

UC Santa Cruz

Cultivating A Movement

Title

Godfrey Kasozi, Former Apprentice, Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9z85w67s>

Authors

Kasozi, Godfrey
Farmer, Ellen

Publication Date

2010-05-01

Supplemental Material

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9z85w67s#supplemental>

Godfrey Kasozi



Apprentice, Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems, UC Santa Cruz

&

Director, Centre for Environmental Technology and Rural Development, Western Uganda

Godfrey Kasozi was born in 1970 in Karusandara, a small village in Uganda. He lives in the town of Kasese in western Uganda, just outside of Rwenzori Mountains National Park. He studied agriculture at a university in Uganda. In 1997, he founded the Centre for Environmental Technology and Rural Development (CETRUD) in western Uganda, which is working to create a more sustainable economy and environment within the country. In search of practical training in organic farming methods that he could use at CETRUD, Kasozi came to UC Santa Cruz in 1999 as an apprentice with the Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems program. There he received valuable skills, returning to Uganda to establish a demonstration garden, and

training programs in sustainable agriculture, nutrition, seed distribution, animal husbandry, and the use of traditional herbs and medicinal plants. Ellen Farmer interviewed Kasozi at her house in Santa Cruz, California on July 30, 2007, when he was in Santa Cruz speaking at the 40th anniversary (“Back 40”) celebration for CASFS.

Additional Resources

Center for Environment Technology and Rural Development (CETRUD)
<http://www.cetrud.org/wb/>

Catherine Viglienzoni, “Agroecology Internship Alum Uses Training to Build Ugandan Program CETRUD,” *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, June 28, 2009.

Farmer: This is July 30, 2007, and I’m in Santa Cruz, California with Godfrey Kasozi. You have been here because of the UCSC Farm and Garden 40th Anniversary event.

Kasozi: Yes.

Farmer: And how long are you here in California?

Kasozi: I’m going to be here for two more weeks after the event to meet with more people and discuss further partnerships with my organization in Uganda.

Beginnings

Farmer: Okay. I’m going to go way back in time, and this is what we’ve basically done with everyone we’ve interviewed. Where were you born and where did you grow up?

Kasozi: I was born in a small village called Karusandara, in the Kasese district in Uganda. That was back in 1970. My father was a village chief who, at that time, during Idi Amin's regime, worked hard, and he had lots of trouble because of being a Christian. My father died when I was ten years old. That was 1981. Then I continued to study under the guidance of my mother. I went to the seminary school to be a priest. But I changed my mind and I went to the university to study agriculture.

Then I decided to come and do some more practical work for the people in my village. But it wasn't very successful and useful, because most of the things you study at the university are more theory. They are not practical. I thought of changing some of the living conditions for the people of my village. We came up with an organization which we thought would be very helpful to the people of the villages that we came from. It was kind of 'what could we bring back?' to the people in those areas. This is a village where many people are very poor. Many people don't have shelter. They don't have money to go to school. There are lots of orphans who have been affected by HIV/AIDS, and also the war, which was in Congo and Uganda. It affected the people very much.

So, the best way was to think of alternatives: How could we be of use? Most of the children going to school get good jobs away from the district, and they never come back. I thought I should be one of the people to think of this village and be able to come back and help my people. Otherwise, if we all went away, who would think about this village? How could the village get the services that they don't have? So the best thing was to say: What can I bring back to the people?

I went on searching for areas where I could get the best knowledge. Which knowledge would be perfect for this village? I went to Israel to study agriculture. But when I went to Israel, I found out that the technology they had was [too] advanced to fit our local activities, which was really very hard. These are small subsistence farmers. You go to Israel and see high tech. They are using the mechanized gadgets operated by computers. In my village, I think it's [inappropriate] to bring in computers. They don't know about the computer or those kinds of things. How do you come back and tell the people, "Now I want to change your living conditions" by introducing a technology which they were not going to use, by telling them about techniques which they are not going to use? Have you brought them something, or have you brought them nothing? They did not even appreciate your coming back to the village.

I went to Germany and studied environmental management. It was very useful because it was mostly based on the developing countries. But when you go abroad and look into the technologies, it's kind of hard. That's why our organization is focusing on nature, people, and appropriate technology. So, what kind of appropriate are we talking about? We are talking about a technology that we are bringing back to the people that is going to be very useful to them. When you go to America or wherever, look for a technology that you can bring back home and simplify to fit the situation, to fit the affordability of the people. I'm not looking to bring a technology of making cars. Look into solar. How can you come back home and modify that kind of solar technology that people can use in terms of energy? Some of our villages don't have electricity. They don't have

running water. They don't have good roads. They don't have all those kinds of infrastructure. They don't have good clinics.

Applying to the UCSC Farm and Garden Apprenticeship Program

I met with some friends and they advised me that there's a place you can go to in California, in Santa Cruz. One of them had been here and studied as an apprentice whereby he did organic farming. Immediately when he told me about it, it was something that I was very much interested in. I went ahead and applied for this course, and then I was called to go.

Farmer: Did you do this over the Internet?

Kasozi: At that time I didn't even know how to use an email (laughter). So I couldn't use the Internet. And what was very funny when I came here at the Farm, it was my first time to come to America. There was this lady with whom I was studying, Rebecca. She asked me, "What is your email address?" I asked her, "What do you mean by email address? I'm just a small boy from Africa. How can you ask me about an email?" (laughter) So she offered to help me make an email. I told her, "This is my first approach to use a computer. I've been using my pen and typing, you know." She said, "Let me help you." And that's why you see that my first email address was `smallboyfromafrica@yahoo.com`. That's how it came about. That's what was happening. So I just wrote, actually. I didn't use email. I wrote a letter to these guys saying "Hey, I want to come," on paper. It came by post office and I was waiting for the reply.

Farmer: That must have taken awhile.

Kasozi: Yes. But I did it. And it happened.

Farmer: So, somebody from the Farm saw your application? Or was it just a letter?

Kasozi: I wrote a letter and asked if I could apply, and then they sent me the forms to fill out. Actually, it took like three months to do those kinds of things, because I applied late. I think my application came in late, but eventually they managed to call me.

Farmer: Did they help you with funding?

Kasozi: Yes. Of course, to be a student. I wouldn't even have had the money to come here. I guess at that time they had some kind of sponsorship. They were sponsoring two students from Africa. So we came in under that scholarship.

Farmer: So there was somebody else that was from a different part of Africa?

Kasozi: Yes. There was someone from Kenya. But I don't think he went back to Kenya. I think he lived here. That has been my biggest problem. [People] go somewhere, get some knowledge, and then keep that knowledge in that country. Many people go abroad and they study and they never come back! They stay there. That's a loss to your people, because the people have hopes in you, and they are giving you money to go and bring back the knowledge. But then, unfortunately, because there's good living you decide to live there and keep the knowledge locked there. I don't believe in that. I don't think that's very useful to many African people. When I came down here, I looked at the Farm and

everything—all the knowledge that they’ve got. I just packed everything and said, “I’m taking this back to Africa so that people can see what they can choose. We might not use everything one hundred percent, but at least seventy-five percent is being used, and is relevant, and people are benefiting.” That is very important for us.

