



# DEFENDERS OF THE PLANET-DEPLA

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ANNUAL REPORT 2022

## FROM CHAIRMAN BOARD

We present to you the integrated annual report, performance report and financial report for Defenders of the Planet.

In 2022, the operational focus was on tree planting, on training volunteers and project staff in Kahokya and Rukoki on nursery bed preparation.

DEPLA over the last decade has established itself as an organization committed towards implementation of various environmental projects. The organization has worked with multiple stakeholders: governmental bodies, media, private sector, international and national NGOs and multilateral organizations to create a platform and an understanding towards environmental degradation.

Consistent with the standards set by Defenders of the Planet-DEPLA, the Annual progress report for the year ending is always published early January, every year.

The style and pattern of this report is mostly usual with brief narratives, stories and visuals. We have observed that most of the readers do not read lengthy annual reports of NGOs, and therefore, this time, we have tried to further reduce the size of the report.

The report reflects good progress, physical and financial during the year. This was only possible due to committed staff and Board members.

Taking impetus from its previous work DEPLA this year articulated and highlighted issues of specific deforestation pressures at district level.

All have been successful due to the contribution of our Board members who have been always helpful in our efforts. Also, the real credit for our achievements during the reporting year should go to our village partners and our dedicated staff members who have played a big role.



**Bwambale William**



## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Defenders of the Planet enters into its sixteenth year (2023) with a remarkable confidence. With sharpened clarity on approach and improved knowledge and talent base, the organization is poised to leap ahead to cover other untouched areas.

With the turn of this year, I feel proud to present the Annual Report for 2022, which provides readers a glimpse of what we did and achieved this year through our effort.

During the reporting year, Defenders of the Planet continues to face operation challenges. We lack a truck which can transport our tree seedlings from nursery beds to planting areas. We also lack means of transporting our extension staff to the field for various activities. Due to this, DEPLA continues to depend on public and hired means of transport which is expensive and unreliable.

Another challenge was some of our staff leaving DEPLA after gaining great experience and joining other organisations for the reasons of looking for greener pastures.

Lastly, DEPLA continues to face a challenge of lack of constant and sustainable finance to run project activities as well as for administration.

DEPLA is a unique organization that makes a difference: indeed, it is an organization that is transparent. We don't have swanky offices, we don't have air conditioned land rovers and we work with volunteers and part time staff. Every cent we receive goes directly to our project work and this partly explains why we are able to use even a small amount of money to create a big impact to the communities we serve.

Funds are accounted for and spent transparently and in a manner that brings concrete and measurable results, we have Finance and Accounting Regulations, Constitution, Code of Conduct which all guides us in our operations.

I close again by thanking our financial partners who made the year 2022 a success because without your support we could not have achieved all in this report.

I strongly invite all those who can support us with actions and kind words, with means and good ideas, and with social endeavor and/or experience to share to join us as we strive to continue strengthening our work throughout the coming year 2023.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Masereka Selester', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Masereka Selester





*Project staff inspecting a tree nursery bed at Kinyateke*

## WHO WE ARE

Defenders of the Planet (formerly known as Rwenzori Environment Conservation Project) is a registered non governmental and non profit making environmental

organisation operating in Uganda.

DEPLA was founded in the year 2005 by concerned community members who saw a need to contribute to environment conservation due to current environmental challenges such as the issue of climate change, high deforestation pressures, threatened biodiversity among others.

DEPLA is registered as a non-governmental organisation (NGO) as well as registered as a company limited by guarantee without share capital.

## MISSION:

"Inspiring humanity to protect our planet"



**Image 1:** land degradation due to soil deforestation.

## VISION

"A world where everyone respects and takes a

responsibility to protect the environment"

### DEPLA OBJECTIVES

- a) To rise awareness on the relevance of environment conservation and management.
- b) To empower communities with technical expertise and trainings on natural environment conservation and issues of bio diversity and to ensure that the natural environment is used wisely and continues to be available for the benefit and enjoyment of the future generation.
- c) To conserve wetlands and river catchments.
- e) To promote tree planting, agro forestry and natural resource conservation to reverse the environmental degradation and to fight against climatic change.
- f) To conserve wildlife and biodiversity.



