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## **Forests Provide Environmental, Economic Boost to Uganda**

Richmond, Va. – Monday, Sept. 8 - The benefits of two new forests have captured the attention of youth in the Masodde community in Uganda.

The forests, which were first planted three years ago, have environmental benefits, provide firewood and give a boost to the economy.

“Forests help us in giving us fresh air, especially those who live near them because at times it can be so hot, but they help in bringing cool air,” said Mutasingwa Fauza, a 14-year-old student at Masodde Muslim School.

The project was made possible by funding and guidance from Christian Children's Fund Uganda. CCF's programs are dedicated to serving the needs of children and youth worldwide.

The forests consist of eight acres of eucalyptus trees and six acres of pine trees. CCF staff, children and their parents initially planted more than 10,000 eucalyptus trees and 5,000 pine trees for the project.

Environmental protection is among the key issues toward improving living conditions in the area, which has seen excessive environmental degradation by humans using the land for fuel, medicine and building materials. The new forests now provide fresh and cool air for the community, as well as helping soil erosion.

“Forests provide fresh air when there is too much sunshine,” said Nalubega Florence, a 14-year-old student at St. Andrew Primary School. “Those forests normally contain fresh air, which is always enjoyed by the people around them.”

The trees also serve as a major source of firewood to the community. Many children come to the forest to collect small, dry tree branches and take them home for firewood.

“Forests are used as a source of cooking materials like firewood, which are cheaper and in many cases got at no costs,” said Nalutaaya Viola, a 16-year-old student at Masodde Muslim Primary School.

The community hopes the forests provide an economic boost as well. CCF Uganda staff members say that money will be made by selling timber for firewood and housing projects. Eucalyptus trees, which grow very tall and straight, can be sold as electric poles.

“Forests will be a major source of timber, which will be mainly used in house construction, and houses are very important to us,” said 14-year-old Nalubega Florence, a student at St. Andrew Primary School.

Additional benefits community members have seen from the forests include fruits from trees, a habitat for wild animals such as monkeys and birds, local medicine and better crops.

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*[Christian Children's Fund \(CCF\)](#) is a global force for children, helping the world's poorest and most vulnerable survive and thrive in order to reach their full potential. Serving children since 1938, CCF works in 31 countries and assists approximately 15.2 million children and family members worldwide, regardless of race, creed or origin.*



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