



JUNE 27TH 2025

NEWSLETTER



GROWING GREEN FUTURES



TOGETHER FOREVER The UIRI Exhibition.



EDITORIAL

We are excited to share highlights of the June 2025 events. JESE envisions a community where nature and people flourish. Our strides are in Natural Resource Management, Livelihood Improvement, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), and Skills development.

We want to use the space to thank you for staying with us on our journey. We cannot do it alone. In our June Newsletter, we bring you updates from various thematic areas of Skills development, Agricultural Enterprise, Natural Resources and operations to keep you tuned to our activities.

These updates are a result of collaboration, partnerships with other partners and stakeholders at local, regional, national, and international levels.

ATHIENO Caroline
Communications and Advocacy Manager-JESE.

EMPOWERING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES: SUFFBS PROJECT SHARES TRANSFORMATIVE RESULTS IN KYENJOJO.

On 12th June 2025, the community of Kyenjojo gathered to witness a landmark moment in environmental and community resilience efforts.

The dissemination of results for the SUFFBS (Sustainable Utilization of Forest and Farm-Based Systems) Project, a collaboration between CARE and JESE (Joint Effort to Save the Environment), brought together stakeholders, community members, and partners to reflect on progress made and chart a path forward.



Mr. Dennis Mwesigwa, Project Coordinator at JESE, highlighted the successes and lessons of the initiative.

BRIEF CRITIQUE OF THE 2025/26 NATIONAL BUDGET BY JESE.

On June 12th, the Minister of Finance, Hon. Matia Kasaija, presented Uganda's 2025/26 national budget amounting to UGX 72.4 trillion—a marginal 0.3% increase from the previous financial year. In response, JESE, in partnership with PELUM Uganda, convened a post-budget dialogue on June 16, 2025, at Fort View Hotel, Fort Portal, bringing together CSOs and local governments to reflect on its implications for agriculture and natural resources.

While the budget reflects commendable efforts, such as an increased allocation to the environment and natural resources—from UGX 526 billion to UGX 708 billion—key concerns were raised. The continued underfunding of the agricultural sector, which stands at just 3% (far below the Maputo Declaration's 10% benchmark), remains a critical gap.

Furthermore, the emphasis on agro-industrialization, with UGX 1.86 trillion allocated (largely externally financed), raises sustainability questions. The support to agro-industrialisation remains silent on adding value to farmers' produce, as well as the promotion of organic and agroecology products that are increasingly demanded by foreign markets. Also missing is clarity on how the budget for agro-industrialisation addresses concerns under the EU Deforestation Regulation (EU-DR) and product traceability, which are critical for accessing international markets.

Participants also highlighted inadequate funding for rural roads that connect producers to markets, weak support for value addition, and limited investment in climate-smart agriculture. Over 50% of

local budgets still go to salaries and recurrent costs, stifling meaningful capital investment in the agricultural sector. Additionally, there is insufficient funding for climate change initiatives at local levels, renewable energy solutions, and land management interventions.

JESE calls for frugal and transparent use of the budget, better alignment with rural development needs, and deliberate financing for sustainable agriculture and natural resource management.



Visit the [JESE Website](#) to read the full article.

SOIL ANALYSIS DISSEMINATION EMPOWERS FARMERS IN KYENJOJO WITH CROP-SPECIFIC INSIGHTS.

On June 18 2025, stakeholders from across Kyenjojo District gathered at the Heritage Hotel for a crucial event aimed at transforming local agriculture, the dissemination of soil analysis findings.

Spearheaded by the Forest of the World team in partnership with Joint Effort to Save the Environment (JESE), NACORI, and the Kyenjojo District Production Department, the session marked a significant step in guiding evidence-based farming practices.

By providing crop-specific insights based on detailed soil assessments, farmers are equipped to make informed decisions about the types of crops best suited to their land's unique conditions. This targeted approach not only enhances crop productivity but also promotes sustainable land management practices, ultimately improving agricultural outcomes and livelihoods in the region.

***“Understanding our soil is the first step in improving harvests and ensuring sustainability,”
Remarked Nyakoojo Sam, project manager at JESE.***



Sam Nyakoojo, Project Manager from JESE, addresses the participants during soil analysis at Heritage Hotel in Kyenjojo.

AGRO ECOLOGY TRANSFORMS A FARMER

Denis Kyakahiire, a 62-year-old smallholder farmer from Kicheche Sub County in Kitagwenda, western Uganda, has significantly transformed his farm and livelihood by adopting agroecological and integrated farming practices. This transformation was made possible through the support of the Joint Effort to Save the Environment (JESE) in partnership with HereWeGrow (HWG) under the JESE Integrated Farm Planning (IFP) project.

