



It starts on an African farm



Your Ripple Effect update – spring 2025

WELCOME TO YOUR SPRING NEWSLETTER!

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Louis in his grandmother's paw-paw garden in Uganda. His grandmother, Namatovu, is part of Ripple Effect's Push Pull Technology project.

Spring greetings from Ripple Effect Uganda!



Dear Readers,

It's a pleasure to connect with you in this spring edition of our newsletter. I'm Pamela, the Country Director at Ripple Effect Uganda. Over the past decade, our team has been dedicated to inspiring and equipping communities to transform their lives while protecting our planet.

In the last year, our communities in Uganda faced several significant challenges. Climate shocks severely impacted farmers, leading to poor soybean harvests.

Women-led businesses faced difficulties running sustainably because of power dynamics within the home. And the high cost of technologies needed to make the most of crops once they've been harvested put financial strain on farmers, especially women and refugees.

Despite these setbacks, we have made remarkable strides in increasing community resilience. Two refugee groups established small poultry farms, helping their members to earn vital income.

We supported the creation of two block farms (large areas of land divided into smallholder plots) over 137 acres, providing both refugees and their host communities with functional irrigation systems. And 47 milk business centres were set up, selling over a million litres of milk, generating significant income for farmers.

Thanks to supporters like you, our projects have empowered thousands of young people, refugees and people with disabilities to set up small businesses and earn a fair wage.

In this newsletter, you'll discover more about our efforts and the incredible stories from our colleagues across the countries where Ripple Effect works. You'll also find out how your support has helped farmers like Immaculate in Uganda, as well as learning how to make your very own cone garden and much more.

As always, thank you so much for your continued support.

Warm regards,

Pamela Ebanyat

Country Director, Ripple Effect Uganda

Front page: Fatuma with her mother Kanze in Mwapala, Eastern Kenya. Fatuma is part of Ripple Effect's Sustainable Futures for Kenya's Women and Young People project.

CHRISTMAS BIG GIVE APPEAL UPDATE

Christmas
Challenge

Big Give

HOW OUR PROJECT IS EMPOWERING FARMERS IN UGANDA

By Abraham Obwakori,
AMS
Project
Manager



I am excited to share the incredible impact of your generosity. Thank you so much to everyone who donated to our 2024 Big Give Christmas Challenge appeal. Together you raised over £100,000 to help support mothers to bring in enough income to feed their children and send them to school.

Our appeal featured two inspiring mothers – Immaculate and Edith. They

are working alongside Ripple Effect as part of the Agriculture Market Support (AMS) project. The project started in 2020 and is now in its fifth year, operating in the Isingiro and Kyegegwa districts of southwestern Uganda.

The AMS project is more than just farming; it's about empowering smallholder farmers - especially women, who make up 60% of the farmers we work alongside - to overcome challenges, build resilience and thrive. Working alongside refugees and their host communities, the project aims to improve food security for these farmers as well as generate farming-related jobs to bring in vital income.

Over the last year, the project has faced some challenges. These include difficult weather conditions leading to a prolonged drought, which affected the crop yield for some people.

Uganda

● AMS project



Immaculate standing in her maize field in Uganda



Immaculate discussing her maize crop with Abraham

Farmers also faced high costs when buying the equipment needed to process crops such as grain, because of the low number of places to buy them from in southwestern Uganda.

Yet despite these difficulties, the determination of the farmers and the power of your donations led to remarkable achievements in 2024:

- 12 farmer organisations involved in the project formally registered as co-operatives, coming together to make them stronger.
- The 12,231 farmers in these co-operatives collectively sold 4,291 tonnes of produce worth over £1 million, earning them vital income.
- 1,237 farmers were successfully linked up with financial institutions so they could access credit to help expand their businesses.
- 7,740 jobs were created for young people in a variety of farming-related businesses including bakeries, beekeeping and creating equipment for processing crops once harvested.

How Immaculate is working alongside Ripple Effect as part of the AMS project

When we first started working with Immaculate as part of the AMS project, she received specialist training in post-harvest management. Despite ongoing challenges, things are beginning to improve.

