



Annual report 2025

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liana-ry.org

Liana's purpose

is to function in development cooperation using holistic approaches that combine improving the state of the environment and human well-being

Forest Garden projects in northern and southern Tanzania

Liana had two Forest Garden projects running in Tanzania in 2025. One, **“Forest Garden farming for People and the Planet”** is implemented in Mwanza district, the other, **“Forest Gardens for human and environmental wellbeing”** runs in Masasi. 85% of the two projects is funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, the remaining 15% is covered by self-funding and voluntary work by Liana.

“Forest Garden farming for People and the Planet” in Mwanza

Project Overview

The project is implemented in seven villages in Mwanza District in northern Tanzania: Kituri and Kifaru, which started in 2023, and Kwanyange, Ngulu, Kwakoa, Kiruru, and Kisangara, which started in 2024.

A total of 369 farmers participate in the project. They are organised into 26 farmer groups that also function as VICOBA (Village Community Banking) groups. The majority of members are women, and approximately 10% belong to vulnerable population groups. Including group members and their families, the project reaches around 2,500 direct beneficiaries. In addition, about 300 neighbouring households have been involved in growing seedlings in raised beds.





The Forest Garden Model

The Forest Garden model is adapted from Trees for the Future. A central feature is the live fence (*wigo*), which protects farms, produces fodder and biomass, and improves soil fertility. The fence consists of three rows using *Acacia polycantha*, *Leucaena leucocephala*, and *Gliricidia sepium*, planted at 30–50 cm intervals, requiring about 2,400 seedlings per acre. All species fix nitrogen.

Inside the Forest Garden, east–west alley lines (*marejea*) divide the land into sections, or they follow contours on sloping land to reduce erosion. These are planted by using *Gliricidia*, pigeon peas, or mulberry (*Morus alba*).

The sections are used to grow a wide diversity of crops, including maize, beans, sweet potato, cassava, pigeon peas, vegetables, and fruit and timber trees such as papaya, passion fruit, guava, mango, *Cordia*, *Markhamia*, *Grevillea*, and neem. Vertical planting further increases productivity and biodiversity.

Water Access and Joint Vegetable Gardens

Water access remains a major challenge for many farmers. Eleven groups therefore established joint vegetable gardens on shared plots of land. In 2025, the project supported land agreements and provided 11 water storage tanks of 2,000–3,000 litres. In addition, 18 farmers in areas with ground water levels less than 12 meters received support to renovate shallow wells.

Benefits of Forest Gardens

Forest Gardens provide year-round production, improving livelihoods, food security, and resilience. They also deliver environmental benefits such as improved soil fertility and structure, increased biodiversity, moisture retention, balanced pest ecosystems, protection from extreme weather, and climate change mitigation.

Progress and Adaptation

Progress has not followed the originally planned phases of protection, diversification, and optimisation. Instead, farmers have gradually expanded their live fences, planted trees, and added crops each year. Only a few farmers completed their full live fence within one year. The project has therefore become more flexible and responsive, adapting to farmers' realities.

Although farmers joined one year apart and were initially referred to as “old” and “new” groups, by the end of 2024 the difference no longer explained progress. Advancement now largely depends on individual effort, health and physical strength, and especially access to water.

Some farms are already well-developed Forest Gardens surrounded by dense green walls and diverse production, while others are still working on their live fences and slowly establishing fruit and timber trees.

To support learning, each main activity is repeated twice, including seedling production, seed treatment, composting, organic pest control, pruning and weaving of live fences, and grafting.

New training topics in 2025

New approaches were tested in 2025. Raised-bed seedling production was introduced as a faster, plastic-free method that enabled neighbour participation and future expansion without the need of buying anything. However, dispersing nurseries to households with limited water led to seedling losses when the short rains failed.

Crop rotation training was introduced for joint vegetable gardens to reduce pests and soil depletion using a simple visual cycle from leafy crops (pointing up) to legumes (to replenish nitrogen), and roots (downwards) to fruit vegetables and back to leafy vegetables.

Training on the storage of seeds, cassava cuttings, and sweet potato vines for the next growing season, aimed at ensuring that farmers retain and reuse the planting materials provided by the project.