Farmer: Well, the climate is different, right? For growing?

Appropriate Technology and Agriculture in Uganda

Kasozi: Yes. The climate is very different. You don’t have so much rain. We don’t have this kind of technology whereby you have water and irrigation. Most of the people depend on rain.

Farmer: Instead of irrigation.

Kasozi: Instead of irrigation. But some time back, I read some books on drip irrigation, on different types of drip. So we have introduced the technology in my village of drip irrigation.

Farmer: In case it doesn’t rain, right? Or is there a dry season?

Kasozi: Yes. We have a wet and a dry season. We don’t have summer, then winter—these kinds of seasons. We have a wet and dry season. When it’s raining, it’s raining. When it’s sunny, it’s so much sunny, and everything is dry. So in order for our people to continue growing vegetables, continue looking after their gardens, we are introducing a technology whereby people can pump water out of the ground, or any source of water, and then it creates gravity within some

tanks so that gravity will push water to the drip so that people can start the dripping to their plants.

Farmer: So that's without electricity?

Kasozi: Yes. There's no electricity being used today. It's only manual.

Farmer: How do you pump it out of the ground?

Kasozi: We have manual pumps. People are using their legs. They just pump some keys, and everyone can pump. There are also some round pumps where people are using their hands. What's important is to draw it to a bucket or a tank, so the gravity from the tank can push water to the drip.

Farmer: So, it's like a bicycle?

Kasozi: Yes. Kind of. There are lots of current technologies that CETRUD has come up with so that people would be able to pump water, and be able to use that water for their gardens, or for their home use. Sometimes you'll find a village where they've dug a well, but they don't have the technology of cleaning the well; they don't have the technology of pumping the water. We are involved in such a kind of technology. We don't have so much money to do that, but we try as much as possible with the available resources to make sure that people have water they can use.

Farmer: An appropriate technology, meaning at the level that they can work with.

Kasozi: Exactly. What CETRUD means by appropriate technology—we mean a technology that easily can be used by the people, and is affordable, and can be maintained by the people, rather than seeking technology that is high tech. We have lots of technologies that people have brought to Africa, but within a year it breaks. There're no spare parts. There's nothing. The first example is a borer. People bring a borer, and there's so much money spent on it. They dig it and within a year it's dry. It's not working. It's a technology they use big vapors to dig deep, deep, deep and put in pipes and such. They pump water. But within a year it doesn't work anymore. There're no spare parts. There's nothing.

Farmer: Is that because it's metal, and the metal corrodes?

Kasozi: Yes, it's all metal and it corrodes. And sometimes it breaks, and you need spare parts, but there are no spare parts. They are not available there.

Farmer: So is this is something that gets donated?

Kasozi: Yes. Exactly. Much of this is donated by UNICEF, by big organizations. But what we are looking to do, for example, we need to protect springs; we need to dig our own wells and then have certain technologies which can pump water. We have lots of sources of water, but the gravity schemes are very expensive. You need lots of money to run water to a village of 52,000 people. One village where we are operating, the population is 52,000 people, so we recently submitted a project to making a gravity water scheme which needed \$120,000, which we could not find. So we still depend on our own technologies to work with the canal water.

Centre for Environmental Technology and Rural Development

Farmer: Can you say more about your organization?

Kasozi: Centre for Environmental Technology and Rural Development [CETRUD] is the non-governmental organization that operates in the Rwenzori Region. It was initiated in 1997 with a group of professionals that included agriculturalists, environmentalists, teachers, and rural advocates.

Farmer: Were they all Ugandan?

Kasozi: Yes. We were all Ugandans who had just come out of school. The main purpose was to address poverty, appropriate technology, environmental issues, and be able to bring services nearer to the people. CETRUD's mission is communities that are free from poverty, disease, and illiteracy, who are sustainably managing their own resources. CETRUD's mission is to improve human life, the environment, and give tangible hope to poor people in Uganda. We focus on people, nature, and appropriate technology. It all rotates. We all work together. There is no way you can [talk about] the living conditions of the people [without] also focusing on environment. You may improve the condition of living, but what about nature? You can't ask people to destroy nature for their own living. What about tomorrow? So, whatever we try to do, we try to relate it together.

Farmer: In a holistic...

Kasozi: Exactly. For example, we come from an area where we have protected areas, national parks: these are forests, these are mountains. We have three national parks in one district of Kasese. People would want to destroy that nature for their own living. We have lots of other educational programs, and the government also has their own rules—don't touch, don't do this or that. But we've been asking the government, "Don't tell people like that. First and foremost, everyone will tell you that our own grandparents owned this forest. Our great-grandparents owned this park. So, you came back and put your boundaries because of the British, you know?" When the British came to Africa, they decided to make all these kinds of rules, areas protected, like Queen Elizabeth's National Park. It belonged to the queen a long time ago, of England. But now people say, "This was our land!" You remember sometime back in Africa people used to say that Speke discovered Mount Rwenzori; Speke discovered this; [Queen] Victoria discovered this. But for sure, it was not about the discovery; it was about the first white man to see it. You see?

Farmer: Yes.

Kasozi: These white British people came and asked, what's the name of this river? Someone was carrying a basket passing by and said, "There's nothing. *Simulikantu*." But because the language was so difficult when this woman said "*Simulikantu*," this man thought the river was called *Samiliki*. But the woman just meant there was nothing in the basket she was carrying.

Farmer: Oh, no. (laughter)

Kasozi: Most of the names came from people locally who were living there. So that's why we try as much as possible to protect those areas. Then you can improve the condition of living for the people.

Farmer: How long have the British been there?

Kasozi: Well, the British were there for a long, long time, since the 1880s. Uganda got its independence in 1962, which was not a long time ago. And we've been working hard to strive, and see how best we can put things on the ground ourselves.

Farmer: What I'm wondering is, are there people that know the original names of those places?

Kasozi: It wasn't a protected area at that time. It was just a free area where people used to go hunting. It was a forest, a nature place. People used to go there to collect firewood. People are living there. That's why recently it's just coming back that people should start benefiting from the protected forests; people should start benefiting from the national parks. Twenty percent of the money which comes from tourism is coming back to the people, to make sure people can benefit from it by building schools, building roads, things like that. People should also continue collecting dead wood.

Farmer: How do people cook?

Kasozi: In most of the villages in Uganda we use firewood for cooking. But CETRUD also has a program for improved cooking stoves. We are trying to find

a way where women, or everyone who's cooking, can try as much as possible to save wood. There's lots of wood going when you're using cooking stoves. With the improved stoves, you can have three saucepans cooking in one place using the same wood. But with three stoves you always push firewood directly, and there is lots of smoke. There're lots of problems that women have been facing in Uganda, so we try as much as possible to make sure that as much as we are talking about improving standards of living for the people, let us also have some facilities that can help these women prepare their food. Then they can prepare healthy food, good food for their families.

Farmer: If there's not refrigeration, there's probably a problem of not being able to keep food more than a day or so, right?