In January 2024, I joined the JESE-IFP project, which provided practical training in integrated farm planning and agroecological methods. The project equipped me with essential skills and knowledge that enabled diversification and intensification of my farm activities, leading to sustainable improvements in productivity and resilience,” Denis shared.

He introduced a variety of sustainable farming techniques, like Mulching, Shade Trees, Intercropping, Integrated Pest Management, Bio-rations Production, New Enterprises including piggery, poultry, beekeeping (apiary), and vegetable production.

His diversified and integrated farm has become more productive, resilient, and nutritionally rich. For example: Steady Income, Improved Food Security, Risk Reduction, and Community Learning Hub. His experience under the JESE_IFP project highlights critical lessons for sustainable smallholder agriculture: Resilience, Empowerment, Diversification. Expanding farm enterprises boost income and improve household nutrition and food security.

Denis Kyakahiire’s transformation is a compelling example of how integrated farming and agroecology can revolutionize smallholder agriculture. His success is inspiring other farmers in Kicheche Sub County to adopt sustainable and profitable farming practices, demonstrating that environmentally friendly agriculture can lead to improved livelihoods and community well-being.

SPREADING THE ROOTS OF RESTORATION.

The Restore Africa project, in collaboration with Joint Effort to Save the Environment (JESE), is making waves across Uganda's broadcasting frequencies literally.

Through strategic use of television features on NBS, UBC, and TV West and radio, the partnership is championing the restoration of degraded landscapes and regeneration of rural livelihoods in the districts of Kamwenge, Kyenjojo, Kyegegwa, Ibanda, Buhweju, Bunyangabu, and Rubirizi.

This media outreach is part of a broader mission to engage communities in sustainable land management and agroforestry practices. By broadcasting success stories, expert insights, and practical guidance, the campaign empowers local farmers to adopt climate-resilient techniques that not only heal the land but also boost household incomes.

The Restore Africa initiative, one of the world's largest community-led land restoration programs, aims to restore over 1.9 million hectares across six African countries, including Uganda.

With JESE's grassroots expertise and the power of mass media, the message of environmental stewardship is reaching deeper into the heart of rural Uganda—planting seeds of change, one broadcast at a time.



 **RESTORING LANDSCAPES
AND LIVELIHOODS IN UGANDA**

RADIO TALK SHOW ROADMAP

Monday 23rd June Voice of Kamwenge 6PM to 7PM	Tuesday 24th June Rwenzori FM, Ibanda 6PM to 7PM	Wednesday 25th June Kyaaka FM, Kyegegwa 8PM to 9PM
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The Restore Africa team during the radio talk show at Voice of Kamwenge radio station.

JESE INITIATIVE EMPOWERS YOUTH.

A collaborative effort from JESE Skill Up! in partnership with Welthungerhilfe successfully conducted a special interview session at the Karago Town Council Hall to select candidates for vocational training in various trades.

With funding from Welthungerhilfe, JESE conducted a selection of the Youth under the Skill Up! program at the Karago Town Council Hall to select candidates for vocational training in various trades.

The practical skills include tailoring, carpentry and joinery, hairdressing, welding, and mechanics.

The program highlights a joint effort to support youth, especially those who face barriers to formal education due to various challenges, by providing them with reliable ways to a sustainable livelihood.

To the trainees,

- ☐ Take charge.
- ☐ Be focused and committed.
- ☐ Embrace your craft with dedication.



Ms. Karungi Phiona, a field officer at JESE orienting youth on a Skill Up! project at Karago Town Council Hall.

OUR LEGACY IN WASH.

In Kitagwenda District, Nyakera Primary School stands as a beacon of sustainable sanitation, thanks to the enduring partnership between Joint Effort to Save the Environment (JESE) and Join For Water (JFW).

Five years after the establishment of its Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) infrastructure, the school continues to benefit from fully functional facilities, an achievement rooted in a structured operation and maintenance (O&M) plan diligently upheld by the school administration.

JESE's ongoing technical support has been instrumental in this success, offering guidance that ensures the infrastructure remains effective and resilient.

This collaborative effort has not only improved hygiene and sanitation standards but also raised a healthier learning environment for pupils and staff alike.

The story of Nyakera Primary School is a testament to the power of long-term commitment, community ownership, and strategic partnerships in transforming WASH outcomes in rural areas.

Let's continue using our facilities and resources sustainably.



The JESE team and Headteacher inspect the ecosan toilet at Nyakera Primary School in Kitagwenda.



A Section of the ecosan toilet facility at Busabura Primary School in Kamwenge District.