More diversification: Pineapples and Beekeeping

Pineapple cultivation was added after facilitators were trained at SJS Organic Farm in Mwanza. Demonstration plots of 50 plants per group were established using slips and suckers purchased from Tanga to provide future planting material.

Beekeeping was introduced as an additional income source, particularly for farmers with limited water access. After a three-day training for 10 farmers at SJS organic farm, groups were trained and farmers constructed 14 Tanzania





Top Bar hives and 12 stingless bee hives.

Income Generation and Savings

Farmers initially focused on household food production but have increasingly begun selling produce. Income has come from papaya, passion fruit, vegetables, and seed sales. Papaya generated 20,000–80,000 Tsh per harvest, passion fruit around 45,000 Tsh, and high-performing vegetable growers earned 70,000–120,000 Tsh per season.

Two farmer groups also earned 620,000 Tsh collectively from selling *Leucaena* seeds to the Masasi Forest Garden project, opening future business opportunities as seeds become more available and other projects need them.

VICOBA groups have strengthened savings and investment, with 2025 savings ranging from 600,000 to 20 million Tsh in one cycle. Farmers were also introduced to low-cost bank accounts by CRDB Bank.

Individual Forest Garden planning and self-assessment

To motivate farmers and address differences in progress, a mapping exercise was reintroduced in which each farmer drew their future Forest Garden and marked desired components. This time mapping was done without a scale, which had made it too complicated the first time in 2023.

In addition, a self-assessment form listing all expected features of a complete Forest Garden was developed. Farmers used this to track their progress and prepare for graduation at the end of 2026, with clear criteria in place.

Learning Hub and Outreach

Mwanga has functioned as a learning site for study visits for all staff hired for the new Masasi project. In February it also hosted a study visit for farmers, staff and extension officers from the Masasi project. In addition, LEAD Foundation paid a visit in December with the aim of planning a project with a Forest Garden component.

Capacity Building for Facilitators

Facilitators received ongoing professional development through several courses including basic and intermediate organic agriculture. Training of

Trainers (ToT) and Agribusiness. As not all facilitators were able to take the full course at SAT, Morogoro, ToT and Agribusiness seminars were arranged at the office to convey the main content of the trainings to others. In addition to SAT courses, one staff had the opportunity to participate in syntropic agroforestry course at Sokoine University. A webinar is being planned to convey the main topics to all facilitators in Mwanga and Masasi, and Liana in Finland.

Facilitators and farmers also participated in NaneNane in Arusha and the Uhuru Torch exhibition.

Documentation and Knowledge Sharing

Technical content, including farmer handouts, is documented through forestgardenstz.blog in both Swahili and English, as well as through local project reports that include the descriptive activity results part and the technical part including handouts and budgets for future use.

“Forest Gardens for human and environmental wellbeing in Masasi”

Overview

The project began in January 2025 with area selection, village meetings, a study tour to Mwanga, follow-up village meetings, enrolment of interested farmers, and group formation with constitution writing.

A total of 225 farmers joined the project, forming 13 groups across five villages: Mraushi, Nasindi, Mpeta, Huwe, and Mkuyuni. The target is to expand to 500 farmers from early 2026. In addition, Lukuledi Special School, which supports children living with hearing impairments, joined the project, following the same activities and schedule as the farmers.

Capacity Building in Organic Agriculture

In April 2025, a total of 20 participants attended the Basic Organic Agriculture Course at the Sustainable Agriculture Tanzania (SAT) Centre. This included 13 farmer representatives (one from each group), three agricultural extension officers, the KIMAS Technical Programme Manager, a horticulture project officer, and two interns from KIMAS and Upendo Charity. The training aimed





to strengthen foundational knowledge in organic farming to support the first cultivation activities. Farmer representatives were tasked with sharing the knowledge within their groups, while extension officers now serve as independent trainers during weekly sessions.

Vegetable Cultivation

As Masasi experiences only one long rainy season (January–April), tree seedling production was scheduled later in the year, while vegetable cultivation was prioritised first. Each group cultivated a joint garden, carefully fenced, with an approximate 5 square meters allocated per farmer. Sunken beds were mostly used due to water scarcity, however also the double-dug raised bed was taught.