Kasozi: Yes. Actually, it's very rare for people to keep food. People keep food for hours in this country. But also, you must know that before the African conquests, people had their own indigenous knowledge. People can dig down and create their own fridges. People used to know how to make water cool. They used to put pots on the side of the house, and the water could cool down. People used to have the drying places where they could dry up some food, like corn, where they could keep it for some days. People used to have granaries. I remember when I was growing up, we used to have millet, sorghum, maize kept in the granary. It was food security. But to be honest with you, now all those things are gone. The knowledge is gone because we are trying to adopt British technology. We are trying to develop. We said these things are useless. But I believe that indigenous knowledge was very, very important. For example, with our granaries, people

used to keep food. But at this moment, you've got many families—people are keeping nothing. People grow a season, and they sell everything. They are no longer keeping food the way it used to be. People could prepare and say, "Maybe drought is going to come. Maybe this season's not going to be so good. So let's prepare. Let's have food in our granaries. Let's have our own food." But now, whatever they grow, they sell.

We are trying as much as possible to see how best can we bring back the indigenous knowledge. How best can we turn back the people to start thinking of keeping food? Recently, during our trainings, we are asking our people, "If we asked you to stop growing anything, how long are you able to live?" Someone told us if they stopped today, they wouldn't have any food in a week. They don't have any food stored. I think we need to go back and start thinking how best can we ask start asking people to restore what they used to do.

Farmer: Do they save seeds?

Kasozi: Seed saving has been a very big problem. That's why we are starting now from the seeds we have been getting. You need also to understand that the government policies have not been very favorable to farmers, these policies whereby you need to buy seeds every season. Sometimes we are even scared about bringing GMOs back into Uganda. It's encouraged by having to buy seeds every season, so the seed companies can make money out of farmers. But there's a need for these farmers to start thinking ahead, to start thinking how best they can start saving their own seed. We have a program at CETRUD on our agriculture section where we are encouraging farmers to save their own seed.

They can even reduce their costs. Because you can't buy seeds every season, every season.

Farmer: And that's your profit right there.

Kasozi: Yes.

Farmer: So, the village— the area you're talking about serving has 52,000 people? Or are there several areas?

Kasozi: Actually, I was just now focusing on one village where we have an agricultural training place. But CETRUD has grown. We started small, but now we are serving in three districts with a population of 1.6 million.

Farmer: Wow.

Kasozi: We have been advancing still on a small scale, but we are talking now about developing a number of people in different projects. We are focusing on agriculture, environmental management, health issues, HIV/AIDS, and poverty eradication. We are also talking about appropriate technology, where we are bringing in tools from the UK to help the people. We are focusing on the youth, women. We are providing sewing machines, used sewing machines, hand tools, so people can start to earn a living in groups. We are grouping them. This is done up in the Rwenzori region. This is the same area where we are initiating a program called Save the Rwenzori. Save the Rwenzori is aimed at, how can we work together? Let's talk about government; let's talk about communities; let's talk about churches; let's talk about everyone to save our region.

The ice is melting. The glacier is melting. And people have cut all the trees from the mountain. People have used it for firewood. People have used it for timber. People are no longer growing things that are coming up in the proper way. They have cut all the trees around the boundaries, so these rivers are washing all the soil away when they fill up. There're lots of problems in terms of soil management. Conservation is no longer being done, so we need to act very fast. If we don't act, nobody's going to act on our behalf. Nobody's going to look into the problems we are going through. So we came up with an initiative. We are asking the government. We all know the government is supposed to provide services, but they don't have means to do that, like maybe in other developed countries or whatever, because these governments are very poor.

Farmer: You mean they don't even have trucks to drive out there.

Kasozi: Yes. But we need to work together as the people who are concerned, as people who are affected. We know that the Rwenzori is for everyone in the whole world, but the nearest person who is affected so much is benefiting from it. We need to develop programs which can help the people plant their own trees so they can have their own wood lots. We need to help the people so they can access and have their own timber, so we can reduce the pressure on these protected areas and on this mountain. Because if the pressure continues, there will be no tomorrow. The future generations will have nothing to see if we don't solve these problems.

Farmer: Are there major urban areas in the region that you're talking about, or is it all rural?

Kasozi: There're a number of urban areas which we call our towns. There's also lots of trouble in towns. Infrastructure, the sewage. There's a lot of trouble. CETRUD is tackling a number of things. Recently we decided to become partners in urban management. All the greenbelts have been drawn now, and CETRUD is going to be taking care of greenbelts. We are also taking care of environmental issues, planting trees in the hills which are in urban areas. It's hard. We are trying. We are trying as much as possible to focus on lots of issues. We are educating the people about how they can live in urban areas. Because the sewage system is very poor. The garbage collection, the garbage dumping. We are involved in educating the people so they will be able to sort out garbage, put, for example, the [toxics] in bags, which have been very harmful to our area. They just throw it anywhere. So we say, "Please, let's be concerned for everyone. Once you collect the garbage and put it in the right place, you won't have any problem." You hear about the breakout of cholera. You hear about lots of mosquitoes. It's breeding in town, with the sewage tanks open, the mosquitoes just breeding. That's why you hear of lots of people dying of malaria, lots of people dying of cholera.

Farmer: Do you get dengue too?

Kasozi: Yes. It's very common to see these kinds of things. And also in the urban areas, that's where most of the HIV/AIDS is coming from, because people don't have jobs. Women are selling themselves because they have no money. Poverty rounds up all the problems that are coming out in Africa. Young girls can't afford to go to school so they can have a better education. So what they decide to

do is to come to town and start becoming—you know—someone who has the money just goes around and just starts doing these kinds of things.¹ If there was some funding, those kind of young girls would be able to afford to go to school and they would obtain a better knowledge of how to live. It's a very big problem that is affecting people in urban areas. But we are there, and we are talking about how best can we sort out those issues with other groups that are operating in urban areas.

Farmer: Are you able to provide jobs through CETRUD for local youth, like, say, planting trees and things like that?

Kasozi: Yes. We are doing that. We are providing jobs. Because we don't have much money, we decided to use volunteers, who are very useful. But at this time CETRUD is discussing with the big companies who are big polluters. We are approaching it in a different way. For example, a big cement factory that employs so many people. There's copper mining; there's the cobalt industry. Those are the biggest polluters in our district. So we have brought those people to the meeting and asked them to help the local people in terms of providing jobs. Our main approach was, we have to sue these people. We see how they are polluting, but we can't win. In Uganda or in a developing country, it's very hard to win in such a war. They have better lawyers. They have money. And they are paying high taxes to the government, so the government is on their side. How are you going to win a case with them in court? Yet you are acting on behalf of the people. People are being affected. People are getting cancer. There is lots of pollution. But the best way that CETRUD is fighting this war, after realizing that

you can't take them to court and ask them to pay the people, is to ask them to bring back benefits to the people. It's to ask them to start sponsoring projects on HIV, on income-generating, on tree planting. That way the polluter pays. It doesn't work very well in Africa. But there's a way that you can get those people to give back for what they are polluting, to bring back some money which can go back to the community. We are trying to negotiate a partnership between us and the local councils so that we can approach these big companies and bring back the money to the people.

