

IREMA Kunene Project (SAP001) kick-starts Agroforestry Programme in Kunene

Having the right gardening tools for the job is just as important as picking out the seeds or plants you want to grow. Climate change projections indicate an increased length of dry season in Kunene region, with the most vulnerable population being small-scale and subsistence farmers, mostly women.

Implemented by the Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia (EIF) and executed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform (MAWLR), is the SAP001 “Improving rangeland and ecosystem management practices of smallholder farmers under conditions of climate change in Sesfontein, Fransfontein, and Warmquelle areas of the Republic of Namibia (IREMA) Project”. This is a Green Climate Fund (GCF) funded project that aims to reduce the vulnerability of smallholder farmers in Kunene region, one of the driest region in the country. Hence the need to promote a range of climate-resilient technologies for enhanced agricultural and livestock production and improve the dissemination of climate risk information among the community.

The IREMA Project recently rolled out its Tree Planting Programme. The MAWLR’s Directorate of Agricultural Production, Extension and Engineering Services (DAPEES) regional staff, Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) - Directorate of Forestry regional staff and the IREMA Project staff spearheaded the handover ceremonies. The project handed over package of gardening tools (Wheelbarrow, Spade flat, Spade round nose, Folk, Watering can, Garden trowel, Rake, Pruning shear) per individual farmer and tree seedlings (Orange, Moringa, Palm, Banana, Neem, Guava, Lemon, Pawpaw, Mango) to each farmer. The fifty (50) farmers that benefited from this intervention are vulnerable households in the project intervention areas, namely, Erwee, Otjokavare, Sesfontein and Khorixas areas.

The project aims to support 300 farmers in the Kunene Region to implement backyard orchards and vegetable gardens to ensure food security at household level, environmental conservation as well as reduction of greenhouse gases emissions. This intervention offers a wide range of environmental services such as improving soil fertility, restoring degraded lands and preventing soil erosion amongst many other benefits. It is an integrated land management approach that also reduces human impacts on land, and contributes to developing a green economy both at local and national levels by promoting sustainable and resilient land management.

Officiating at the handover ceremony in Sesfontein area, was Chairperson of the Kunene Regional Council and Sesfontein Constituency Councillor, Hon. Hendrik Gaobaeb who applauded the EIF – IREMA Kunene Project for the great initiative of helping to promote agroforestry in the Kunene Region, further affirming that the communities are grateful for the support. He also reiterated that promoting and the adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices among local communities is one of the strategies that will help vulnerable communities in the drought-stricken Kunene region to become resilient to climate change negative impacts. During a similar handover ceremony in the Khorixas area, Constituency Councillor Hon. Sebastian !Gobs encouraged the beneficiaries to take good care of the seedlings and tools donated to them so that they can bear fruits to the benefit of the wider community.

During the handover ceremonies, the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) – Directorate of Forestry representative, Ms. Helena Modestus provided practical demonstrations on tree planting and general management of seedlings and gardening tools. This was done to equip beneficiaries with the right capacities on the right/recommended procedures to plant seedlings to prevent seedling mortality. According to Mr. Mwaetako, Chief Agricultural Scientific Officer, this is the first phase of this funded project activity and the second phase is planned to be rolled out in the fourth quarter of this financial year. The handing over was concluded in Khorixas area on the 13th August 2021.



Handover ceremony in Khorixas area



Seedlings and garden tools distributed to the beneficiaries