When I spoke with her, she told me *"I have ensured that my maize grain fully matures and dries in the field before it is harvested, to control moisture, ensure quality and increase its marketability."*

Immaculate has also received training in business planning and has been learning from other farmers who have already started their own small businesses to improve their income and livelihoods. She was inspired to borrow a small amount of seed money to start her own vegetable business, and now buys vegetables like tomatoes, cabbage and aubergines in Kajaho's weekly community market, which she sells on to make a profit.

The proceeds from this business have improved her ability to provide a balanced diet for her children. She told me: *"I am able to generate net profit of UGX 8000 (£1.74) per week from my vegetable business that I use to finance my basic household needs including food, clothing, and medical care for my children."*

Thanks to people like you, our projects can continue to see fantastic achievements like this. And mothers like Immaculate can be supported to generate more income, building a brighter, more secure future for their families.

HOW TO MAKE A CONE GARDEN

A space-saving solution for growing crops. By Isaac Ogutu, Farm Systems Officer



A cone garden is an efficient method of growing vegetables in limited spaces. It features stacked layers of polythene liner arranged in a staircase-like structure. This design allows crops to grow vertically as well as horizontally, giving the garden its distinctive cone shape.

Cone gardens allow for dense planting (up to 100 plants per square metre), with a space of 16 square metres producing enough to feed a family of three. They use significantly less water, reduce the risk of common pests and weed infestations, and their compact design minimises the effort needed for planting, watering and maintenance.

As a result, cone gardens are an excellent option for improving food security for farming families in rural Africa while also promoting healthy soil practices.



Cone gardens in action in a kitchen garden in Kenya

You will need

- garden hoe or fork
- spade
- soil
- six sticks
- polythene liner
- well-rotted manure or compost

Method

1. Soil preparation

- Loosen the soil using a hoe or fork.
- Break up clumps to create fine soil, then mix with manure or compost in a ratio of two parts soil to one part manure/compost.

2. Setting up the layers

- Position six sticks evenly into the ground in a circle to mark out the size of your lowest layer.
- Curl the first piece of polythene liner around the inside of the sticks to create a large circle.
- Fill the liner with the prepared soil mixture using a spade, and once it's stable, remove the sticks.
- Now place the sticks a few inches inside the first circle to create the next level, and curl the second piece of polythene liner inside the sticks as before.

3. Building additional layers

- Repeat the process for each of the six layers, ensuring each is stable and filled to the top with the soil and manure/compost mix.

4. Final step

- Plant your seedlings, water generously and watch them flourish!

What could you grow in a cone garden?



- kale
 - spinach
 - chard
 - coriander
 - strawberries
 - peppers
- ... and much more!



Caren tending to her flourishing cone garden in Kenya as part of the Enterprising Migori project.



FARMING WITH PASSION

How our project is supporting farmers in Kenya like Joseph

Joseph is a small-holder farmer from Mwaluvanga, in Kenya. Before working alongside Ripple Effect, the yield from his farm was low and didn't generate much income. But after joining our Sustainable Futures for Kenya's Women and Young People project, Joseph is confident he will get a good harvest from his new passionfruit orchard so he can provide for his family from the land.

Joseph lives with his mother, his wife Teresia, and their son Edgar on the East Coast region of Kenya. Here the soils can be very sandy, are often infertile, and struggle to retain moisture. There is also a significant risk of drought which has been made much worse by the climate crisis.

Due to these harsh conditions, coupled with a lack of information about climate smart farming techniques,

Ripple Effect farmer Joseph with his wife Teresia and son Edgar, on their farm in Kenya

Joseph has been struggling to get a good harvest from his passionfruit crop. Two years ago, he planted a passionfruit vine straight into the infertile sandy soil, but it is only a metre high and has not produced fruit.

Joseph received training on how to plant passionfruit seedlings using water conservation techniques so they thrive, even in the difficult growing conditions he faces. Joseph planted passionfruit seedlings using his new knowledge, and after just three months he had vines that had grown taller than him which were nearly producing fruit.

