

Solomy Ateenyi has set a target of achieving 100 goats on her Mityana based mixed farm. EDGAR R. BATTE talked to her and below she shares her dreams.

Ateenyi rears goats and grows eucalyptus trees

Solomy Ateenyi rears goats and grows eucalyptus trees, spread on two acres in Mityana. She is only starting out. She started with 16 goats in September last year and began by planting 800 trees in July last year.

"I started this tree project after doing research on eucalyptus. I found out that they are strong and they can grow well and survive in all-seasons," she says. Recently, her goat gave birth to seven more.

Ateenyi was motivated to go into farming by her parents. Growing up, she saw them rearing different animals, such as goats, pigs and rabbits. Each of the children had one pig, according to Ateenyi.

Starting out

When she grew up, she did different jobs but in the end, she pursued her passion. That is how she started rearing goats. She did not require a lot of start-up capital. She says they (goats) make quicker returns and are more suitable for small scale farmers.

"I started with two nannies which were pregnant. In January, when I had saved more money, I bought three more pregnant goats. Now, I have 16 goats; three males and 13 females. Already three are pregnant," the budding farmer explains.

She grazes them in Mityana on part of the eight acres she bought at Shs6m in 2007. She initially bought two and then four acres later.

The land was spotted for her by her parents who live in the area. She visits Mityana four times a week.

Hands on

She has two employees but is 100 per cent involved. "It is one of my day jobs. The workers help me out to take care of the farm. I look after my goats on a free range. I do not spend much on my goats apart from treatment. The treatment is not such a financial burden because they are treated once, when the rains start and at the end of the rainy season" she further explains.

Returns

She has realised some returns from the project. "I have started getting returns because the goats I started with have more than doubled and their kids have started giving birth. I am not planning to start selling



Ateenyi cuddles a kid on her goat farm in Mityana. PHOTOS BY EDGAR R. BATTE



The farmer poses in her grown eucalyptus trees garden which she planted last year.

200

SHS200,000
CAPITAL ATEENYI INVESTED
INTO HER GOAT FARM

soon because I would like them to keep multiplying so that I grow my project," Ateenyi says.

Target

Her ultimate goal this year is to grow the project to 100 goats. She is giving goats more attention since trees do not require much work and attention. Her initial investment in rearing goats was Shs200,000.

Ambitions

She runs a shop in downtown Kampala, dealing in plastics. But it was not from the shop that she earned the savings that started her off in the tree planting projects and goat rearing venture.

"I started goat farming when I received money from our rotational savings club. It is a group of four ladies. We each save Shs250,000 per month. Each month, the recipient gets Shslm," she explains.

She dreams of growing her fold to 1,000 in three years' time. "I plan to achieve this by buying more female goats so that they can breed and multiply. I rear both exotic and local

types," she adds.

And having her finances in check is important. Ateenyi says she usually develops a financial plan or framework to keep track of finances coming in and out of the businesses.

In peak times the plastics businesses earns her an average of Shs300,000 per day. The profits drop to Shs100,000 during off peak season. Her clients consist of businessmen and women deal in herbal medicines, jelly and liquid soap.

Advice

Her advice to those, who might want to go into growing your money on trees or rear goats for commercial purpose, is first to have the time, and then to be passionate about the ventures.

"Goat farming requires a little start-up capital and more suitable for small scale farmers. The risks are not many and they are manageable. You should have it in mind that life on a farm is a school of patience; you cannot hurry it but learn the trick of the trade," she advises.

When she is not transacting or waiting for clients at her shop, she tends her goats in Mityana or walks through her tree project. She is a mother of two who demand her attention on a daily basis. She is a graduate of Information Technology (IT) and System Management from Datamine Technical Business School. Her first job was doing sales at Twins Investment Limited. Ateenyi was born and raised Makindye, Kampala. She is the last born in a family of