

friends of fadeco

newsletter may 2003

Food crisis hits Karagwe 70,000 face starvation; FADECO called on by Government to help...

From FADECO Director, Joseph Sekiku

Normally, it is very hot through Christmas to January with rains expected from Mid February every year. The onset of the rainy season means a lot for the people here. More like a custom/tradition, lives of people here are modelled on this natural weather changes: the rainy season means people grow their food and it's not the best time to visit nor hold sensitisation seminars or training. Most will be engulfed in their shambas (gardens) either planting, or weeding, etc. When rain is over (again normally end of May through August), it's time for merry making, exchanging gifts, visitations, etc...and the best time to visit because most people will be available.. and less farm work. A lot of beer making and drinking too!

This year it's been very different. The rains did not come as expected (around 15th Feb.) not until 15th April. And what can I say? When these came, they have been very heavy, coupled with hailstorms. One thing is definite - late planting, which further means that there will be food shortage for a community entirely dependent on the rains. There would not be enough rains for crop to mature (most crops mature within a minimum 90 days).

And worse, something that could be a headline for a news column in a national journal: heavy rains now with hailstorms and hurricane have destroyed hundred of acres of crops, leaving over 70,000 people in Karagwe completely without food. This means, for a population heavily dependent on bananas as main

staple food crop, these are going to starve.

FADECO's role

There are a lot of implications to the interventions started and being implemented by FADECO. FADECO is involved in the promotion of appropriate technologies in agriculture: organic farming, agricultural diversification, agro-forestry to post harvest processing, preservation, storage and marketing. This is done by sensitising farmers and training them in simple techniques to help them cope with such disasters but most importantly to ensure household food security and income.

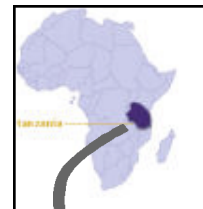
FADECO has been called to respond to the existing disasters - not by providing relief food, but by procuring planting materials for sweet potatoes. I can say that I have been motivated. This is like an expression from the Government of Tanzania that they recognize the contribution made by FADECO in addressing local community needs.

I would like to express my deepest thanks to all members of FOF in the UK for your interest in FADECO and for supporting our development work here. With you in the background, I am most encouraged and motivated. I understand that what it means for you to think about us. I am happy that, through FoF, we are able to show the rest of the International community that indeed friendship can break confines of race, religion and backgrounds. FOF is a living testimony that the world is one big village.



The membership organisation for the supporters of Family Alliance for Development and Cooperation (FADECO)

Working for sustainable development of the grassroots communities in Karagwe, Kagera Region, NW Tanzania



What you can do:

- Use the form on the back cover to encourage others to join
- Send a donation
- Sell copies of our 'Who said that?' quiz



www.fadeco.org

A friend of fadeco visits TZ -

Secretary Richard Collins exports pole lathe technology!

In the summer of 2002 Sekiku Joseph, the founder of FADECO, stayed with my family in Taliesin in Wales. Several times he asked me to visit him in Tanzania. I wasn't sure what my purpose would be - having a wonderful experience and using up some of Joseph's valuable time didn't seem like enough. But in the end I decided that I would go. My hope was that now we had set up friends of fadeco the visit would help to strengthen the link between our two communities and that I could bring back with me some understanding of development in the area and FADECO's part in it. I also knew of a little piece of appropriate technology that may or may not be useful to some people out there - but more of that later.

The trip was great. I was on the receiving end of so much hospitality, kindness and good humour. And I learnt a great deal. Of course there's so much I don't understand about Tanzania or FADECO or development in general but I did come home knowing a lot more than I did. My overall impressions of FADECO were very positive. I hope that I can encourage you to continue with your support.

Richard Collins - January 2003

The area and the people

The area that FADECO is based in is the Karagwe district of Kagera region in NW Tanzania. It has a very good climate with lots of sunshine and two good rainy seasons per year. The agricultural potential is great. But Karagwe is remote from the capital of Tanzania, Dar es Salaam (five days' drive), and its development is way behind that which has taken place just over the border in Uganda or in other regions of Tanzania. The main economic activity is agriculture and most of that is at something near subsistence level - grow it, eat it, maybe take a small amount of surplus to market if you're wealthy enough to own a bicycle. People usually have plenty of food - it's not like the drought regions of Africa. But there is not much that people can do to improve their circumstances and there is no free education and no free health care. In a poor family if you're badly ill you die quietly at home.

It's a beautiful area and some people are healthy and happy much of the time. Many others are too poor; with very bad housing, lack of education, poor nutrition, and sickness. The remoteness means that large scale economic development isn't going to happen for a while. But there is lots of scope for small scale improvements in people's quality of life - better diet, housing, improved agricultural practices and appropriate education. These are the areas in which FADECO is active.

The origins of FADECO

The story of FADECO starts with a young man, a student of agriculture in Makerere University in Kampala (Uganda), making his first trip to the Karagwe district of Tanzania where his parents had come from and where many of his family still lived. This man going back to his roots was, of course, was Sekiku Joseph. What he found was an area in a state of development far behind that of Uganda with a very low standard of living. The poverty surprised him very much and he resolved to try to do something about - to improve things in a small way for his people.

