

## **Annual report 2023 FRED'S FARM - People 4 People**

### **SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY on and around FRED'S FARM**

In 2023, FRED'S FARM (FF) returned to pre COVID-19 activity levels with no restrictions. By providing employment, training and an "open gate policy" on FF where locals can "see" and "do", there is dissemination of knowledge and farming practice which is difficult to measure. But the testimonies of the former and present interns from the local school can be used as a barometer. They tell us that increased knowledge helps them improve their agricultural practice, makes them more independent and provides hope for the future.

The dairy goats interbreeding programme is slowly maturing. Moringa tree propagation is thriving under Pascasie's attentive care. Fruit trees on the farm are maturing providing food for our daily workers on the farm.

More of the Twa villagers are interested in cultivating food, and eager to learn methods to improve their harvest. Participation in the microsavings programme is high and the system is well managed, making it possible for children to attend school.

The internship programme for school pupils has a far-reaching positive impact. Small scale trials were set up on the demonstration plot.

Pascasie, a former intern, was employed full time to follow up moringa on FF, at the local school and in the Twa village. Elie, a former intern, was employed on FF as the new night watchman, and follows up the interbreeding service in the community.

An educational visit in February to the Rwandan Agricultural Board (RAB) national research station, and a "model farm" close to FF, gave us the know-how and motivation to make considerable changes in our coffee management. The coffee harvest in March was poor, but throughout the year, total management has improved. Macadamia is well tended, maturing and thriving.

### **Primary beneficiaries**

Approximately 1000 individuals. Employees, participants in formal training on the farm, recipients of plants and farm produce, school pupils, recipients of medical treatment, Twa and others who cultivate on FRED'S FARM land, tradesmen who carry out work on the farm, and more.

In addition there are many secondary beneficiaries, the closest family to the primary beneficiaries and fellow villagers.

### **Employment**

10 people had permanent employment all year round, of these, one is a new permanent position to follow up

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moringa cultivation. 10 field workers were employed for 9 1/2 months of the year, primarily weeding the coffee terraces. 5 were employed for 2 months in the dry season, primarily to water young plants. The field workers are employed pr week, with different individuals employed in the course of the year.

In addition we provide 507 "days of employment" for the Twa villagers, with almost all the villagers participating; harvest and transport of materials for mulching and making compost.

### **Animals on FRED'S FARM**

Goats: 01.01.23: 10 animals, 31.12.23: 13 animals. 6 kids were born. 4 animals died in the course of the year, 2 after eating poisonous plants, 1 birth complications, and 1 unknown cause. 1 new buck was purchased for FF. Milk was shared with 3 children with the highest degree of malnutrition.

Dairy goat Interbreeding programme: the local village leader, a villager and 2 former interns are now entrusted with one young dairy goat buck each on their farms. They provide a no-cost breeding service for local goats.

Hens: six hens produced eggs regularly. Eggs are shared with the vulnerable and staff.

### **Farmer training on FRED'S FARM**

90 farmers attended training in week 35 to learn to make organic compost. Jacques led the training. Many of these farmers have now implemented this method.

### **Staff training**

Jacques, Sten and Hanne were on an educational visit to a Rwandan Agricultural Board (RAB) research station in February to learn about methods to improve soil and coffee health. All 3 visited an organic coffee farm run by a coffee academic. A consultant was hired for a day's training, to teach both staff and villagers (Twa and others) how to make liquid fertilizer from readily available organic materials. In January/February FRED'S FARM hosted a visiting academic from Israel, a relative of Sten. Opher provided practical and theoretical input and was a mentor for Jacques.

### **Collaboration with Kizi school**

Solar lamp library: this continues to function as intended, all lamps have been in use all year. More than 100 pupils benefit. Final year primary and final year secondary level pupils are prioritized. A few were damaged, a few missing and some were serviced in Norway and returned to the library.

Plant moringa: this was carried out in February 2023 and followed up through the year by our moringa specialist.

Macadamia nut tree: the tree died before the dry season, a new one was planted.

Internship program: 12 pupils have successfully completed a 12 week internship program on FRED'S FARM in 2023. In February Hanne and Sten invited all former interns to come to work for a day on the farm. Nine attended. Each proudly told about the follow up of their individual "home projects" and each project has thrived to a greater or lesser extent. In this group there are motivated young people who have the potential to be a resource in their community, including potential employees on FRED'S FARM.

### **Twa initiatives**

School attendance: 10 children started school in September, an increase of 4 from 2023. FRED'S FARM supports

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half of the cost of school uniforms, sandals, exercise books, pens and school lunches.

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Food production: Some new fruit trees are planted and small areas between the houses now have small-scale cultivation. Moringa seeds have germinated and small seedlings have survived. 10 hoes for cultivation were provided for the Twa villagers on their request.

Microsavings: this continues successfully with 27 families. The capital increased by approximately 50%.

Training to make liquid fertilizer: 10 Twa villagers participated. FRED'S FARM provided containers for 2 interested groups to start this process, and Pascasie (FF moringa specialist) has followed up.