Farmer: Here they get a tax break for that. They don't have to pay as high of taxes if they provide those kinds of programs. I don't know if you have those kinds of incentives.

Kasozi: Well, I don't know. Uganda has good incentives today. Investors. Sometimes I'm so annoyed with our government because they look so much into investors as important people, that they forget their own people. One of the things that annoyed me when I talked to the minister was we have this donation of a container of tools—sewing machines, carpentry equipment, construction and whatever—which is coming to the real local people: to the youth, the women who are very poor, who are trying to make a living. The government wants us to pay taxes on that container of donations, when someone bringing one hundred containers for constructing a big factory is not paying any taxes, and he's going to make money out of us. He's going to be selling cement to make money. He's not paying taxes. It's a challenge. It's kind of annoying. This is the local people. We're going to tax the local people, and they are just people who want to make a

living. So, does the government care about a poor person? It makes me not happy. The government should be able to look into all those issues and should be able to help their own people rather than only thinking about investors.

Some time back, the government itself, with the president's blessing, they were intending to give away a forest, a forest which has been there so many years, so that the Indian investor could grow sugar cane. He's an Indian investor from India who was coming to Uganda because they have lots of money and they can take down the forest to grow sugar cane. But what was very good for the people of Uganda was that everyone woke up and said "No. This can't happen. This was our great-grandparents' forest. It has been here. We can't let it go like that. You are the president. You are here because of us. If you are here because of the investor, let us know. If you feel you support the investors more than us, it's our vote that will show you that the investor can't put you to be president of Uganda. It's us who are putting you [in office], and you should act on what we want, not on what he wants. We can't allow you to give away this forest. We are even going to boycott sugar made by that company. We are not going to drink sugar made by that company. We already have five companies that provide sugar. Why should we go ahead and give away our forest?" There were lots of demonstrations. There were lots of people saying no. And it worked. Lots of people learned from that and lots of people said, "Yes, that is what we wanted."

Farmer: That's great. That's democracy. That's people on the street. They demonstrated. Was it violent?

Kasozi: Well, at one point it became violent because they wanted to kill the Indians. So it was kind of bad, but it was controlled. But it showed us that we are now reaching the next stage of saying the environment is very, very important.

Farmer: That's great. So, the forest, is it a rainforest?

Kasozi: It's a rainforest. It's a very big forest. It's the best forest. And the people said, "No, why should we give it away?" Some of the forest commissioners resigned, to show solidarity to the people that they care. Because if you are a forest commissioner and you accept your forest to go, that means you don't need your job. (laughter)

Farmer: So it's a rainforest and Uganda is on the equator.

Kasozi: Yes, Uganda is on the equator. Uganda has lots of belts of rainforest up there. You take the passes down to Lake Victoria.

Farmer: So are there certain kinds of wood that people can grow for firewood that are better to grow for firewood than others?

Kasozi: Yes. There are lots of types of wood, like eucalyptus, casuarinas, acacia, jacaranda, melia. There's wood that people can grow for easy access of wood. We try to plant lots of trees which could help the people have firewood first. We plant, for example, lots of *Leucaena* and *Calliandra*, trees which do well in agroforestry, and also nitrogen-fixing plants. So people can benefit from nitrogen; they can benefit from fodder for the animals, and they can still get the firewood.

Farmer: So the tree grows and they just take off branches. They thin the tree but they keep it growing.

Kasozi: Yes. Exactly. They keep it growing.

Farmer: Did you learn this at the UCSC Farm, or did you learn this somewhere else?

Kasozi: Well, originally, I was an agronomist. I did agriculture. Here (in Santa Cruz) you don't learn so much about the trees that are in Africa. You learn about leguminous plants, which can be used to fix nitrogen in the soil. But most of the things I've done because of community forestry, which I also did in Kenya. I worked as a researcher for three months. I worked with the Kenyan Forestry Research Institute. It was very important for me to be there and to do more work. They have been very good in agroforestry. That's why even ICRAF [International Centre for Research in Agroforestry] is best in Nairobi.

From the UCSC Farm and Garden to Uganda: Sustainable Agriculture

Farmer: So what did you learn at the Farm here that you've been able to apply?

Kasozi: Well, when you look into the whole teaching lessons at the Farm, the whole system, actually there's nothing you can leave [out]. You look into the soil management; you look into the integrated pest management. You look into the crops. You look into the water system. You look into the orchards. You look into herbal growing. You look into all those kinds of things. I just took a package back to Uganda. Even our demonstration center is based on the lessons that I got from

the Farm and Garden here. So we are very successful. We are the first people who have brought up a number of vegetables in our villages. To be honest, culturally, we didn't have lots of vegetables in my country, apart from beans. That's what someone would tell you. Now we are eating vegetables which have been brought due to our initiative. Even the district appreciates our initiative. We are promoting lots of vegetables in the area. We are still having difficulties with people eating low green plants, for example, lettuce. So they are coming up slowly eating it, but in our culture nobody eats the low vegetables. They say it's like eating sand. This was not there. They didn't have it and they didn't know about it. They didn't really know that you can eat fresh things like that.

Farmer: You have to be able to wash it.

Kasozi: Of course, you can wash it. People have some water where they can wash it. But it's that it wasn't in our culture. They have never known about it. People used to eat lots of fruit. But it's something new and something very important. It's also education. For example, people need to know what can they gain out of eating such a kind of vegetable or such a kind of fruit, or what. Once someone knows the importance of that particular vegetable they say, "Oh, I need it!"

Farmer: So, which ones grow easily?

Kasozi: Oh, the squash, the beans— Most of the types of vegetables here grow there. The only thing that failed was the Brussels sprout because it needs the cool

to grow. But most of the vegetables you have here do well in Uganda. We don't have any difficulties.

Farmer: Oh, that's good. And tomatoes even?

Kasozi: We have lots of tomatoes. Actually, the vegetables in Uganda were mostly the tomatoes, onions and carrots. Those were the things which have been there for quite a long time. And beans.

Farmer: What do people like the best?

Kasozi: People like squash. Swiss chard has been very wonderful for many people because it's very easy to grow and people can eat the leaves.

Farmer: Does it fit with the traditional recipes?

Kasozi: Yes. People used to have greens, like dodo which is amaranthus. So now they can supplement it with the squash, with the Swiss chard, with other kinds of leaf growing vegetables.

Farmer: Now, they don't have a lot of animals at the UCSC Farm, right?

Kasozi: Meat is culturally something that is respected. At least everyone needs to eat meat over the weekend. And you'll hear there's a [dish] called the called Sukuma Wiki, because it pushes [the meals to last] from Monday through Friday. It [uses] coriander. So on Saturday and Sunday we are able to eat at least meat, or something good. When we look into our background, people are working from Monday through Saturday. They don't care. They aren't even dressed up. But on

Sunday people are dressed up, going to church; people are visiting each other. That's when they need to kill an animal. That's when they are all killing chickens, so they can all benefit from what they are eating.

Farmer: From the protein.