Species selection was done in consultation with each group and finalised by the horticulturalist project officer. In areas with adequate water, farmers grew: Chinese cabbage, Spinach, Eggplant, African eggplant, Chilli pepper, Onions, Cowpea, Okra, Beetroot, and Carrots. In areas with limited water, they grew: Amaranths, Collard greens, Black nightshade, Onions, African eggplant, Chilli pepper, Cowpea, and Okra.

In each garden, two beds were irrigated with drip systems, while the remaining beds were watered by cans. Farmers were later offered the opportunity to purchase subsidised drip kits for home use. The first vegetables were harvested in June and the last in October. In addition to home consumption, farmers began selling produce collectively through their groups. The best sales totalled over 200,000 Tshs income to the group. Composting and organic pest management techniques were taught alongside vegetable cultivation.

Tree Seedling Production

Tree activities began in July, with outplanting planned for January 2026. Twenty kilograms of each live fence species were purchased, calculated to cover two full sides of both a homestead and a one-acre farm, or for more vulnerable farmers, all sides of a home garden only. Many farmers in Masasi have two or more plots, so home gardens have been planned to have live fences, fruit trees, and vegetables, while the marejea and timber trees, together with a live fence will be allocated to the bigger farm plots.

Species selection for trees beyond the live fence was made collectively with the groups. Farmers suggested both fruit and multipurpose trees. From a large list of suggestions, the project selected a subset to start with, including papaya, passion fruit, guava, lemon, and orange for fruit, and moringa and neem for other multipurpose trees. Seeds for papaya, moringa and neem were purchased, others were extracted from fruits.

Capacity building in facilitation

To further strengthen facilitation capacity, both project officers participated in a five-day Training of Trainers (ToT) course at SAT in October, and a one of them also attended an Organic Agriculture Basics course at the same centre in November.

In December, key lessons from the ToT course were delivered in a full-day recap session for KIMAS staff and collaborating extension officers, ensuring improved and consistent facilitation approaches.

Nursery activity required special campaign approach

Groups struggled to find sufficient water for their gardens as shallow wells began to dry up during the dry season. Sourcing manure was another hurdle. The project responded by providing three storage tanks to groups that could purchase water but lacked containers for water storage.

Nursery establishment also coincided with the cashew harvesting season, which slowed progress significantly. Filling seedbags proceeded too slowly to meet the planned outplanting schedule. As the seriousness of the situation became clear during Liana's monitoring visit, the project launched a crisis response. This began with an inventory of all nurseries, followed by an intensive campaign in early December.

The campaign, dubbed "Banana Harambee," provided bananas to sustain collective work sessions for several hours at a time. The project also helped in sourcing sufficient manure. Group members filled seedbags not only for themselves but also for those who had fallen behind. In addition, storage tanks were purchased for the remaining groups (three groups had received tanks earlier). Next year more compost will be made during the rainy season and campaign approach will be used early on.





This collective effort boosted seedling numbers, improved group morale and togetherness, and ensured that every farmer benefited from the activity.

Group leadership committed to closer monitoring through weekly attendance and activity records. With cashew harvesting concluded, the campaign was able to progress effectively.

During the two-week Banana Harambee sessions, a total of 29,899 seedbags were filled and sown. Combined with those already inventoried, the total number of seedbags across all group nurseries reached 119,862 by the end of December. The inventory also showed that farmer groups and Lukuledi special school had managed to raise 1,768 fruit tree seedlings, 463 moringa and 574 neem seedlings. Lukuledi raised enough seedlings to fence an entire 1-acre demo farm.

Outplanting seedlings

Early rains enabled outplanting to begin before Christmas. The intensive nursery campaign and the need for close guidance meant that the Christmas break was almost non-existent for two staff members and extension officers.

After months of challenges, outplanting became a joyful milestone, as the results of the collective effort began to show on farmers' plots. Seed distribution continued alongside planting, with additional seedlings still growing in nurseries and scheduled for outplanting through mid-February.

