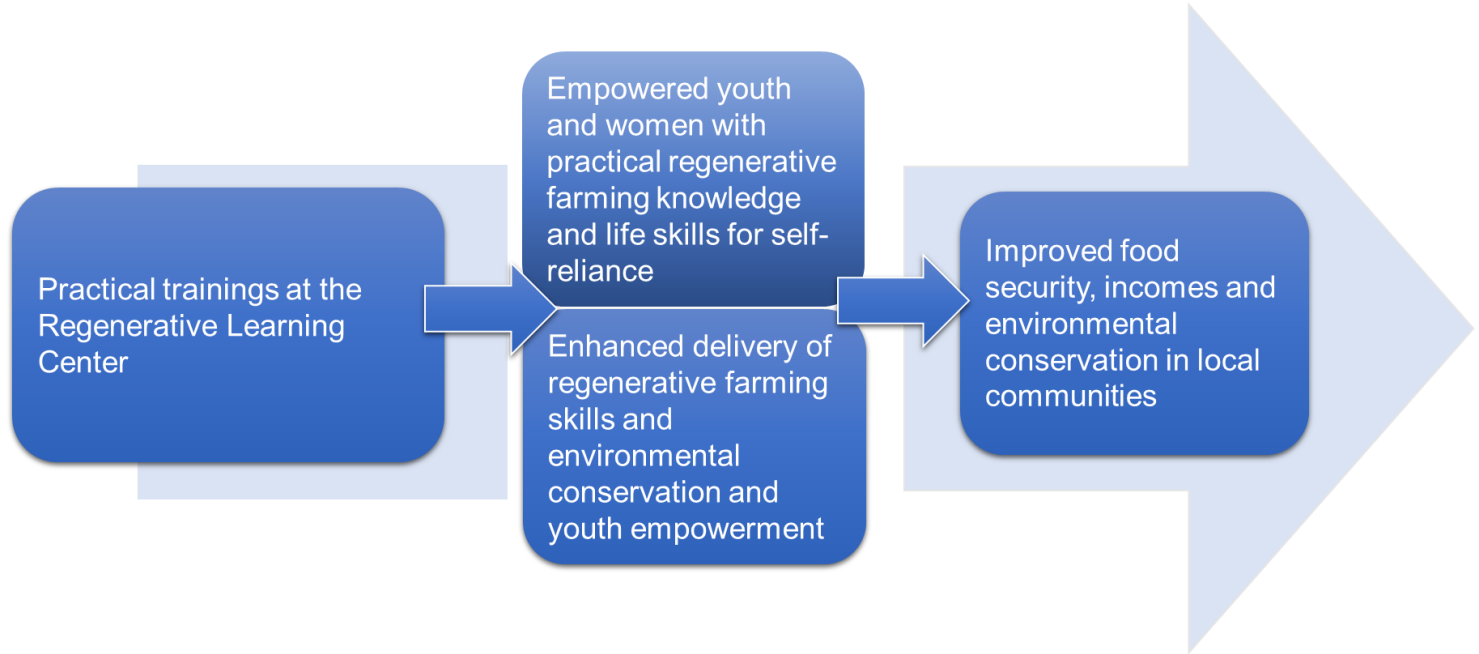
Background

Over the last decade, Uganda has seen an increase in the use of chemicals and destructive modern farming practices among smallholder farmers. This in threatens food security and health by putting the rural poor at a disadvantage – threatening their land tenure and degrading the biodiversity. To reverse this, there is need to move back to regenerative farming practices that enhances food security and regenerates the biodiversity. However, there is a huge knowledge gap among the smallholder farmers – with much practical training needed to promote permaculture and regenerative farming.

It is against this background, that YICE has over the last six years been implementing regenerative farming activities – targeting smallholder farmers including the displaced populations in rural Uganda. Over this period, our approach has been the visiting farmers in their local communities and deliver practical trainings in permaculture and regenerative farming as well as establishing demonstration sites. While this approach has been successful, we would like to target audience to farmers outside the refugee communities, even from other countries in East Africa, and also law-makers and community representatives. The Centre will be a more permanent alternative to the current system and will enable people to learn methods of regenerative agriculture so they can incorporate these at their own homes and farms.

Having trained permaculture and regenerative farming for over six years on a “train and move” arrangement, in 2021 YICE designed to establish a base – and offer more formal and certified trainings to smallholder farmers and the young people. In addition, a lot of agricultural students in Uganda lack opportunities to carry out their practical placements. The permaculture learning center will offer an opportunity for students to apply the knowledge and learn from the garden. The initial Center funding has been provided through the Ashden Awards Grant for Regenerative Farming.

Theory of Change



Components and Activities at the Center

On top of the planned regenerative farming trainings conducted at the center, the center will host a number of activities. These will include:

1. Professional Permaculture Design Course training
2. Practical Organic farming and pesticides training and manufacturing
3. Regenerative tours – through the village and Center's food forest
4. Youth skilling program – covering Soft skills, art and craft
5. Community social services such hostels, sports, games
6. Student placement opportunities especially those in the agricultural field
7. Food supplies and seedbank for the local communities
8. Regenerative farming research and knowledge development

The construction plan and budget

Our plan is to establish an environmentally friendly center – using locally available materials. Construction of the center will be done using used bottles that will be collected from within the local communities. Youth and women in the local communities will be trained on how to build using bottles and will actively engage in the construction of the center. During the center establishment, we intend to create up to 100 jobs for the local youths and women, for a period of over 6 months.

Our estimated budget for construction of the center is **40,000 USD**. This would cover the following activities:

- Developing a site plan and architectural design
- Land surveying and demarcation
- Developing a perimeter fence around the land
- Water harvesting - for all water needs at the center
- Constructing Eco-houses (1 hostel, 1 office, 1 training hall) **using plastic bottles**
- Establishing vegetable demonstration gardens for training purposes
- Poultry, Rabbits and goats to provide manure on the farm
- Construction of a bio digester
- Registration with the government of Uganda
- Human resource and volunteer support

YICE has already secured up to **\$25,000** in funding through the Ashden Awards prize money– and construction started March 1st 2022.

Construction Update:

Over the last three months, YICE started on the process of constructing the regenerative learning center. Among the key activities that have been accomplished, we have been able to draw all the center plans and got them approved by the government of Uganda. We also developed the Aerial view of the center (see photos attached). The images below show the construction progress of the center's training hall, the Aerial view and Center plan.



Regenerative learning center Plan – approved by the government of Uganda.

Below: Arial View of the regenerative Learning Center



Below: Women compacting bottles for construction. We have employed 25 women and youths who picked the bottles and are compacting them. These earn between 3 – 5 USD per day since March 1st.



Below: Images of the construction progress for the first block as of April 20th. We hope to have the first block completed by end of May.