Jiggers treatment: 8 children were treated. Two local health workers attended and treated the children. Each child was provided with soap and sandals.

### **Cultivation on FRED'S FARM**

8 local farmers with little land, and 12 Twa villagers were invited to cultivate on FRED'S FARM.

Food production, primarily banana, papaya, avocado and peanuts, for daily workers and permanent staff who live on the farm, has increased. Fodder production for the animals continues to increase. Production of our own mulching materials has increased.

### **Demonstration plot**

The school interns have responsibility to plan, develop and follow up this area. All fruit trees planted in 2021 have grown well, and some have started to bear fruit. Moringa was planted to replace what died. Sorghum, eggplant, maize, sweet potato, peanuts, onions and beans were cultivated. We continued with iron-enriched bean trials and learn with each new trial.

### **Coffee and macadamia nuts, cash crops on FRED'S FARM.**

Income approx. NOK 500 from sale of 2023 harvest. Extreme weather conditions in dry and wet seasons damaged flowers, trees, soil and felled 2 mature macadamia trees. This impacted the harvest very negatively. 45 organic solid compost heaps were produced on the farm. Two different kinds of organic liquid fertilizer were also produced; one using worms. Compost and fertilizer were used on coffee and macadamia.

Coffee: 1392 mature coffee bushes. Planted 300 new coffee seedlings, more robust varieties. 200 young shade trees, calliandra and grevillea, were planted.

Macadamia: 124 mature macadamia trees. 22 mature trees produce nuts. 98 young macadamia.

### **Beehives**

Four new beehives were built by a former intern, and placed in tree tops in the top coffee terraces to improve pollination.

### **Water**

Harvesting and storage of water functioned well all year but there was a total disruption of piped water for some weeks in the dry season. So for several weeks water had to be collected and carried from the river valley.

approx. 1 km from the farm.

## **Maintenance**

The outhouse, including the henhouse, had to be demolished due to extreme termite damage to its supporting

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beams. It was rebuilt.

General maintenance work to prevent water damage to existing buildings was carried out; ditches, walls, guttering, fixing roof etc.

## **Health, safety and environment (HSE)**

Health insurance is paid for all permanent staff. Malaria nets are provided for staff who live on the farm. Health and safety equipment is in place and in use when spraying the animals against ticks. Rubber boots are provided for all permanent staff. Jacques heightens awareness in everyday duties on the farm regarding hygiene and risk assessment. Jacques feels confident to use the first aid kit as required.

Tree planting, and planting of more ground cover continued to improve spoil, and to prevent soil erosion.

## **Collaboration**

Jacques collaborates closely with the village and sector leaders, the district veterinary surgeon, the sector agriculturalist, Kizi school principal and a local farmer who runs a tree nursery. In addition, he liaises with RAB regarding coffee cultivation specifically.

Our contact with the English NGO, Rwanda Action, continues, providing a support network with an understanding of local challenges.

## **Information to sponsors, and others**

FRED'S FARM homepage [www.fredsfarm-rwanda.com](http://www.fredsfarm-rwanda.com) was edited regularly throughout the year. Three updates in English were published on the homepage. All sponsors are informed about these by email.

Skjetlein senior high school published 2 updates from FRED'S FARM in their school magazine.

## **Contact with FRED'S FARM**

FRED'S FARM homepage provides an opening to the wider community. .

NGOs, private individuals and commercial companies, most based in Rwanda, contacted FRED'S FARM via email making enquiries primarily about moringa and dairy goats or goat milk; some look to collaborate, others are interested in buying seeds, plants, goats, and others about commercial collaboration. Several have requested to come on study visits. One of these people is the Director of Extension, Rwanda Institute for Conservation Agriculture.

## **Management**

Jacques and Hanne had 12 planned WhatsApp meetings, and otherwise kept contact as required via WhatsApp. Jacques reports weekly in shared online documents and photo documentation.

Hanne and Sten visited Rwanda for 3 weeks in January/February to follow up all activities, and made the plans for the year with Jacques.

## **Committee i 2023**

Bente Denstad and Ferdinant Tumukunde (Fred's son)

2 committee meetings were held in 2023.

Arne Ivar Denstad, Sten and Hanne Paltiel attended the committee meetings. Grace, Ferdinant's mother, also attended. Ferdinant and Grace attended online.

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## **Financial and other support**

20 family and friends gave a monthly donation. In addition, approx 30 others gave individual donations in the course of the year. Skjetlein Senior High School supported the project.

See the separate annual accounts.

Torggrim Daling, former teacher at Skjetlein, and Opher Mendelsohn, Sten's relative, gave generously of their professional know-how. Kjell Harry Lyngaas roasted and provided packaging for coffee.

**FRED'S FARM thanks everyone, family, friends, school pupils and teachers, for their generous support without which there would be no activity.**

Bente Denstad, styreleder

Trondheim, JANUARY 2024