Project Expansion to New Villages

To reach the target of 500 direct beneficiaries in Masasi District, project expansion areas were identified in late November and early December 2025 in consultation with Ward and Village Agricultural Extension Officers. The selection focused on villages that fit within the existing field schedule, had willing farmers, some access to water, suitable landscapes for increasing crop and tree diversity, and cultivation areas located close to homes, while avoiding areas already supported by other agricultural projects.

Field visits were conducted by the Liana coordinator, KIMAS Technical Manager, and Project Officer across several wards to assess suitability. Based on this process, the following villages were selected for expansion:

Makanyama, Namatunu, Mnarani, Chakama, Tukae Wote, Mtawale, Ngalinge, Mpekesho and Navai. Village meetings were conducted and participants to travel to Mwanga to see Forest Gardens were selected.

Liana financial policy launched

In May, the Board approved the Liana Financial Policy document, which formalises financial management practices that have been in place within Liana for several years but had not previously been documented.

Margaret Tebbutt Foundation

Margaret Tebbutt Foundation performed well in year 2025 due to high interest rates. Its profit was € 4832,70 as dividends, and €2185,99 as increase in value.

No grants were given out in 2025.

The Margaret Tebbutt Foundation is a non-Autonomous Foundation hosted under Liana. <https://margarettebbutt.liana-ry.org/>.

Liana blog and social media communications

The news blog, <http://www.liana-ry.org/liana-news-blog/>, has been actively used to communicate about Liana activities in Tanzania.

Local blog written in Mwanga: forestgardenstz.blog

Liana uses also its Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/lianadevelopment> for keeping members and supporters up to date on its activities.

Videos are saved on the YouTube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/@Lianaorg>.



Liana annual meeting 2025

Liana's annual meeting was organised by emails on 16-18 May, with a possibility of a Zoom session for 1 hour. Eight members took part. In addition, we had a special meeting to select a new auditor on 21-24 February 2025.

The Board communicated and conducted its duties through emails through the board googlegroups mailing list.

Liana members 2025

Liana had ten regular members and nine supporting members in 2025.

Liana Board 2025

Eija (Chair)

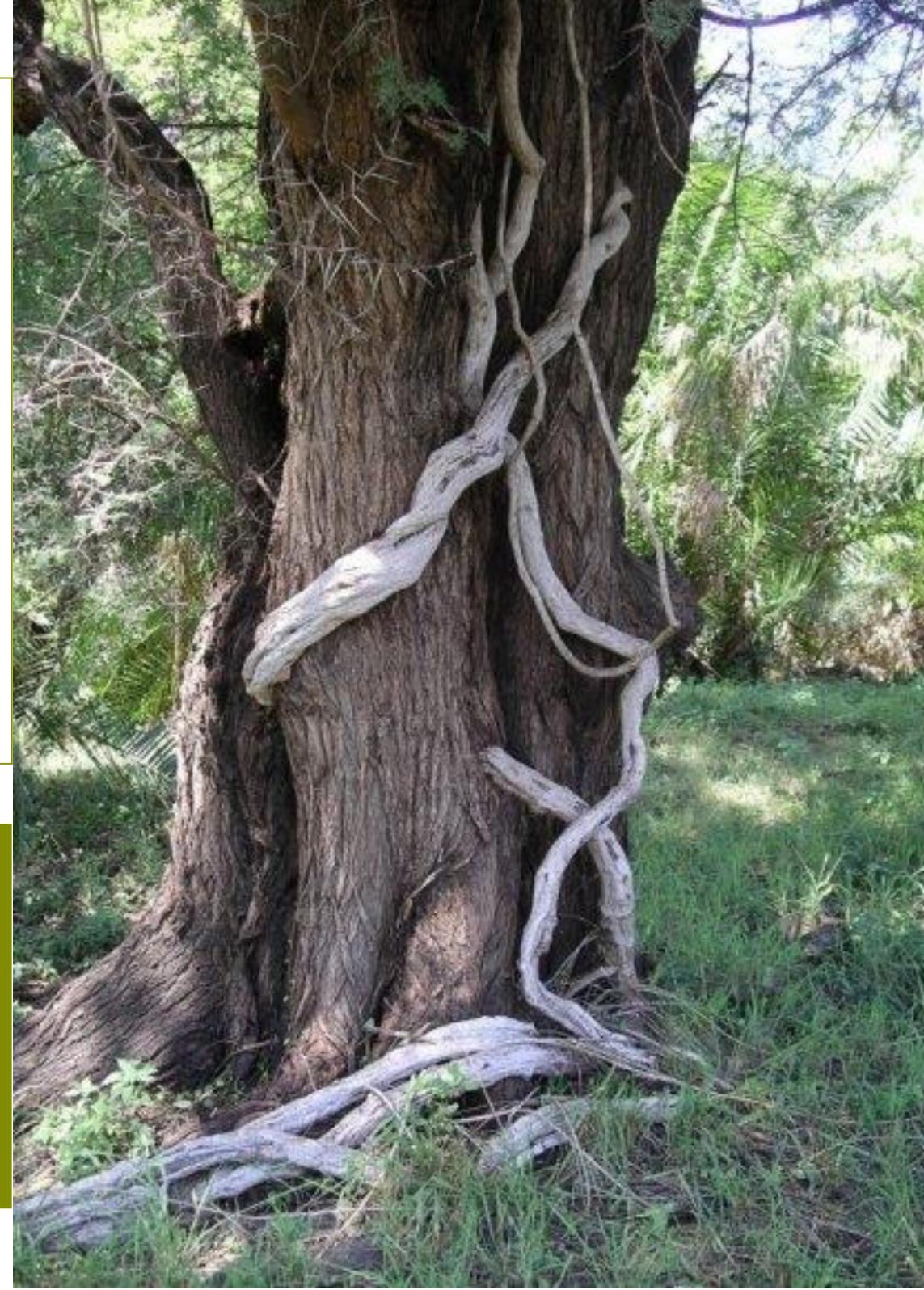
Ric (Secretary)