Image 2: A water catchment in danger

### MEMBERS OF BOARD AS AT 31<sup>ST</sup> DEC 2022

Masereka Selester  
Biira Stephanie,  
Mbalibulha Vincent,  
Kamanyire Janet,  
Bwambale Elisha Shem,  
Bwambale William,  
Baluku Joward,

**Auditors:** Nagenda and Co.

**Banker:** PostBank Uganda Ltd

## MEMBERSHIP

Membership to Defenders of the Planet is open to any person interested in furthering the organisation objectives. During the reporting year of 2022, membership was at 138 including local and foreign members. The membership had 63 Females and 75 males.



**Image 3:** Beneficiaries carrying trees for planting on their lands

## SPECIFIC DEFORESTATION PRESSURE

Uganda's forest resources have faced a lot of pressures and these pressures are below;

- Deforestation due to fuel for domestic use. Due to the fact that Uganda depends on firewood for cooking at home, this has led to the pressure on the existing forests. About 91% of Uganda's population depends on fuel wood for cooking, about 7% of Ugandans use Charcoal for cooking all these put forests at a high pressure. Only 2% of the populations use other means to cook and these are gas, electricity, etc.
- Deforestation due to high demand of fuel wood in factories. Trees are put on high pressure due to high demand by factories such as the Lime works Factories that use a lot of firewood for processing lime. Tea processing factories use a lot of firewood in the process of withering tea. All these industries use high volume of firewood every day.



- Deforestation due to brick burning. Burning clay bricks requires a lot of firewood and this has claimed a lot of trees. Every day trees are cut by brick burners which pose a high risk to our forests.
- Deforestation pressure by the construction industry; there is high demand of timber and poles by the construction industry. A lot of trees are felled due to high demand of timber and poles for both furniture and construction works.
- Deforestation pressure by firewood sellers, due to the fact that Uganda heavily depends on firewood, many people have engaged in the business of cutting forests for firewood in order to earn a living. Though this improves the lives of people by earning some money, they destroy the environment and this has contributed to climate change and the people have been affected by the effect of climate change
- Deforestation pressure by the agriculture sector. The population of Uganda is increasing at an increasing rate yet the land is not increasing. This has created high pressure on the existing forests, wetlands for cultivation of crops.



A pile of firewood for sale. High demand of firewood is increasing pressure on forests

## VICTORIES DESPITE CHALLENGES IN 2022

Defenders of the Planet-DEPLA implemented a tree planting for climate justice in Rukoki and Kahokya sub counties- Kasese District.

### SUMMARY:

The Tree Restoration Project was implemented in Uganda, in kahokya and Rukoki Sub Counties-Kasese District with an aim to provide 50,000 tree seedlings to the community members so as to restore the degraded lands.



The project involved raising tree seedlings in nursery bed in Kahokya and Karongo Parishes and after maturity, the tree seedlings were supplied to beneficiaries for planting on their lands.

Before transplanting, the project team headed by the forestry officer registered tree beneficiaries and surveyed their lands to identify how many trees each beneficiary need and the species suitable for the beneficiary's land.

### **SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN**

The following activities were accomplished;

- Prepared two nursery beds in Karongo and Kinyateke respectively
- Held 3 sensitisation meetings with beneficiaries and local leaders
- Registered 644 tree planting beneficiaries
- Surveyed land for tree planting farmers
- Training 13 community members on forestry and tree planting
- Transplanted 50,000 trees which included various species such as grevillea robusta, maesopsis eminii, eucalyptus grandis, senna spectabilis

### **PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS:**

- ❖ 50,000 tree seedlings were provided to farmers and have been successfully planted by beneficiaries who included schools, churches and community members. The tree species planted include Grevilea Robusta, Eucalyptus Grandis, maesopsis eminii and khaya anthotheca, etc.
- ❖ 1,000 beneficiaries submitted their applications in our office for tree seedlings and the project managed to supply 50,000 tree seedlings to only 644 beneficiaries. These beneficiaries are from the villages of Kapoko, Karongo, Buhaghura I, Buhaghura II Kathoma, Bughalitsa, Kahokya, Kintateke, Murambi, Kalhamia I and kalhamia II.

## CHALLENGES in 2022

Despite the above success, the year 2022 presented very many challenges but the major ones are;

During the reporting year, Defenders of the Planet continues to face operation challenges. We lack a truck which can transport our tree seedlings from nursery beds to planting areas. We also lack means of transporting our extension staff to the field for various activities. Due to this, DEPLA continue to depend on public and hired means of transport which is expensive and unreliable.

Another challenge was some of our staff leaving DEPLA after gaining great experience and joining other organisations for the reasons of looking for greener pastures.