"We are conserving water and soil and improving yields. The biggest change I've seen is the production of my passionfruit. The speed of growth is much faster than it was before."

This Ripple Effect project aims to support young people to find work in the fruit value chain. It is doing this by linking young farmers with companies that process food, such as fruit juice and pulp. One such company in the

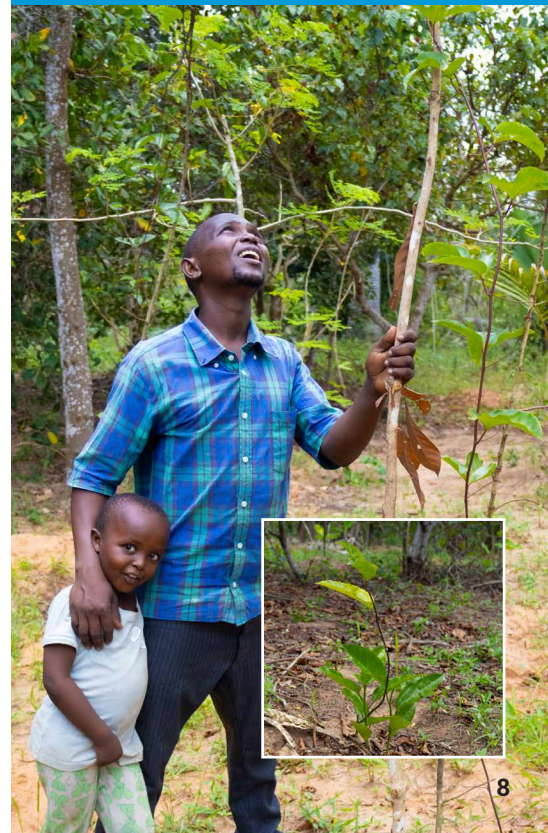
region where Joseph lives has bulking centres in rural areas. Farmers like him can deliver their fruit when it's ready and receive a fair price for it. This provides a guaranteed market for farmers like Joseph.

Thanks to your generosity, farmers like Joseph can build resilience against the climate crisis and secure a better future for their families. Your support makes a real difference - helping farmers grow, adapt, and thrive.



Some of the passionfruit Joseph has harvested on his farm

Joseph and his son next to one of the passionfruit vines he planted six months ago using techniques he learned from Ripple Effect training. The inset photo is the small passionfruit vine Joseph planted two years ago before he started working alongside Ripple Effect.



TRANSFORMING LIVES BY ADDING VALUE TO PRODUCE

By Deogratiuous Egeru, Enterprise Development & Innovation Coordinator



As the flowers bloom and the days grow longer, we are thrilled to share how your support is making a tangible difference to the lives of millions in rural Africa by empowering farming families to add value to the produce they grow. This can be transformational on their journey out of poverty and is part of the value chain process.

What are value chains?

Imagine a journey where every step adds a little more magic. That's what a value chain is! It's the entire process of creating a product or service, from the initial stages of production up until it's finally consumed. Each step in this process adds a little more value.

In the rural African context, value adding activities include everything from

farming and production to processing, marketing, and distribution of the product or service. The farmers we work alongside can get involved every step of the way to improve their livelihoods.

Why value chains matter to Ripple Effect

Value chains are crucial because they help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our projects. By optimising each step, we can ensure that resources are used wisely, and the benefits are maximised for everyone involved. This means better quality products, fairer prices for producers, and more sustainable practices overall.

They also provide an avenue for us to engage rural farmers in the different

stages of value creation. All they need are the right skills, knowledge and access to technology so they can thrive while delivering benefits for whole communities and the planet.

Our Sustainable Futures for Kenya's Women and Young People project has been a cornerstone of our value chain work, supporting local farmers like Fatuma and Elizabeth from our autumn pineapple appeal. Through your support, we have been able to enhance the fruit value chains in their communities. We have also provided greater opportunities for them to engage with these value chains by producing things like fruit juice and dried fruit.

This work has improved livelihoods and strengthened the community's resilience and sustainability, helping them produce high-quality, nutritious food that is affordable for their communities.