GROWING GREEN FUTURES:

In June 2025, St. Paul Primary School in Kamwenge District took a bold step toward environmental stewardship through its active conservation club.

With support from the JESE community nursery beds and coordination by the Kamwenge District Local Government's education department, the school received over 150 tree seedlings, 50 Markamia, and 100 Grevillea species.

These trees were deliberately planted along the school's boundaries, creating a living fence that not only enhances the landscape but also contributes to long-term conservation benefits.

Early observations show the seedlings are thriving, a testament to the students' commitment, and the school is nurturing.

This initiative reflects a growing movement among Ugandan schools to integrate environmental education with hands-on action, empowering young learners to be guardians of their natural heritage.



Mr. Mugambo Herbert, Program Officer from JESE, with the Headteacher of St. Paul's Primary School and the patron of the school's conservation club, during an ongoing monitoring visit.

FROM BODABODA RIDING TO BOUNTIFUL HARVEST: THE RISE OF AHABYOONA BAPTIST.

In the heart of Mugasani, Fort Portal City, Ahabyoona Baptist embarked on a journey that would change his life forever. Once a casual worker in Kampala, he discovered a passion for mushroom farming that exploded into a dream of self-reliance. Determined to carve out a better future, he saved UGX 500,000 through boda boda riding and invested it in a humble mushroom enterprise.

With limited resources but unwavering determination, Baptist built a small mushroom house and began his farming venture. His dedication caught the attention of Joint Effort to Save the Environment (JESE), an organization committed to empowering youth in agribusiness. Through their extensive training in agroecology, integrated farm planning, and urban farming innovations, Baptist developed his skills, learning how to maximize yields in small spaces.

“As my knowledge expanded, I decided to practice on my farm. With the help and support from JESE, I grew my mushrooms and passion fruits from a modest setup to an impressive 1,300 gardens. Bravo, Jese.” Baptist shared.

The transformation was amazing; his once small-scale effort became a successful agribusiness, ensuring a steady income while promoting sustainable farming practices.

Baptist's success is more than a personal victory; it is a beacon of hope for young entrepreneurs seeking opportunities in agribusiness. His journey proves that with resilience, passion, and the right support, even the smallest seed of ambition can grow into a flourishing enterprise.



Top-down, Mr. Ahabyoona Baptist, a youth farmer at his mushroom House and passion fruit farm in Magasani Gweri, Fort Portal tourism city.

TOGETHER FOREVER.

On June 24, 2025, JESE, CARE, and NOGAMU actively participated in the Uganda Agri-Food Systems Exhibition held at the Uganda Industrial Research Institute (UIRI), Namave Campus in Wakiso district.

The event brought together key stakeholders from the agricultural sector to discuss critical issues surrounding food order, safety, and sustainable financing within Uganda's agri-food systems.

The exhibition was honored by the presence of the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries, who addressed the congregation, emphasizing the government's dedication to strength-

ening food safety and enhancing agricultural productivity. His speech underscored the importance of collaborative efforts between government bodies, civil society, and private sector actors to ensure sustainable development in Uganda's agri-food sector.

A significant moment during the exhibition was the address by Commissioner Walugembe from the Office of the Prime Minister.

"I am deeply grateful for the impactful work being done by the Civil Society Organizations in promoting food safety and sustainable agricultural practices." Noted, Commissioner Walugembe.

He further reiterated the government's pledge to provide continued support and collaboration to ensure the success of these initiatives.

The Uganda Agri-Food Systems Exhibition at UIRI Namave Campus served as a vital platform for dialogue, partnership, and knowledge exchange. The active participation of JESE, CARE, and NOGAMU, alongside government officials and other stakeholders, demonstrated a united commitment to advancing food safety and sustainable agriculture in Uganda.

This calls for continued collaboration and support to enhance financing mechanisms for agri-food systems, exploring innovative approaches to fund sustainable agriculture and food safety programs. This will help improve value chains to benefit farmers and consumers alike.



Mr. Commissioner Walugembe Edward from the office of the prime minister, addressing the congregation at Uganda Industrial Research Institute, Namanve campus, Wakaiso.



Mr. Dennis Mwesigwa from JESE and other representatives from CARE and NOGAMU at UIRI Exhibition Ground.

STAKEHOLDERS MEET TO REFLECT

On 26 June 2025, JESE organised a review meeting. This important assembly brought together a diverse group of stakeholders committed to advancing sustainable food systems through agroecology transforms a farmer in the Rwenzori region.

The meeting was intended to update members on the progress made by RAAP so far in 2025, confirm and approve the proposed work plan for the remaining half of the year, and discuss sustainability strategies to ensure the platform's long-term impact. Central to the agenda was the goal of building a strong, collaborative network of actors championing sustainable agricultural practices and environmental stewardship in the region.

