

## A word from Jean-Paul Deprins, CEO

Dear reader,

In any complex business, success is built on strong partnerships and dedicated people. Forestry is no exception. At Better Globe Forestry, we are fortunate to have both committed teams who bring our long-term vision to life and partners who stand with us in our mission to create a lasting impact.

This month, we are pleased to shine a spotlight on Tree Partner Solutions, whose recent visit to Kenya reaffirmed their crucial role in our shared journey towards sustainable development.

## TREE PARTNER SOLUTIONS VISIT TO BETTER GLOBE FORESTRY A FIELD JOURNEY THROUGH IMPACT

In late April and early May, Tree Partner Solutions (TPS) from Sweden, represented by Jacob Saturnus, Filippa Amanto, and Cathrin Nilsson visited Kenya to experience firsthand the transformative power of sustainable tree planting in drylands, and reaffirm why Better Globe Forestry (BGF) remains their trusted partner in East Africa.

Their visit began at BGF's head office in Nairobi with introductory meetings, followed by an immersive field tour to Kiambere BGF plantation, FSA bank and several BGF partner farmer farms across Kitui county, one of the regions that showcases the lasting impact of BGF's long-term collaboration with local communities.

*The TPS visit commenced, with a meeting at the BGF Head Office.*



*Community engagement meeting with BGF, TPS, and the local Chief.  
(Photos by BGF)*



## From Digital Tools to Deep Roots in Kiambere

At the Kiambere plantation, the delegation received an in-depth overview of current fieldwork and innovations. They tested a Swedish mobile application designed for tree measurement, which will significantly enhance BGF's capacity to capture real-time data on tree growth and stand density.

The BGF team also demonstrated the seed extraction process and full propagation cycle of *Melia volkensii*, widely regarded as the champion species of dryland forestry, highlighting the science and dedication behind every tree planted.

A key highlight of the visit was the stop at the site of BGF's upcoming pilot agroforestry project, where 10,000 trees will be planted in partnership with the local community. Access to water and community co-management emerged as central themes during discussions, which included a meaningful engagement with the local Chief and community elders.

Their message was clear: BGF's presence is not only appreciated, it is essential. Echoing this sentiment, TPS described the initiative as "a new way forward" for sustainable land use and improved livelihoods. Designed in line with FSC standards from the outset, the project will integrate timber and fruit trees with resilient crops such as millet and pigeon peas, setting a model for sustainable

*TPS visit at BGF Kiambere plantation. (Photo by BGF)*





## Where Trees Meet Finance: A Village Bank with Deep Community Roots

In Kitui's Mbuvi Location, the delegation visited the FSA village bank, an institution co-founded with seed support from BGF. This is no ordinary bank; it serves as a lifeline for over 6,000 community shareholders, organised into 124 "muungano" groups. Here, loans are driven by peer accountability, built on trust, and rooted in grassroots entrepreneurship. TPS witnessed how tree planting, savings, and group enterprises intertwine to create a thriving financial ecosystem, one that empowers rural families and reinforces the link between environmental and economic resilience.

*Kasten Village Bank visit, including a briefing by the manager and a meeting with one of its thriving farmers' Self-Help Group. (Photos by BGF)*



## Farms That Tell a Story

TPS continued their journey by visiting several farmers and community groups, each with a story of resilience, innovation, and transformation.

At Musovo, a self-help group that began partnering with BGF in 2015, members proudly showcased their thriving Melia and Acacia trees, gum harvesting techniques, and table banking initiatives that have evolved into local businesses. Beyond improving their livelihoods, the group actively supports neighbouring communities and vulnerable children, spreading the benefits of their success.

One farmer shared how, with training from BGF on soil and water conservation, he transformed a barren, degraded plot into a flourishing, food-secure farm, even in this drought-prone region. TPS was visibly moved by the strength, dignity, and quiet determination behind his story.

In Ngungani, the "home of Melia", the delegation met one of BGF's longest-standing partner farmers. A leader within a dynamic growers' group pursuing FSC certification, he proudly manages a farm with 1,784 thriving Melia trees, proving the long-term potential of sustainable dryland forestry.

The final stop was in Waita, where another farmer reflected: *"I joined BGF to improve my family's livelihood through agroforestry. Today, I have fruit trees, bees, chickens, cassava, and sweet potatoes."*

His farm is not only productive, but thriving, offering food security, income, and employment to his wider community.

*TPS and BGF teams with a Self-Help Group that has been a BGF partner since 2015. (Photo by BGF)*

*BGF and TPS during a field visit. (Photo by BGF)*



## Investing in Nature, Transforming Futures

The TPS delegation returned to Sweden with renewed conviction. They witnessed how tree planting in ASAL regions goes beyond reforestation; it's a nature-based solution that regenerates land, uplifts communities, and creates long-term value. Their visit reinforced confidence in BGF as a trusted partner, one with the expertise, dedication, and deep community ties needed to drive meaningful, lasting impact.