We cannot express enough how grateful we are for your continued support. Together, we can create a brighter future for communities around the world. Let's spring into action and make this season one of growth, hope, and positive change.



REMEMBERING PROFESSOR SIMON DOHERTY



At the end of last year, the Ripple Effect community was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Professor Simon Doherty. Simon's connection with Ripple Effect was profound: advocate, volunteer, Board member, fundraiser, catalyst and friend – he will be greatly missed.

As a Trustee Board member for six years at Ripple Effect International, Simon brought humour, insight, and leadership to the charity, leaving an indelible mark on our organisation. His deep commitment to change characterised Simon's work with Ripple Effect, and many of our country programme teams had the privilege of knowing Simon personally through his visits to their projects in East Africa and last year to our Africa Hub in Kenya. These encounters were marked by his genuine interest and unwavering support for improving human, environmental and animal health as one.

Simon was an inspiring leader and a passionate advocate for One Health – a holistic approach aiming to sustainably balance and optimise the health of people, animals and ecosystems. Last year at the prestigious Global Veterinary Awards, Simon was named winner of the 'One Health' category, as well as winning World Vet of the Year 2024.

We honour his memory by carrying forward his commitment to the One Health approach and its impact on the world. Driven by his energy and spirit, this lasting legacy to Simon will inspire future generations to champion the causes he held dear. His leadership and vision have inspired us all.

Professor Simon Doherty was not just a colleague but a mentor and a friend to many. We send our heartfelt condolences to his wife, Anne, his three

children, his family and all his friends and colleagues globally, who were touched by his remarkable spirit.

Simon will be deeply missed, but his legacy will live on, inspiring future generations.

Please visit Simon's tribute page where you can leave a message, share your memories, and donate to the "One Health in Action" fund.

simondoherty.muchloved.com



Professor Simon Doherty with Ripple Effect farmer Amnech in Wolaita, Ethiopia

TOP SPRING GARDENING TIPS

from climate-change-resilient gardener Kim Stoddart



Kim Stoddart in her garden

I've been writing and commenting about more sustainable and climate-resilient methods of gardening for more than a decade as a journalist and editor of Amateur Gardening magazine, and I'm on a bit of a mission to help gardeners build resilience for the future. From my teaching over the years, I've realised that coping with our increasingly extreme weather is as much about building resilience in the gardener as it is in the actual garden.

So, my approach is very wellbeing focused and upbeat and designed to demonstrate that working more in tune with the natural world will help save time and money, as well as boosting results, and reducing our impact on the planet. It can also be a lot more fun in the process, fostering a deeper understanding and connection with the plants, produce and wildlife in our gardens.



My top tips for climate-resilient spring gardens

Embrace free-spirited planting

To help with natural pest control, and to aid biodiversity in your food growing efforts, consider mix planting with different crops side by side. Leave a good gap between nutrient-hungry plants from the same family (e.g. tomatoes), which will also help avoid the spread of airborne disease such as blight. You can get really creative with your planting in this way, and if one crop doesn't do as well you can't tell because it's mixed in with so many others.

Garden from the ground up

Protecting your soil, and making it the best it can be, is at the heart of effective organic gardening methods. So, practices such as mulching, encouraging soil life, and not digging, will help improve soil structure and resilience from the ground up.

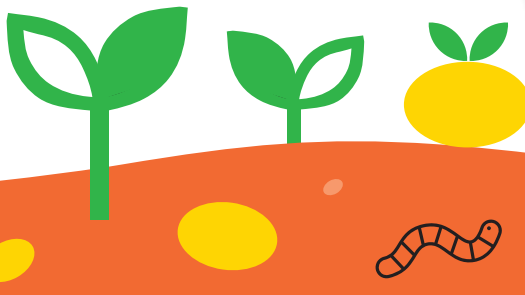
Don't over-pamper plants

If you provide crops with too much quick-release fertiliser and water they can

become a little lazy and very needy of your input. This can lead to the development of shallower root systems, as they don't have to 'dig as deep' to find food and water themselves. Therefore, making the soil the best it can be more naturally and letting crops fend a little more for themselves encourages them to form a greater below-ground stability which affords them greater resilience against challenging weather.