A few years later Joseph settled in the village of Nyakasimbi, bought some land, and started farming in the simple unmechanised way practised in the area. He introduced new crops, crop varieties, and unheard of techniques like composting and double-digging. Everything he did was done with the intention of demon-



strating useful new practices that others could copy. Soon he was running workshops in Nyakasimbe and the surrounding area.

Some of the problems people had in the area were environmental. Much of the hill-top land was very bare with only grasses and a few acacia trees growing in a thin soil. The practice of setting fire to the grass every dry season resulted in soil erosion when the rains came, the destruction of tree seedlings and a lowering of the water table (which meant that people were walking long distances to collect water). Joseph planted trees on his land in among the crops in agroforestry style. He used species like *Grevillea robusta* which have nitrogen producing root nodules that improve the soil fertility when young and which later can be cut for firewood or eventually timber. With help from Tree Aid he established tree nurseries and helped people to plant trees on their land so they had their own supply of firewood. There are around seventy planted woodlots (plantations for fire wood) in the Nyakasimbi area now.

Sekiku Joseph's work grew and changed in response to the needs and demands of local people. In 1996 he and a group of others set up a small independent non-profit making organisation called FADECO. The need to communicate led to the creation of an office in the nearest town of Kayunga where there is electricity and telephone/ internet access. The work continues but on a larger scale. FADECO now works on two levels. It still is involved in running workshops and demonstrations of quite simple new farming or environmental practices that will improve the quality of life of poor people locally. It also operates as an information centre and catalyst for change at a regional level. FADECO produces a quarterly newsletter on development issues (avidly read - the area has no newspapers or magazines). It runs a resource centre with a library of books journals and information on CD ROM.

More information on its current programmes can be found from the FADECO web site www.fadeco.org.

How to grow fruit and eat it

I felt I should have a questioning attitude and a healthy scepticism about everything I was seeing on my visit. When I arrived in Nyakasimbi it was just in time to attend a meeting of twenty head-teachers of local schools who had come to meet Joseph to access a grant from Seeds for Africa to plant fruit trees around their schools. But surely everybody around here plants fruit trees I thought to myself - why do you need an NGO involved? Food is

easy to grow in Karagwe: there are two rainy seasons per year. However, people have poor diets with very little variety. They don't eat much fruit (apart from plantain bananas) even though it is easily grown and the vitamins would improve their health.

But now, with this project, local children will learn about caring for trees and will be encouraged to eat the fruit that they've grown. This should result in a simple but very positive cultural change that will have a lasting effect on people's health. This is a small project but to me it was an illustration of how FADECO works. FADECO is the catalyst - communicating with schools, setting up meetings, applying for grants. And this seems to be the role that FADECO now has in the area. I was impressed with many other examples I saw of their work as catalyst for change - providing information, putting people in touch with each other, suggesting ideas.

Some distance (maybe it was half a day's drive) from Nyakasimbi on my way back to the airport and home we saw a familiar figure pushing a bicycle up a hill. I was very surprised to see someone I recognised in what seemed like a remote spot. It was one of the teachers who had attended the Seeds for Africa meeting the week before. We gave him a lift to his home and he proudly showed us his tree nursery. Joseph said that many of the people had come such distances; some from much further away. Transport is bad in Karagwe district and people are poor. This willingness of people to travel a long way to participate in FADECO's activities seemed to me a very good measure of the value of its work.

More reasons for supporting friends of fadeco

My guess is that large scale economic development is going to take a long time to reach Karagwe. Meanwhile FADECO seems to me to be responding to the demands of people in the area and serving as a catalyst for changes that are appropriate and sustainable. FADECO is much more grass roots led than some rural initiatives I see around me in west Wales, for instance. And the environmental issues FADECO addresses are those linked with the quality of people's lives like access to water or fuel-wood.

I won't say that they are perfect but they should avoid the mistakes that foreign NGOs sometimes make. I think if you want to support development work and make a difference in the lives of poor people you should support FADECO. Perhaps you can persuade some others to join friends of fadeco.

The pole-lathe

When Sekiku Joseph was here in Wales last summer I took him to see Bob Shaw who teaches green wood-working and woodland management in his wood south of Aberystwyth.



I explained that this sort of thing was really recreational here and not exactly a big part of the rural economy. We were looking at a pole-lathe, a machine for turning wood that is powered by a foot-operated treadle and a bendy pole. Joseph said that it might be appropriate technology where he lives in a village without electricity. He had travelled over a great part of northern TZ and other areas conducting workshops and surprisingly he had never seen or heard of such a thing.

With the help of a man called Gonzaga Aloysius who had come over the border from a town in the south of Uganda I made

a pole-lathe in Nyakasimbi. Gonzaga is a young carpenter who makes furniture and employs four apprentices. He said he had recently started renting an electric lathe but hadn't used it much yet and



Doing some agro-forestry with Oswald

was very interested in the pole-lathe. A local carpenter came and watched (he was ill and not able to do much at the time) and we made some tool handles and a pestle for pounding maize. Gonzaga told me that he was going to send back his electric lathe (it was very expensive to rent) and build a pole-lathe. When I got back to Kampala I received a letter from him thanking me very much and saying that he had already half-built his own pole-lathe and was looking forward to teaching his apprentices how to use it.

Big areas of TZ and Uganda have no electricity. Maybe this simple device will play a part in the livelihood of a few rural craftsmen. Who knows?

Treasurer's Report

To date FofF has raised a total of £887 through membership fees and fundraising events which have included a market stall, an art sale, carol singing and the sale of Fadeco's delicious bananas. Money is still trickling in from the art sale as the donated exhibits have continued to be on sale at Bro Ddyfi House in Machynlleth.

Richard took £600 from the funds to Joseph in January of this year to be used towards the setting up of a multi purpose skills transfer centre. This leaves the current balance of our funds at £272. Some of this money will be used towards sending computers, donated by Powys Council to the Fadeco project. Further funds will be raised for this purpose through the sale of two of these donated computers.

We have more fundraising activities planned for the coming year, so watch this space...

Penny Dunsford, Treasurer

PCs for Resource Centre

Five computers are now nearly ready to be sent to Karagwe for the Resource Centre FADECO is developing. They will be used for training and job creation. We were donated eight by anonymous donors and these have been refurbished, and two were sold to pay for the shipping costs.

Who said that? Quiz

We are distributing this quiz for £1 each as a fundraising effort. The idea is people send in their answers and the one who correctly identifies the authors of most quotations wins a prize.

Please phone Richard (01970 832575) or Chairperson David Thorpe (01654 761570) for more copies to sell on.

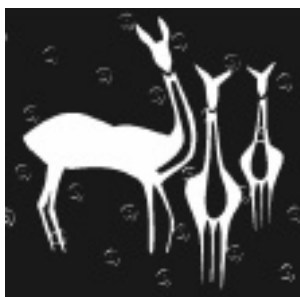
Membership drive

Currently we have only 25 members. We need to expand to raise more money. Please could each of you try to get at least one more member in the next few weeks? Let's set a target of reaching **50 members by September!!**

friends of fadeco

Who are we?

A small organisation establishing itself as a charity in the United Kingdom. It was started by a group of people in mid Wales after visits by Frank Jackson, a solar engineer, David Thorpe and Felicity Eden to a remote area in northwest Tanzania.



There we met Joseph Sekiku, who runs Fadeco, a small local development agency. Although small, it operates in an area which supports 350,000 people, and it is bravely doing its bit to improve conditions for these, amongst the most disadvantaged people in the world. Joseph has visited us twice and has many contacts in the UK. We decided to set up a support group for Fadeco as it makes it a lot easier to channel assistance from the UK to this part of the world.

What is Fadeco?

Fadeco is a local development NGO in the Karagwe district, Kagera region, NW Tanzania, striving to promote sustainable socio-economic development of the grassroots communities. Fadeco is involved in developing, transferring and adapting low cost technologies that are appropriate, cost effective and affordable to poor rural communities; technologies that are environmentally friendly. Fadeco has concentrated her efforts on agricultural development, low cost housing and renewable energy technologies.

Fadeco stands for FAMILY ALLIANCE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION. It is a local registered development NGO with a charitable status. It works directly with family groups at the grassroots / village level. It has a membership of 56 as of 2001. It started as a self-help group in 1993 and received official registration with the Ministry of Internal affairs on the 12th Feb. 1996. Its registration number is SO 8737 under the societies Ordinance of Tanzania. One of its greatest achievements has been the introduction of the post-harvest solar fruit drying technology for micro and medium scale enterprise development.

What are our objectives?

Our formal objectives are:

- To aid in the sustainable development of Kagera
- To promote exchange visits between the UK and Kagera
- To advance for public benefit the education of the inhabitants of Kagera
- To educate the public in the UK concerning the causes of, and ways of relieving, poverty, sickness and distress in Kagera.

Membership application form

Individual membership (per year)	£10
Joint household or family membership	£15
Group membership (offices, clubs, etc)	£15

Name:

Address:

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E-mail address:

Phone number:

I/we support the names of the organisation. I/we apply for individual/household/group membership (delete as appropriate).

I enclose £ . . . as annual subscription

I enclose £ . . . as a further donation

I am over 18.

Signed:

Capacity if a group:

Date:

Please send the form and a cheque to the Secretary, Friends of Fadeco, 7 Seaview Terrace, Taliesin, Machynlleth, SY20 8JN.

Why support Friends of Fadeco?

Because as well as raising funds for vital development work, we aim to build local links and a real partnership at the grassroots level through Fadeco. We will be involved in specifically targeted fundraising, at present, for a multipurpose information centre.

We would like you to help us with this and other very practical aims.

Contact the Secretary:

Richard Collins, the Secretary, Friends of Fadeco, 7 Seaview Terrace, Taliesin, Machynlleth, SY20 8JN.
Tel. 01970 832575, email: richardtaliesin@hotmail.com. Or visit the web site, where there is lots more info:

www.fadeco.org