DEPLA continues to face a challenge of lack of constant and sustainable finance to run project activities as well as for administration.

Volunteers arranging seedlings in nursery bed at Karongo

## OUR PARTNERS

The target which DEPLA achieved this year sounds quite stupendous. This was made possible only because we got significant support from a wide range of partners, donors, and other organizations.

### Key Supporters that strengthened us in 2022

-Kasese district local government

- Plant for the Planet
- Bunyangabu Bee Keepers Cooperative
- Rukoki Sub County Local Government
- Rural Integrated Development Services
- Kahokya Sub County local government
- Ngeya FM
- The Margaret Hayman Charitable Trust
- The charcoal project

### Our Team

In 2022, Defenders of the Planet was manned by a team of 138 members, who were experienced social workers, environmentalists, accountants, agriculturalists, health experts and dedicated paraprofessionals. They are truly the life-blood of the organization, keep it invigorated and growing. Driven by DEPLA's values and commitment to excel in the field of environmental conservation, the team members served as the backbone of all the projects being implemented by it in partnership with other organizations. Our team is gender balanced and it is ensured that no one is discriminated on the basis of race, religion or gender.



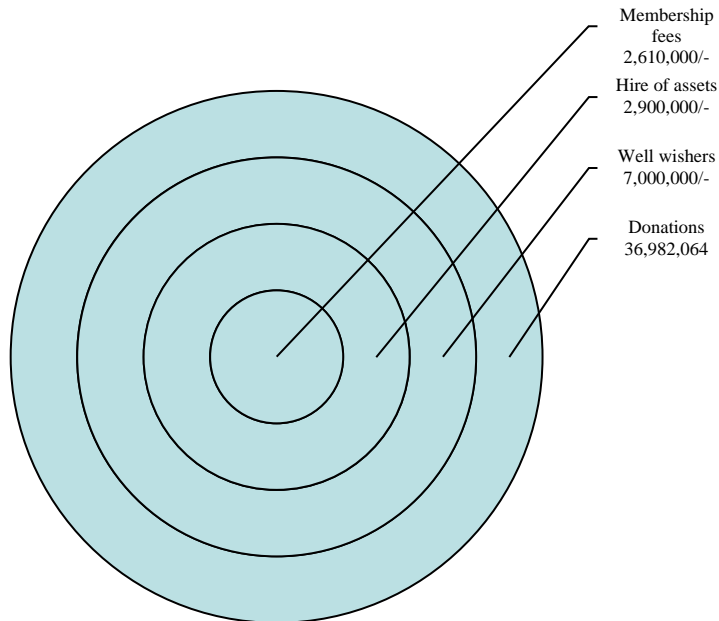
*Project staff inspecting a planting plot*

### FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

This section gives a summarised financial information in general at a glance pertaining to the year 2022.

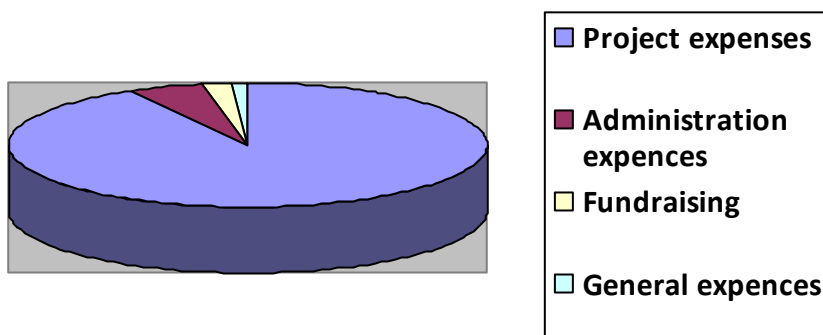
It is not an audited accounts as the audited accounts takes not less than two months in audit and certification of the same while this annual progress report is furnished in two weeks on the completion of every financial year.

However, information provided in this section represents the true financial picture of DEPLA during the reporting period. In our practice, audited accounts and balance sheet duly audited by the Certified Accountants are furnished at later date separately.



### APPLICATION OF FUNDS

During the reporting year of 2022, the funds were spent as follows, consistent with our objective and that of donor's objectives for giving the funds.





## FUTURE PLANS AND COMMITMENTS

Defenders of the Planet plans to acquire land and construct a permanent head office block. We also plan to establish an environmental information and training Centre where by people will be visiting the Centre to get different information about environmental conservation as well as trainings at no cost.

We are also embarking on expanding and opening branches in other parts of the country for better service delivery.