Kasozi: From the protein. People have been eating vegetables. Also, it was like eating vegetables means poor families, economically dependent on beans. They're not changing anything—beans, beans, beans. Monday up to Sunday, Monday up to Monday. So they would like to change. If you came to my house and I fed you beans, that would show that I was not respecting you, or I'm really very poor that I can't even afford to buy you a kilo of meat.

Farmer: So when you came here to be an apprentice (you were telling the story the other day at the reunion) was it a vegetarian kitchen?

Kasozi: Yes, it was a vegetarian kitchen. It was very strange because I had never lived in a vegetarian kitchen in my life. I asked, "What do you mean by vegetarian? Do you have any meat here?" They also had herbal tea. I was a one-hundred-percent user of black tea. I saw these guys drinking lemon verbena. I asked them, "Are you normal? What is happening to you? How can you drink only grass?" (laughs) Because it really is something that we've never seen, something we don't know. I said, "I need to try this grass and seed." At first I refused even to drink it. I said, "I need black tea. That's what I need." And they went and bought black tea for me. It was very strange. Everything was very strange, I have to be honest with you.

Though you study agriculture and agronomy, you don't go deeper to see what you are studying. You don't do it practically; you don't see it. When you come to this farm it's actually hands-on. You bring your hands to the soil. This business of theory, you forget about it. You even eat what you are growing. Whereby in Uganda I did not find such a kind of practical thing happening. So many people will tell you, "I'm a graduate. I have a degree in agriculture." But sometimes they know nothing apart from theory.

Farmer: They don't know where their food comes from?

Kasozi: Yes. When I was here, I took a picture of a big farm of cabbages and strawberries. I took it back to Africa. Someone asked me "Are you sure these cabbage pictures are normal? Is it true? Can someone be able to grow cabbages like this?" I said yes! It was in Watsonville or somewhere. Someone said, "No. It cannot happen." I told them it was not plastics. (laughter)

So, back to the Farm. I found that these people had lots of good, good ideas that I really needed to take back to Uganda. I encouraged many people to start approaching farming in such a way, because everything you grow there is very useful. Talk of leguminous plants; talk of vegetables; talk of herbs; talk of fruits. When you go back to Uganda, at our farm you will find all those things. We have introduced herbs that people had never seen. But the challenge now is to start making medicine out of those herbs so people can prove they are very useful. One time we introduced *Moringa oleifera* which is a tree that came from India. *Moringa oleifera* is a very useful tree in terms of medicine. It cures a lot of disease. It cures some symptoms of HIV/AIDS, some symptoms of fever. It does lots of

work. It increases nutrition. You use the leaves. You use the bark. It's a very, very useful tree. Now they are planting *Prunus africana*, which is a medicinal tree which cures cancer. We are planting *Worbugia ugandaensis* which is a tree that cures cough, head and fever. We are looking into how best we can bring those services in here. How people can access them. How someone can have it. If you approach medicinal plants, and if you can have them in your garden, then you can start treating some of the diseases yourself.

Farmer: So you're saying that people's individual gardens have a variety of herbs and vegetables that people can eat, and trees that are medicinal.

Kasozi: Yes. We are trying as much as possible to promote that. We are trying as much as possible to make sure that a family can be sustained if they have all those kinds of varieties. Our type of food is bananas, but you can't only depend on bananas. Eighty percent of a banana is just water. You need to look at what other proteins and what other vitamins you can get from other vegetables. We say a sustainable home should have the following: 1) they should grow trees around their land for agro-forestry purposes, for firewood, for nitrogen and for timber in the future. 2) They should grow vegetables for both home consumption and sales. 3) They should have animals for milk and for sale. They should have chickens. And also the manure which can go back and feed the land. As much as possible through our trainings, we encourage our farmers to have necessities that could help them.

If you have chicken, and if you have all those other vegetables as well, you can't fail to make money which can send your kids to school. You can't fail to have

good nutrition in the home. You have milk. You have vegetables. You have bananas. You can grow all those kinds of things. And people in their orchards, they are growing pineapples.

It's so encouraging for me to go back and look into where we were six or seven years ago. People come back and say, "Well, thanks very much for what you have been doing for us." But not everyone is so committed. There are still many other lazy youths that we are fighting on the street. We say, "Instead of going into town to look for a job, when your father has land, go ahead and grow a, b, c, d. There is no single day when you are going to tell me you are poor when you have nothing to sell. There's no single day you're going to tell me that you can't afford to have any food, when you are lazy. You have land, and you can grow it. There is no single day that you're going to tell me that you don't have money to go to the clinic, when you are not making any money from anything." We tell the people that poverty can be fought in many ways.

Farmer: The land is good, arable, where most people live?

Kasozi: The land is still okay. We only need to have knowledge of how we can maintain our fertility. Some people are still very lucky they can find animal manure. They can make their own compost and be able to feed the land. Some people are living near water, only they don't have technology where they can tap that water and get it to their crops. Some people are still living in swamps where they can even make their own fish ponds. So land is not a problem, only some places where there has been lots of population pressure.

Population Pressures and Domestic Violence

The population has increased. People have lots of children. It's really sometimes annoying to me as an individual. I happen to have one son, but I'm looking after twenty-seven orphans. Many friends of mine help take them to school, though it's very difficult. I don't have property of my own. Everything is community property: the house, the land. I've given away everything I have to give to the people so that they can use it. You find that a family has twelve, eighteen children. People do not have any family planning. It is so difficult to take care of all those children. And what annoys me so much: some families, you'll find a man buying a half kilo of sugar and a half kilo of meat when he has twelve or thirteen children. He orders his wife to cook that meat for himself, to be the only one who should drink sugar. Whereas the kid needs that meat, needs that sugar more than himself. The kid is the result of his own making! The kid did not just come into the world without him and his wife making that kid. It so much annoys me, and I've been telling many men, "That's being irresponsible." For example, leaving your home, you eat in a hotel, you come back home and there's no food. When the woman asks you, you start beating her. It's so annoying to find those situations happening.

Farmer: Will the men talk about it?

Kasozi: Well, we are happy that some men are changing. Some are changing not because they want to, but because of the law. The law has been put in place to protect women. But some women, because of the culture, don't even report the violence which is taking place within the family. There's lots of domestic

violence happening in the homes, but very few women are willing to report it, because of cultural issues. A man is a man. But there are many women who are reporting those issues and are being helped.

We are also coming from a Christian background. As much as people say Christianity is good, it's not one hundred percent. There're lots of problems that have been caused because of Christians. And there're also lots of problems that have been solved because of Christianity. So, it's two ways. Sometimes we find that Catholics don't want to practice family planning, don't want to use condoms. It's challenging to make sure that you bring those people into a standard where they can understand all those issues.

Farmer: Without feeling like they're going against their religion.

HIV/AIDS

Kasozi: Exactly. Some people in my culture are too religious. They will do anything to die for Christianity. They have too many children. Those babies are suffering. Those babies are causing trouble for other families. You'll find in my country that there's no grandmother, no aunt who's not taking care of someone else's kids because a daughter died of AIDS, or a son, or whatever. The kids I'm looking after, they've lost both their parents. They have nowhere to go. It's so difficult. I don't even have enough money to take care of myself and my son, or whatever, because that's the problem. That's the backbone which is there.

