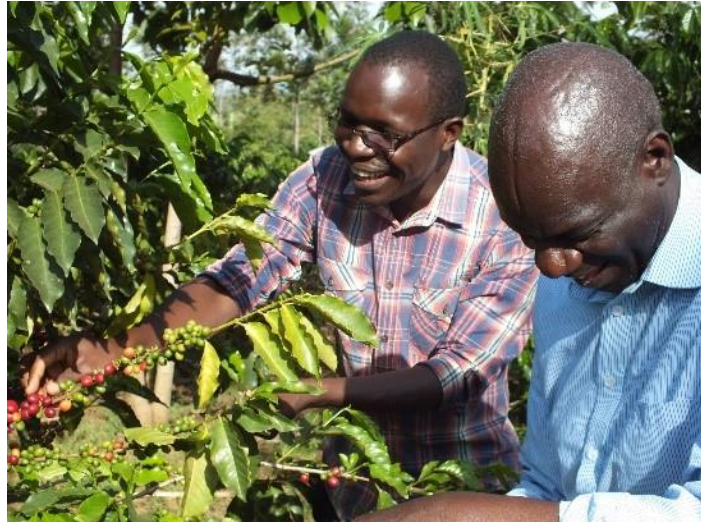




## permEzone Newsletter – June 2017

### *Pilot Program Now Starting in Rongo!*



*Paul (project manager) and Caleb (project founder) for Sustainable Village Resources*

Our pilot program started in RONGO on June 1st!

It has been a long journey, with many unexpected detours on the way, but no one said international development would be easy!

In collaboration with Permaculture Research Institute-Kenya, we will be working with Sustainable Village Resources (SVR) in Rongo, western Kenya. You may remember SVR from our December 2016 newsletter, when we highlighted the work that Sheena Shah, Programmes Coordinator at PRI-Kenya has been doing with them to implement an organic coffee project. With PRI-Kenya's help, their shade-grown, permaculture-raised, and fair-trade roasted coffee is now available online for coffee-lovers in the UK! With an established consumer base, we are happy to have the opportunity to collaborate with a well-organized group and help build their impact with the permEzone program.

SVR is an NGO in Migori county, where they are blessed with fertile soils and abundant rains; sadly, unsustainable agricultural practices have contributed to increasing deforestation and soil erosion in the area. Many farmers, who used to make a good income from coffee, abandoned coffee production in favor of sugarcane; despite the good soils and rainfall, they are now struggling to make a living from volatile markets.

PRI-Kenya partnered with Sustainable Village Resources and Rongo Coffee Farmers group to support the farmers in their efforts to create environmentally sustainable livelihoods through coffee food forests - layered agroforestry (permaculture) systems that provide organic and healthy coffee as well as food crops and other cash crops, such as honey. Other species will be integrated into the system to provide essential eco-system services, including nitrogen fixing trees.

SVR have already set up a central coffee food forest demonstration site in partnership with PRI Kenya, the Biovision Foundation- Switzerland, and SLUSH fund in North America. This site comprises a coffee tree nursery with seedlings appropriate for organic production and a simple processing and storage facility. One of Kenya's largest coffee marketers is helping to market the coffee, with transport arranged through another supporter, Fargo Courier.

As we work to fire up our pilot program in Rongo, we are also laying the groundwork for future expansion and defining our program and processes so that we can nimbly pivot to take advantage of opportunities in other locations as they arise.

### *The permEzone Team*

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Even more good news: our friend and colleague Nicholas Syano, co-founder of the Permaculture Research Institute Kenya and Founder of the Drylands Natural Resources Center in Makueni, Kenya, has been so successful in raising funds at DNRC that he is now pursuing a big opportunity to work on another farmer training program. We are happy to see that permaculture principles are spreading far and wide and gathering momentum!

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*We are now fundraising to meet the costs of trialing the mobile phone platform that will form a critical component of the permEzone service. Please make a [contribution](#) to this special fundraising campaign if you can.*

*Your donations will be used to run a pilot of the permEzone program, training and supporting farmers in East Africa, developing the mobile phone platform and collecting and evaluating data to demonstrate the impact of the program. This is a chance to make a real difference by empowering people in impoverished rural communities to work together to build resilience and improve the lives of current and future generations.*

*Any further help you can give to [spread the word](#) will be hugely appreciated.*

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*permEzone is a project of [Empowerment Works](#), a 501(c)3 non-profit, and an international project of the [Permaculture Association](#) (Britain).*