

Improving Livelihoods and Food Security Through Permaculture Training

Monik, a refugee from South Sudan, is no stranger to moving around. After years of violent conflict finally ended, Monik and his family were repatriated to South Sudan, and lived a peaceful life as farmers for five years. They were surrounded by relatives, and able to make ends meet. “Unfortunately our dream of settling down in our country forever was short lived when war broke out again in 2016,” he says. “As days passed, the security situation deteriorated and became risky for my family with its young members. Together with my wife, we decided that she move with the children to Uganda, a safer place, as I stay back at home hoping the situation would get better.” Later, when the tensions became increasingly dangerous, Monik left to join his family in Uganda.



Monik, 38, Maaji III Refugee Settlement

Monik began working as a translator in a health facility when he arrived in Adjumani settlement in Uganda. After three months, he had saved enough money to set up a small shop, which helped to meet the family's basic needs and pay his children's school fees. Compelled by his passion for sustainable, small-scale farming, Monik signed up to a community permaculture workshop organised by NRC. The permaculture workshop aimed to teach refugees about agricultural and design principles that utilize locally available resources and patterns in the natural environment to create a sustainable way of growing food. The participants of the programme formed groups and received two weeks of training followed by regular support visits from the training team over a period of 7 months. The training involved understanding about global trends such as climate change, health, nutrition, and the need to be less reliant on fossil fuels as well as



learning practical skills such as making compost, building nursery beds designed to retain moisture, making organic pesticides, keeping seeds and management of small livestock.

Monik's harvests have not only increased his income, but provide nutritious meals for his family, supplementing the basic cereals provided by the World Food Programme and insulating them from food shortages in the refugee settlement. With a start-up kit of seeds provided by NRC, Monik is growing a number of different vegetables including

eggplants, carrots, tomatoes, okra and watermelon. He has already earned a total of 255,000 Ugandan shillings from vegetable sales and has dried the okra to ensure a supply of green vegetables for the family over the coming dry season.

“The most significant change from this whole experience is that I have gained skills that have helped me contribute to the transformation of lives within my community through providing trainings.”



An inspired change-maker, Monik is now passing on his skills and expertise to the wider community. This was part of the agreement with NRC for those who attended the training.

Monik speaks optimistically about his ambitions for the future. “I plan to irrigate in the dry season to create a constant supply of the vegetables to the vendors that buy from me,” he tells us, “and become a certified trainer on the permaculture approach within my community.”

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NRC Uganda Livelihoods and Food Security Response Strategy 2019

In 2019, livelihoods and food security (LFS) programming will strengthen protection and build resilience for our beneficiaries through three key areas: ensuring access to food through safety nets, increasing access to and production of nutritious food, and increasing income generation through market-based programming. We will strengthen financial inclusion through village savings and loan associations, and support economic participation through vocational skills training and small business development and support linked to market demand. We will assist our beneficiaries to produce diverse foods that meets their nutritional needs. Much of this work will be done jointly with other NRC expertise areas, particularly Education, ICLA and WASH. LFS has a role in leading joint livelihoods oriented assessments and analyses to inform integrated programme design, whether multi-sectoral, integrated or somewhere in between.

Our response will directly contribute to durable solutions through market based programming and skills building that is appropriate for both the Ugandan context, as well as in South Sudan should refugees decide to return. Conflict sensitivity, protection and a rights based approach shall be an integral part of delivery.