Farmer: That's a crisis.

Kasozi: It's taken so long for people to understand. You look into our caretakers program. The women who have lost their husbands to HIV/AIDS, they still go out with other men and they are pregnant! You are running this program, you are trying to assist this family, but you come back and you find this woman pregnant. Why? "You know you have HIV/AIDS. You know you have six or seven kids. You don't have money to take care of them. Why do you go back and start making other kids when there's a risk? You have not considered that risk." It really discourages you, but you have to continue. You have to see how best to still talk to those people.

Farmer: How do you think the kids will change? Do you think that the kids can be educated?

Kasozi: Yes. How are we doing these changes? We are now starting to bring parents and youths together. One of the programs that CETRUD is doing with schools is to organize discussions. The kids have been trained very well. They're coming down and performing for their parents. In poems and drama, they are performing, and these issues are discussed. The young people are telling us about HIV/AIDS. We know it's the youth that are dying of HIV/AIDS. Then the youths will come up and say, "But you are my mother; you are my father. There is no single day you have ever opened up and said, 'My son, be careful of HIV/AIDS. Be careful of this.'" Because of culture, people are not talking to their children. People are not encouraging their children. "If I come [home] with a girlfriend, you [will] want to kill me." So they are doing things in hiding. It's not open at all. [They say,] "If I came and told you that I have a girlfriend, you would

want me to die. And even yourself, you will go to another woman when you have my mother here.” We all need to be open to each other so you can talk about this problem. If we hide it, we are going to die. It’s so much in this culture. These kids are working with their parents; they are working with the old people, to their farms. We organize these kinds of days. It’s very difficult to bring as many as possible, but we are trying to bring the youth to have open forums with old people so they can discuss those HIV/AIDS issues and discuss all other family-related issues.

Farmer: And you do it with drama?

Kasozi: Yes. We do it with drama, with poems, with lots of presentations.

Farmer: I’m sure that some of those young people will become leaders.

Kasozi: Yes. We are very sure that things are changing a lot. When you look into the situation, some people are going to school. They want to lead a better life, and they look to having so many kids as a problem. They have to do family planning. No one wants to get pregnant at school. It’s encouraging. Kids say, “I need to protect myself. If I’m going to have sex I need to use a condom. I have to be very careful with HIV/AIDS. I have to be careful about getting pregnant.” So it’s helping. It’s a gradual process. It’s a real gradual process. We know we are going to achieve success, but it will take time. We are always looking to what is going to happen tomorrow. You don’t give up. You continue encouraging people to make some changes.

Farmer: So you have one son?

Kasozi: I have one son who is now almost six years old. And he's going to school. He's called Blessing.

Farmer: Do you live in a rural area or an urban area?

Kasozi: I live in the rural area, but I don't really have a place to live. The office is in an urban area, but most of our operations are in the villages, so I'm always going everywhere.

Farmer: You move around.

Kasozi: (Laughter) Yes. I live everywhere, so it's kind of challenging. But it's something that I enjoy doing, especially working with the rural communities.

Farmer: It seems that you have so much to bring back from all the experiences that you've had. Your education programs are really appropriate to the transitions that people have to make.

Kasozi: Yes, that's true. When you are an educator, there are some principles which you must follow. One of the things is you don't one-hundred-percent take yourself as if you know. There are some things you don't know, but those people with the indigenous knowledge, they know.

Farmer: So you're also learning at the same time.

Working with the Community

Kasozi: Exactly. It's a two-way. Not only for you, because you've been going to school, you are so much aware. You can help them, improve on what they know.

That's why I believe in the saying: "You go to the people; you live with them. You learn from them, and you do it with them." Then they will be able to say, "We have done it ourselves." That is more sustainable than you saying, "This is the cup I want you to use." Or you want to ask them, "What can we use?" And then they will say, "There is a cup. Let's use that one."

Farmer: So, *they* have the idea.

Kasozi: Exactly. They are so much involved. If you just say, "Now, I've come to this village. What you need is bowls. What you need here is a community center. What you need here is this—" They will take it. They will take it. But at the end of the day, when that bowl breaks they will say, "This was Godfrey's bowl. Let him bring another one." But if you went there and assist their problem and say, "What do we need in this village?" they might say, "What we need here is a health center. We don't have a health center." "Well, what can we do to have a health center?" They will say, "We have local materials. We have stones. We have sand. But is there money to buy cement, to buy nails?" If you happen to find money to buy nails, to buy timber, then they get these local materials and they get local people to provide labor. That community will be sustainable. That health center will be sustainable. Then you say, "Can you contribute one hundred shillings per family so with this money you can keep on buying drugs and keep this health center going?"

So that's the approach CETRUD is using. We try as much as possible to involve the participation of the community. We work as a team. We look into everything. We look into the values of the people. We don't really look into: this is a woman;

this is a young person; whatever. We try to be equal. This woman, this elder, this youth—all these people are very important in terms of building success for the community.

Farmer: Each person has their part to play.

Kasozi: Exactly. You listen. You listen from each and every person, and you also encourage cooperation: cooperation between the local chiefs, cooperation between the leaders, cooperation between church leaders. You try to involve each and everybody's opinion. Unless you do that, it can't succeed.

Farmer: Is there a sense that people are pretty stable in the places they live and you're building on that, or do people move around a lot?

Kasozi: Well, moving around in Uganda is no longer there. It used to be, when people were still very few. We are looking at a population that has grown rapidly, from eighteen million to twenty-seven million in a period of ten years.

Farmer: Wow! Even with all the deaths?

Kasozi: With all the deaths: with war, with AIDS. You can imagine that. That's ridiculous.

Farmer: The youth population must be huge!

Kasozi: Youth population is very high. There has been lots of war, HIV/AIDS, killing people, people dying day and night. One of my friends said, "Godfrey, there's not a week in which you are not burying somebody in the village. But the

population is not decreasing. It's steadily increasing. What's this?" Then I asked him, "How many times do you go to the hospital and see how many kids are being born? So many kids have been born. And how many people are dying? So you must realize as the population pressure has continued growing, land has been growing smaller and smaller."

This is a resource base for every family. We have to start thinking: how can people live sustainably on small land instead of moving from place to place? The nomadic people, the people with cattle, were moving from place to place several times. But now they are fighting for land because you can't mix cattle with farming. They need more land. People need land for cultivation. So there's lots of war between the local people now themselves, you see?

Farmer: Yes.

Kasozi: So in Uganda, land is becoming a problem. Population has increased. People are moving from place to place. But they have to stop, because nobody's going to accept it. Once I have land here, I need to work hard to make sure that I benefit from my land. I'm not going to look for another plot of land, because you can't find it anymore. So it's very, very important.

CETRUD's Work with the Ugandan Government

Farmer: Did you tell us the other day that the government is getting interested in funding some of your programs?

