

Suubi Update Blog September 2012

http://www.hug.org.au/_blog/Suubi_Update_Blog/post/September_10th,_Coffee_Project_Takes_Off/

3-9-2012, Coffee Project In Full Swing.

A larger scale coffee growing project has really started taking off at Suubi over the last month or so. This followed after a group of five youth from the centre had earlier spent a number of weeks being trained in grafting and growing seedling.

Having since taken those skills to establish small coffee plantations at their own homes, those five youth are now leading a group of 30 interested people from the community to establish a coffee nursery at Suubi Centre. The aim is to begin by growing 10,000 seedling which will then be sold to coffee farmers in the area, whereby creating an income for participants. In addition to this, the first 500 seedlings produced from this crop will be purchased from the group to be planted out at Suubi Centre. The income generated from this plantation will go a long way towards making the whole project self sustainable in the future, while at the same time serving as an excellent working demonstration area for others who are interested in learning from it.

With the help of a [RSSAF grant which is distributed by Oxford University](#) in the UK and the ongoing support from HUG in Australia, we recently added a new water tank at the centre which will be used by the coffee growing group. Necessary tools and equipment to get the nursery started have been provided and a greenhouse to protect the seedlings is also currently in the process of being built.



The new tank was installed during August and has since taken advantage of rain from the start of this years wet season.



Members of the group were also hard at work during August preparing the many pots to be used for establishing the first crop of seedlings.

During last week, members of the coffee group visited one of the most highly regarded and well established coffee farms in the district. Faasi, the owner, was keen to pass on his skills about permaculture and the way he has maintained his very large plantation over many years. It was from his flourishing trees that the group took cuttings which are now being used to establish their first crop of seedlings.



Fassi, (L) explained many things to the group about how to grow healthy trees which will continue to produce a high yielding coffee crop.



Cuttings were taken from Fassi's very healthy mother trees to be used to establish the seedling crop at Suubi Centre.

With the cuttings from Fassi's mother trees on board, the group returned to Suubi where they set about preparing them for planting in tube stock. The youth who had participated in the earlier training did a wonderful job of passing on the cutting and planting skills to the rest of the group.



Bossco (2nd left) passed on cutting skills to some of the new participants in the group.



The small cuttings were then dipped into a solution to encourage root growth before being planted into tube stock.



The tubes were covered with polythene to create warmth while the roots begin to grow.

Now that the planting is complete, the coffee group will need to water and care for them carefully over the next couple of months. It is hoped that before the end of the year we will be seeing the fruits of their labour as the seedlings are sold and planted out. Exciting times ahead!