Miika (Vice-Chair)

Susanna (Member)

Alex (Member)

Ari (Member)



“You don't need to immediately eliminate world poverty, bring world peace or save the environment. You just have to do whatever you discover works with your modest resources to make a difference in the lives of the poor.”

(William Easterly, 2006)

Financial accounts of 2025

Liana ry 1982505-3		Profit and loss account
		01.01.2025 - 31.12.2025
Actual operations / Project operations		
Project funding and donations		120 783,24
Transfers from previous to following year		4 002,24
Individual donations		880,00
Project funding and grants		115 901,00
Other activities in Tanzania		0,00
Forest Gardens in Tanzania		-115 149,82
Expenditure in Tanzania		-82 588,36
Expenditure in Finland		
Personnel (salaries and side costs)		-24 672,14
Other costs (office, audit, monitorin travel, exchange rate adjustment)		-7 889,32
Marketing costs (Exhibitions etc)		-55,00
Admin costs		-310,61
Surplus/deficit		5 267,81
Other fundraising		
Income		555,00
Expenses		0,00
Other fundraising total		555,00
Investments and financial activities		
Income		7 018,69
Expenses		-7 018,69
Total investments and financing activities		0,00
Profit/loss for the period		5 822,81
Surplus (deficit) for the financial year		5 822,81

Note: **Value of voluntary work and resources made available without payment** are not indicated in the accounts: For the Forest Garden Mwanga project, their value is 3900€; and for the Masasi project the respective values is 5095€. The value of voluntary work is determined by calculating half of the individual's budgeted salary rate. All organisational administration is done as voluntary work (annual reporting, webpages, organisational bookkeeping).

Forest Garden project in Mwanga 2023-2026

Grant €192 172; Self-funding €33 938

Number of group members 369

Number of farmers with family members: approx. 2600

Group members neighbours involved in activities 300

Number of farmer groups 26

Number of villages 2 (2023), 7 (2024)

Forest Garden project in Masasi 2025-2028

Grant €247 427; Self-funding €43 663

Number of farmers who started in 2025: 225 aiming at 500 in 2026

Number of farmer groups: 13 (2025)

Number of villages 5 (2025); 9 new villages selected to start in 2026

Number of special needs students taking part in activities 40