Kasozi: The government is getting interested because we are now entering into a partnership. There is a program that is called “Triple P.” It is a public-private partnership which the government of Uganda has initiated. Through public-private partnerships, the first project we are doing with the government was agro-ecotourism. We came up with a strategic plan which we did with the local government of Kasese to make sure that we encourage tourists to look into Agro and Eco, not only to go to protective areas. We can start mapping out and defining areas where tourists can go to sleep and eat. There’s lots of coffee. People have never seen coffee; they’ve never seen vanilla. Let us find some gardens and farms which are very good where people can go and visit. People can spend money there. People can have vanilla tea; people can have herbal tea—whatever. So that’s what we’ve been working on with government recently.

Now there’s another project in alternative agriculture. We at CETRUD are producing through the farmers we have trained, where we are going to be supplying 80,000 to 100,000 seedlings. The same seedlings will come back to the people, but we shall breed [them] ourselves and get money funded by the government to do this kind of work because of the people we will benefit. Because they are going to produce those seedlings and they would be bought at a high rate, they will pay more money and they will still benefit from those seedlings. That’s the kind of partnership that we are doing with government. And CETRUD is involved in organizing all kinds of agricultural exhibitions. It shows us that the government now is listening. Once the government gives us a contract, we are telling the best way to find a market. I think the next step where CETRUD is moving is to start thinking about a marketing strategy.

Marketing Organic Food

Farmer: Are we talking export?

Kasozi: Yes. We are going to be working on the marketing strategy through our National Organic Movement. I was part and parcel of making this network exist in Uganda when I came from here. I've been part and parcel of establishing a number of networks: a sustainable agriculture network, an organic forum for discussions. I believe if we begin producing seedlings, training farmers, planting those seedlings, orchards, and people start producing mangoes and oranges organically, then we can move on to the step of looking for markets, which will also be organic markets. Then government will say, "Well, why don't we mark out such-and-such areas where they are one hundred percent organic areas, so when people buy the product they are assured they are organic?" But what's very important is to make sure we have markets for those products. If we don't have markets, it's another war between our organizations and the government. We are convincing the government that there will be a market for those products. What has discouraged the farmers in most cases in my country has been to grow a product and at the end of the day there's no market for it. So we have to be very careful with what we're doing. But we're doing lots of research towards that.

Farmer: So, right now do they have a local market that works? Can people come and buy and sell?

Kasozi: There are lots of local markets. For example, it's so encouraging that some of the mangoes we give to farmers, those few that grow them, they can sell a big mango locally for one dollar. That's locally.

Farmer: One dollar.

Kasozi: It's a very big mango. It's a new product that we produced. The problem will be, how long is this market going to be there now that we have encouraged more than ten thousand farmers to start growing these mangoes. (laughter) So the price has to fall. And once the price falls, then we will start looking for international markets in order to catch up.

Farmer: Are they shippable?

Kasozi: Yes, they are very much shippable. They are very good products. They are very sweet. They are really very good. We are hoping that we can still find markets in the international market. The other thing is to make sure that we are basing ourselves on quality and quantity.

Farmer: What about the processing? Like, you could make mango salsa or chutney, or something like that, and package it?

Kasozi: Well, what is happening is that most people are making mango juice. And everyone is very much interested in the mango juice. So we hope once the product is in place we shall be able to find a market for it in different ways. You can dry it. You can process it, and all those kinds of things. We are sure

something will be coming out of that. At this moment if someone complained to you, "I have no market for my mangoes," that would be a lie.

Farmer: Do you have cooperatives there?

Kasozi: Our cooperative system collapsed because of corruption.

Farmer: When was that?

Kasozi: Recently. That was in the eighties.

Farmer: It never developed again after that?

Kasozi: It is coming up now through the saving and credit cooperatives, things like that, coffee-growing cooperatives. We had very strong cooperatives which collapsed due to government. There was so much owned by government, also. But in our trainings, we don't so much believe in cooperatives. We believe in getting together for a cause, not putting people in a cooperative because they have to grow cotton, and once there is no market in cotton, they have to continue growing cotton. We don't believe in that. You can associate; you can be in a forum where you can discuss about marketing together, where you can discuss working together. One of the most important things we are thinking about is individual production, and maybe marketing together, rather than belonging to a cooperative whereby you are wedded to the cooperative, you have made your vow, "In poverty, in richness, we will always be growing cotton." (laughter) It's so discouraging to us to see that in the cooperatives where they are growing cotton, there's no way they can change objectives if they want to grow coffee, if

there's no market for cotton. But now people are free. They can join a cooperative where they can grow mangoes and other things. If that doesn't work out, grow something else. You don't really have to make an agreement with what you are growing. You can always change, depending on the marketing system, depending on what you can sell to the market. These are some new ideas based on our experiences, and how best people can change their way of living here.

International Exchange

Farmer: Do you invite guests from here or from other places to come and do trainings in your programs?

Kasozi: We very much welcome guests, volunteers and speakers giving our trainings. We have been hosting a number of volunteers from WWOOF², the organic movement, and we've hosted a number of people from universities, and people from other institutions, and NGOs and so forth, to come and help us, work with us in terms of implementation of projects, in terms of research. We also have taken some courses from USAID to help us develop some strategic plan for the agroecotourism. Now we're going to get another one to help us develop a very big program for culture. All those things have to be done to assure that we don't have problems in the future. It's very important to have a strategic plan for every component of what we are thinking of doing. It's a process. We bring all those people together, and we go through a process, so at the end of the day nobody will be blaming another person. Because we have seen a number of organizations which have come to an area to do something and they have not done it, and they end up having a conflict in that area.

Farmer: Oh, there's such a bad history of that. The projects tend to be two years, three years, and then they end. Is there a project (I think it's in Uganda) about wireless laptop computers?

Kasozi: I know about some Internet providers, but of course that costs a lot of money. You'd have to make computers available to many farmers, or you have a center. One of the things I've seen is a technology center in one of the villages. Then people can come there and check the prices. There's so much individual marketing in Uganda. When everyone is marketing individually, they set their own price. But when you're marketing together and you have a similar language, you can bargain together and determine the price.

Organic Certification in Uganda

Farmer: Do you have an organic certification board in Uganda?

Kasozi: Well, under the National Organic Movement of Uganda we are working around the clock to have certifiers in Uganda. But most of the companies that buy organic products, they bring their own certifiers because they are more comfortable with their own certifiers than our certifiers.

Farmer: Do you have to pay for that?

Kasozi: The company pays for them. It all depends on the marketing system, who is buying your products. Some big buyers say, "I want to be certified. I want to certify my coffee because my marketing strategy depends on the certification that I have, so I need some very organized companies from Europe and other

places who can come and do that.” But under our network of Uganda we are trying to have our own trained certifiers so they can be able to help our farmers and they can also be organized internationally.

Farmer: So they would advise the farmers on how to have organic certified crops.

Kasozi: Exactly. How do you grow these crops, what they need to go through, the distance they need to be from conventional farmers to be organic farmers—all those kinds of issues.

Farmer: What is your vision for the future of sustainable agriculture in Uganda?