This event was organized by the JESE as the RAAP Secretariat. The meeting attracted representatives from a wide range of institutions, including JESE, KRC, NARO, Mountain of the Moon University (MMU), BD, Uganda Martyrs University (UMU), Fort Portal, IDP, Caritas, AID, Kamwenge District Local Government, Kitagwenda District Local Government, Kabalore District Local Government, Albertine Interventions, among others.



Top-down, participants during the RAAP meeting at Tooro Botanical Garden in Fort Portal, Tourism City.

“We are a transformative force that has rapidly gained momentum in reshaping agricultural and environmental practices. We need to continue with dedicated efforts in our cause.” Re-marked Mr Kabaseke Clovis, Chairperson of RAAP.

The key resolutions were development of a Robust communication strategy, capacity building initiatives, strengthening monitoring and evaluation of members, resource mobilization strategy, Advocacy strategy to influence policy and practice, support mechanisms for participation and members, identification and leveraging of RAAP opportunities.

“Thank you all for your participation and commitment. We need to operationalize the platform’s strategies and translate plans into concrete actions that will sustain and scale the platform’s achievements.” Mr. Amanyia William. Head of Agriculture enterprise and development, JESE.

COMMUNITY-DRIVEN RESTORATION: 2025 MAM SEASON TREE PLANTING UNDER RESTORE AFRICA.

The Restore Africa Program is the world’s largest community-led land restoration programme supporting smallholder farmers to restore degraded land through growing trees in agroforestry systems, strengthening food security and increasing resilience to extreme weather events. In Uganda, the program targets to restore 560,000 ha of degraded landscapes while working with 325,500 smallholder farmers across 32 districts.

During the 2025 March–April–May (MAM) tree planting season under the Restore Africa Program, JESE, in partnership with CARE, supported 4,290 households — 3,071 men and 1,219 women — to plant 813,912 tree seedlings across six districts in the south-western Uganda sub-region: Kamwenge, Ibanda, Kyegegwa, Kyenjojo, Bunyangabu, and Buhweju.

The 20 different tree species distributed were selected and prioritized for their ecological, medicinal, nutritional, and economic value.

They included indigenous hardwood species like *Milicia excelsa*, *Maesopsis emini*, Mahogany, *Albizia coriaria*, *Terminalia superba* & *Cordia africana*; medicinal trees like *Prunus africana*, *Warburgia ugandensis*, *Zanthoxylum gilleti* & *Spathodea campanulata*, and fruits like mangoes, soursop, avocados & jackfruit.

This effort reflects our integrated approach to climate resilience, agroforestry, and community empowerment, anchored in inclusive participation and local ownership. Overall, JESE targets to plant 6,075,000 trees by 2027 under Restore Africa.

As we look forward to the coming Second season, we are continuously enrolling more participants and calling upon all interested farmers willing to take part in growing indigenous trees to join us.

The project will provide free seedlings and training to farmers who have enrolled in the project through consent.

Green Up to Cool Down!

JESE PARTICIPATES IN THE GEA ANNUAL LEARNING EVENT TO ENHANCE RESTORE AFRICA IMPACT



From June 16th to 20th, Fort Portal City played host to the Global EverGreening Alliance (GEA) Annual Learning Event, a landmark gathering that brought together Managers of Restore Africa Consortium Partners from Malawi, Kenya, and Uganda, alongside the GEA regional team from Nairobi and colleagues from the GEA Secretariat in Australia. The event, led by GEA CEO Chris Armitage, was a dynamic platform to celebrate the remarkable achievements of the past two years and to foster cross-country learning and collaboration in the Restore Africa Program across the continent.



Immersive Community Engagement in Kakinga Village

A Platform for Reflection and Learning

The Annual Learning Event was designed to facilitate meaningful exchange among implementing countries and partners, to enhance the quality and effectiveness of restoration efforts across Africa. Through a series of interactive sessions, participants reflected on successes, shared challenges, lessons learnt, and explored innovative strategies to scale up impact.

Looking Ahead

The GEA Annual Learning Event in Fort Portal was more than just a meeting—it was a celebration of progress, a catalyst for innovation, and a reaffirmation of the collective commitment to restoring Africa's landscapes.

As the Restore Africa Program moves forward, the lessons, relationships, and renewed momentum from this year's GEA Annual Learning Event will undoubtedly drive greater impact and lasting change across the continent, amplifying the impact of restoration, one community at a time.



JESE is proud to have hosted this transformative event and remains committed to supporting communities in their journey toward environmental restoration and sustainable livelihoods.



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