*Community restoration efforts*

## VISITORS

During the reporting year 2022 totally 101 people visited our office and activities in the field, the list of which is prepared from our visitor's books.



*Picture 7: volunteers carrying tree seedlings to planting areas*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We wish to acknowledge and appreciate all partner organizations, individual donors, agencies and volunteers that made DEPLA's implementation year 2022 a success. These include but not limited to the following;

- ❖ Plant for the Planet team

- ❖ The Margaret Hayman Charitable Trust
- ❖ Rukoki Sub County Local Government
- ❖ Bunyangabu bee keepers Association
- ❖ Kahokya Sub county Local Government
- ❖ Kasese District Local Government

With our utmost gratitude, DEPLA also wishes to acknowledge the key role played by the Executive Committee, and above all the staff and volunteers for their commitment and diligence that ensured outputs for this year 2022 amidst many challenges.

DEPLA looks forward to continued, fruitful collaboration with these partners.

## **GET INVOLVED**

### **As a Citizen**

Have you ever seen a forest being set on fire or being cut for timber or charcoal? Have you witnessed swamps being reclaimed for various activities? Is there poachers in your community? As a citizen, you can do a number of things to end this environmental degradation. Most importantly, developing awareness about conservation and sharing the same with others. You can always report this to the nearby authorities. If you want to do more and become part of a systematized effort, you can always do better by volunteering at Defenders of the Planet.



### **As an NGO or Individual**

DEPLA is always open to collaborate with people and organisations working for the environment in difficult circumstances. We gladly share our materials, publications, policies, etc. for the benefit of others.

### **As a Professional Environmentalist /activist**

If you are looking for an opportunity to work in the field of environmental conservation, then DEPLA can be a place of your choice.

DEPLA has acquired wonderful experience of working with various national and international donor and corporate organizations. In partner with them, it has developed and implemented several projects benefiting the environment.



To find out more about on the nature of our engagement, please write to us at: [depla@mail.com](mailto:depla@mail.com)

### **EDITORIAL TEAM**

1. Masereka Selester - Executive Director
2. Kamanyire Janet - Secretary
3. Magwara Jockim -Project Officer
4. Kihatha Samuel - Volunteer
5. Kibogho Bahati-Seed collection specialist
6. Musanji simon- Nursery beds supervisor



## CONCLUSION

The 2022 year has been one of notable strides for DEPLA as a non-governmental organization (NGO). A great deal of work has been put in and much has been achieved despite challenges.

DEPLA is looking forward to consolidating the achievements registered during the year under review and to implementing more innovative and sustainable projects in the coming implementation year 2023.



## HOW YOU CAN HELP

Defenders of the Planet is a nonprofit organization and depends on donations from people like you. It is your donations that enable us do all this work.

To support our work, kindly visit our website; [www.depla.bravesites.com](http://www.depla.bravesites.com) or Send us an email [depla@mail.com](mailto:depla@mail.com)

"Your support will be acknowledged"

DEPLA welcomes financial, material, and technical support locally and internationally. For international donations, please contact us using [depla@mail.com](mailto:depla@mail.com) for more information.

### **Become a member**

Membership is open to any person interested in promoting DEPLA's mission. To become a member visit our website [www.depla.bravesites.com](http://www.depla.bravesites.com) and download the membership application form or you can send us an email on [depla@mail.com](mailto:depla@mail.com) to request for the membership application form.



**Volunteer your time**

Volunteer with us and gain great experience. Every year volunteers give their time to help DEPLA work towards its vision by raising money and offering their skills, valuable knowledge and time. To learn more send us an email [depla@mail.com](mailto:depla@mail.com)

**Why You Should Support Our Work?**

Defenders of the Planet-DEPLA is an organization that does a wonderful job. We don't have permanent staff that needs highly paid salaries but we work with qualified volunteers, we don't have swanky offices or air conditioned land rovers. Because of this, every cent we receive goes to our project work and this enables us to use even a small donation to create a big impact to the communities we serve.

**Make a donation**

To make a donation kindly visit our website [www.depla.bravesites.com](http://www.depla.bravesites.com) or send us an email on [depla@mail.com](mailto:depla@mail.com)

**Leaving a legacy**

Including DEPLA in your Will is an important decision and we will give you all the information that you need to make the right choices for you. If you would like to talk to us about this issue kindly send us an email on [depla@mail.com](mailto:depla@mail.com)

## CONTACT US



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