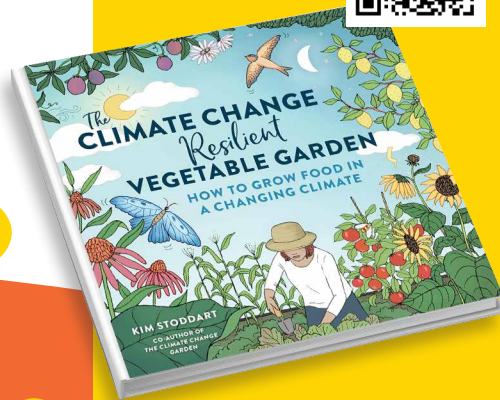
Plant more perennials

Longer-lasting plants are better able to stand firm against the elements and will provide you with crops year after year, for less work. There are many exciting varieties now available to buy, from perennial cottager-style kales and leeks to artichokes, herbs, and fruit.



COMPETITION TIME!

Kim is a leading authority on climate-change-resilient methods of gardening, particularly home food growing, as showcased in her superb new book 'The Climate Change Resilient Vegetable Garden'. And we've got five fantastic copies to give away! To be in with a chance of winning, just enter online at rippleeffect.org/book-competition



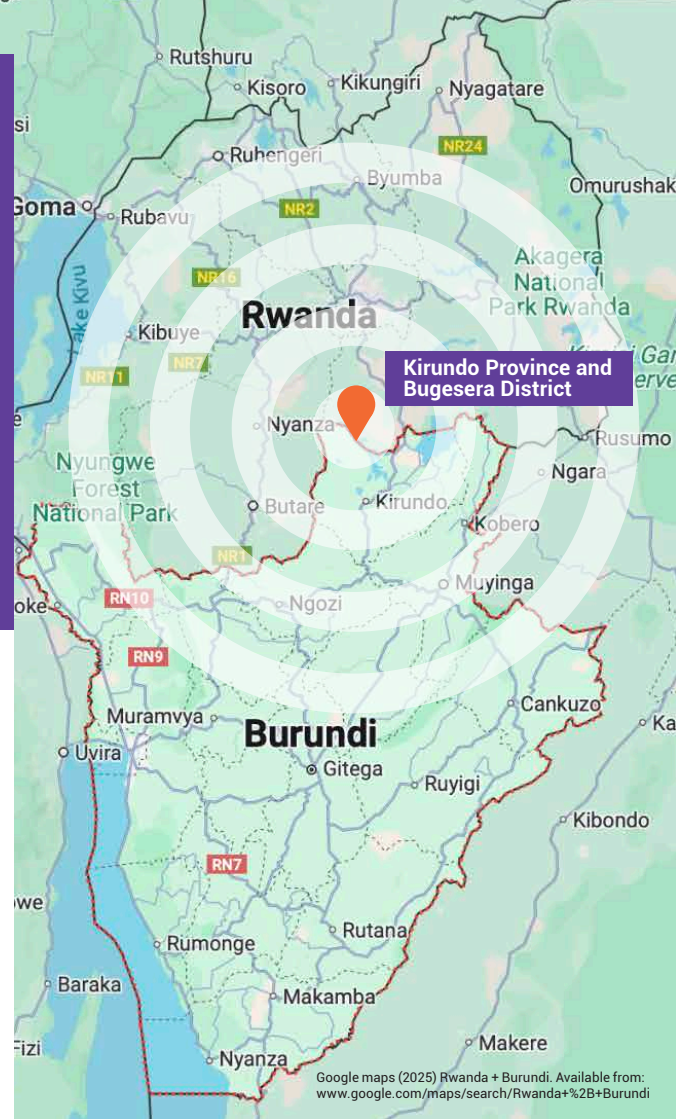
NEW PROJECT LAUNCH: RESTORE

In January this year, we launched a brand-new two-year project in Burundi and Rwanda. The Regenerating Soils and Thriving of Rural Ecosystems (RESTORE) project seeks to address hunger and poverty while protecting the local environment in Burundi and Rwanda, particularly around Lake Cyohoha in Kirundo Province and Bugesera District.