Kasozi: Well, when you look into where Uganda is moving now, and where Uganda as a country has come from, my vision into the future: we hope many people are going to change from what they are practicing now into sustainable agriculture. Because for the first time, now the government is encouraging farmers to come into sustainable agriculture. It’s the first point that we are now achieving. But also, there are lots of hindrances which you must accept. One, if someone is going to grow organic and it will still be the same price, there’s not any incentive which is put towards that. It also discourages farmers. “I grow my tomatoes; I use high production to produce them as a sustainable agriculture farmer. Someone grows his tomatoes, he uses conventional production—we mark the same price. He makes more profit.” It has been some of the discouragement that many farmers have been facing. But with the Network of Sustainable Agriculture in Uganda, we are starting to think of asking some buyers, to convince them—that’s why we are now organizing lots of exhibitions

to tell farmers the difference between organic products and conventionally grown products, and the benefits which are there in eating organic products.

The health issues. So, people are looking into, “Oh, wow, if I eat something which is not chemically produced, I’ll be safe. Instead of spending so much money in the hospital, I better spend money by buying that product.” People are becoming aware. People are looking into the [conventional] farms. And people say, “Even my great grandparents used to grow these products without chemicals. These guys are killing us.” Once people become aware of the effects of the conventionally grown products and what they can gain out of the sustainably grown products, then the future of sustainable agriculture is going to be so great. But this is a war. You have to fight. And it’s a gradual process. People have to change gradually.

And also, you can use your own local materials without spending money. So, the knowledge is going on and the trainings that we are doing, we still need a lot of booster organizations, like donor-funded projects. We are asking if donors can put in money here rather than putting money in conventional farming. We hope we can achieve a lot. For example, CETRUD is coming up with a program for long-term trainers. We hope to train a number of trainers. But you have to find a lot of money to bring like one hundred people every year to your farm to train them. If you don’t have a lot of resources, it’s hard to do that. But if you can have the inputs, if you can have the money to do that, we hope that we will see sustainable agriculture as an initiative which is already taking place in Uganda, will catch up so quick. Many farmers will benefit from it.

Farmer: Is your biggest market in Europe, if you're doing export?

Kasozi: Yes.

Farmer: So, if there're big markets in Europe or Britain that want organic mangoes or something, maybe it would behoove them to make some donations for training people, because it's going to impact their sales and improve their sales. But it's the open market. It's not necessarily that they own your orchards.

Kasozi: Yes. As you say, there's an open market. There's a lot of competition. If Kenya is able to produce organic products cheaper, then you're better off buying it in Kenya rather than Uganda. But we're trying to make sure that we are also getting into the market and that people can come and buy from us. So it's a fight. There are many organic farmers all over the world who are producing for the organic market. So we must understand it, and we must have our goal looking toward quality and quantity. Some of the problem with us marketing internationally has been quantity and quality. You may have the quality, but you don't have enough products to bring someone to come and buy your coffee.

Farmer: Like to fill a container ship.

Kasozi: Exactly. You are talking of ten tons per annum, and someone is talking about two thousand tons. Buyers don't have to come to a country to buy a small quantity. They have to go where they can get enough to see a profit.

Developing a CETRUD Apprenticeship Program

Farmer: Do you have ongoing relationships with people from your time at the UCSC Farm and Garden that are connecting with Uganda now, and with your communities?

Kasozi: From time to time I've talked about it at UCSC. I'm glad that they've been so much in touch with me. But I need more than that. Recently I appeared on the cover of two of their study guides. But we are looking for more than that. To really make a follow-up, especially for people to go back and start to do the type of work that we are doing, we need them to start sending us interns, to start asking people if they are willing to come down. It's encouragement. I'd also be happy if these guys would come and check on what we're doing. They don't have that kind of follow-up. We need that kind of follow-up. You might not give me anything, but you coming from America to Kasese in Uganda to see what I'm doing, and those people I'm working with see these are the people who trained me, and the seed they gave me, I've planted, and it's generating lots of lots of seeds. It's very important, that kind of attachment. You feel you are still part and parcel of that farm.

If I was trained here and I'm able to do it in Africa, why don't you now look into the way to support me to do an original training? We have the capacity to do it, where we are, to bring people from Kenya, from Tanzania, from Rwanda, from Congo. We can do three months training. Is there a way that we can work it out with your university? You can even send me trainers. We can still do it down there. Therefore, we can benefit more people than what you benefit in a year.

You only bring one or two persons from Africa who get formal training in partnership with the Farm and Garden with the University of California. You see? Therefore we benefit more people regionally. But these things, they just come up. This is something I'm asking these guys if we can consider these things and work toward partnerships in that. They have published my articles in their newsletters. But now I want it to move to more than that. I want it to be published that we are looking for people to work with in Africa.

Farmer: That would be great.

Kasozi: Yes.

Farmer: And the WWOOF people come.

Kasozi: But they just come on their own.

Farmer: They just come to work. They don't come to teach.

Kasozi: Exactly. Yes. WWOOF has sent some very exciting guys who have come and have been instrumental. For example, a man called John came and did a profile. [By "profile" Kasozi probably means an article about CETRUD—Editor.] I had all the knowledge but he designed it. So these things are very important.

Farmer: Did he bring his own computer?

Kasozi: We have computers, actually. We have a very well-facilitated office. Our website is just coming up. Our website can tell you exactly what we are up to.³

Farmer: So this was somebody named John who came from WWOOF?

Kasozi: John was originally a WWOOFer. He was just a freelance volunteer, and there are others who said they would do lots of communications for us. We are also asking some organizations who have official volunteers about how best they can come and help us. We are going to get a woman who is going to come and do a film. All of this kind of information, you can pass it to people if you make a film of what you are doing and what other people can learn from you. We are also using plays and those kinds of things where the young people educate the elders about HIV/AIDS and those kinds of things. It's working out very well. People are learning a lot.

Farmer: And then Firelight Foundation is one of your supporters, here in Santa Cruz?⁴

Kasozi: They have been very supportive. Tonight I am having a party with them. Tomorrow I will be presenting some of the programs I have been doing. Yesterday, CETRUD was chosen in Uganda to host all the grantees—all the projects they are funding in Uganda—to come and study from the success stories that CETRUD has had. We took them through a whole week, so I will be making a report to them about what CETRUD does and they started. I also went to some of the projects in Northern Uganda where war has been. I'll be making a report on what I saw in Northern Uganda. They have been tremendous. I very much respect the Firelight Foundation and their many donors because they can listen and they can make some changes. Some donors are like, "Oh, this is what I want and that is what I want." But they are very unique at Firelight, the kind of people who really listen and give a little money and make a lot of change with the

money they give in Africa. That was a very big connection for me. That's what connected me to Firelight, was here in Santa Cruz. I met the director of Firelight who was working with the Global Fund for Women, Jennifer [Astone], before Firelight came in place in 2000; Jennifer knew me and wrote me and told me about the fund, and I applied. They have been funding me for the last five years. So that's something which is so encouraging.

Farmer: Well, thank you so much.

¹ CETRUD focuses quite a bit on fighting the prostitution of women and girls.

² Worldwide Opportunities on Organic Farms.

³ <http://www.cetrud.org/modules/content/index.php?id=4>

⁴ See <http://www.firelightfoundation.org/>