

Newsletter June 2025

The Training of Forest Wardens Has Started

A big milestone has been reached. Last year, the credit system of tree-secured loans, TCRD*, caught the attention of the government and the IDS institute at the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. In Switzerland, the Directorate for Development Cooperation (DEZA) also showed interest. In November 2024, TCRD was chosen as one of ten startups for the International Cooperation Award. Each year, DEZA looks for «outstanding development activities with strong local roots» for this award. Through this recognition, DEZA confirmed the «great potential» of the tree-secured credit system. However, no financial support was given. Locally, the experience has been very positive. After two successful TCRD credit rounds in 2023 and 2024, ten farming families in Magunguli, who never had access to loans before, now use tree-secured credits to plant extra fields with beans and potatoes. These early successes have sparked a lot of interest, including in nearby villages. But there is a big problem: there are not enough forest wardens. «*We urgently*



need to train more Watunza so that families in neighboring villages can also join,» says Ragpa Tweve, the first forest warden (Mtunza Misitu) in Magunguli. Forest wardens are responsible for registering the tree plots, monitoring the trees, and protecting them from fires and illegal logging. They send monitoring reports to the lenders so the loans can be secured. Until now, Ragpa has done all this work alone. Over the past three years, TCRD has built a system that people in the village developed themselves. They understand how it works, and they can improve it over time. The skills of the Watunza Misitu are crucially important. The GRACOMA initiators are now creating the first training course for forest wardens. **farip** will play an important role by sharing knowledge and guiding people during the learning process. «*Training will be an important task for the future GRACOMA company»*, emphasizes Bahat Tweve, one of the founders.

***TCRD Tree-secured Credits for Rural Development**

farip promotes innovative business ideas: Among them are women who want to run a business on their own, like Fatuma with her [cookshop](#), or Lucy who turns 50kg bags of [beans](#) into small packages for family consumption. «[MTM](#)» uses waste biomass from harvested fields to produce charcoal dust. This is processed into briquettes as a charcoal substitute, reducing the consumption of solid wood. [GRACOMA](#) is an experiment to test how private forest ownership can be used as collateral for bank loans. This complex project encompasses a wide range of areas such as fire protection, forest maintenance, tree nursery and monitoring and evaluation of the growing trees. «[Scheduled Cargo Service](#)» SCS wants to provide agricultural producers with reliable transport to markets. [TSS](#): A fair trading model, distributing surplus to producers. **farip** aims to sustainably strengthen the agricultural production chain in the countryside and to stabilise and improve farmers' income situation.

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Collection Points Our many years of working with the trading system «Transaction Security Services» (TSS) of the Tanzanian company Tanzania Biashara Mapema (TBM) show how complex and fragile the whole value chain is - from the field to the sales point in the city.

For a long time, TBM used its own transport. But the «scheduled transport» had to be reduced because of many challenges. This year's rains are heavier and longer than ever before.



Many roads cannot be used.

TBM is now focusing on the first, most important part of the sales chain: building **collection points** along the main roads. Farmers can bring their products there. From these points, the products will be transported to the cities and sold by TBM.

TSS is becoming **Vijikweli**, which means «truly from the village.» «*Vijikweli is the brand of fair trade,*» says Elibariki.

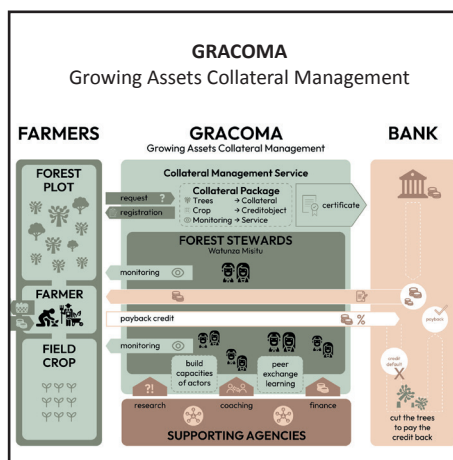


Pioneering Work There is exciting progress in the training of Watunza Misitu, the forest wardens. The first drafts and a budget for the training program are ready. The training plan covers topics like tree nurseries for native plants, registration of forest plots for loan security, monitoring of the plots, contracts, and bookkeeping. The budget for the first forest warden course is set at 12,000 CHF.

farip depends on donations to keep supporting these projects. Thank you



for standing with smallholderfarmers! There are also plans for extra training on other ways to earn income from the forest. For example: making briquettes from biomass, using biochar to improve soil and store carbon, or selling honey and wild fruits. Some important processes still need to be refined and decided soon. How will farming families get help when applying for loans? How will the correct use of loans and repayment be checked? And what should happen if a loan



is only partly paid back or not paid back at all?

The initiators want to set up GRACOMA as a legal entity and local organization very soon. Until now, **farip** has been taking on GRACOMA's tasks. In the future, GRACOMA will work independently from **farip**. Once it is founded, GRACOMA will expand to other areas. It will also act as the legal manager of the loan securities with the banks.

«Scouting» How does an interesting idea in rural Africa become a small business? It requires scouting! **farip** specializes in this “first mile”: Initiators in Tanzania approach **farip** to support their innovation processes: Who will take on the idea. How is the organization structured? What practical trials can demonstrate feasibility? And where is the market for the products? Many ideas are discarded, and only those with development potential make it through to be supported by **farip** as a venture.

farip supports ventures with loans and experience sharing, connects them with other innovative projects, and coaches them through an ongoing learning process on how to turn failures into new ideas.