Through knowledge-sharing and adaptive strategies to optimise impact by addressing land degradation and fostering resilience, the project holds the potential to transform the lives of rural communities in a socially inclusive way, while contributing to broader climate change mitigation goals in Burundi and Rwanda.

PROJECT AIMS

- Regenerate degraded soils and improve rural ecosystems while enhancing the livelihoods of smallholder farmers.
- Soil and water conservation to boost climate resilience.
- Regeneration of watersheds and natural resources.
- Improved crop and livestock production through agroecological practices; enhanced household incomes and food security.
- The project will directly benefit 1,000 households in each country, emphasising inclusivity by engaging women, young people, people with disabilities, and minority groups.



Your donation in support of farming families

☐ £10 ☐ £25 ☐ £50 Other

If you would like to twin your garden, please call 01225 874 222 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm) or head to rippleeffect.org/garden-twinning

1 Your details

Title & full name:

Address:

Postcode:

Phone:

Mobile:

Email:

We would love to keep you updated about the impact your support is having and about other ways you can support us including opportunities to donate, fundraise and volunteer. **Let us know by ticking the boxes below to ensure you don't miss out:**

☐ **Yes**, I'd like to hear from you by **email**

☐ **Yes**, I'd like to hear from you by **sms**

If you would like to update the way we contact you, please contact us on 01225 874 222 / 01225 688 222 or at supporter@rippleeffect.org. More information is available at rippleeffect.org/privacy

2 Your method of payment

☐ I've enclosed a cheque/postal order/charity voucher made payable to **Ripple Effect**

☐ I'd like to pay by card, my details are below:

Name as it appears on card:

Card No:

☒ CAF Card

Start Date (CAF Card Only): Expiry Date:

3 Boost your support by 25% at no extra cost with Gift Aid

Gift Aid allows Ripple Effect to claim 25p extra in each £1 you donate from HMRC at no extra cost to yourself. **Please tick the box below** and complete your details to help make your support go even further!

☐ **Yes**, I am a UK taxpayer and want Ripple Effect to claim Gift Aid on this donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years.

I understand that if I pay less Income Tax/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on my donations in that tax year, it is my responsibility to pay any difference. Please let us know if you want to cancel this declaration, change your name/address or if you are no longer a UK taxpayer.

☐ **No**, I am not a UK taxpayer or do not want Ripple Effect to claim Gift Aid on my support.

Signature:

Date:

Donations made using this form will be used wherever the need is greatest to support the farming families we work alongside in rural Africa.

Please complete and return this form to: Ripple Effect, The Old Estate Yard, Newton St Loe, Bath, BA2 9BR

Ripple Effect International is a charity registered in England and Wales (299717) and Scotland (SC049792), and is a company limited by guarantee (02290024).

Growing together with farming families in rural Africa



As the climate crisis worsens in rural Africa, farmers are struggling to grow what they need to feed their families. You can help them change their situation and grow a more positive future.




Twin your garden with Ripple Effect and your donation of £60 could help provide a family in rural Africa with seeds, tools and vital training. In time, families will grow nutritious food to eat, set up small businesses and be able to break the cycle of poverty for good.



"Garden Twinning joins a veg patch here with one in rural Africa. It means you grow alongside a small scale gardener, and they get three years training so they can grow sustainably. It's a terrific idea and a lovely gift."

Kathy, Garden Twinning

What you'll receive:

-  sustainable wooden plaque to display in your garden
-  vegetable growing guide from Charles Dowding, our no-dig expert
-  wildflower seeds to get you started on your Garden Twinning adventure

We would love to see your Garden Twinning photos. Email us at head.gardener@rippleeffect.org to let us know what you have been growing in your garden.



Twin a garden at rippleeffect.org/garden-twinning or call 01225 874 222 / 01225 688 222

(Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm)