

**A NARRATIVE REPORT FOR THE FIRST QUARTER
(OCTOBER – DECEMBER)**

**SCALING UP and OUT SUSTAINABLE FARMING METHODS FOR IMPROVED
FOOD SECURITY, NUTRITION AND INCOME AMONG NINETY WOMEN IN
HOIMA DISTRICT.**



PROJECT LOCATION OF THE PROJECT: Itara Village, Busiisi Sub-County Hoima District, Western Uganda.

REPROTING PERIOD: October-December 2016

SUBMITTED TO: Quaker Service Australia

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SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Eco-Agric Uganda has completed its second quarter of scaling up and out sustainable farming methods for improved food security, nutrition and income among 90 women in Hoima District. This aims at assisting communities to achieve a greater quality of life through improved food security, nutrition, income, water quality and reduction in poverty levels. The project is benefiting ninety members. The Australian government provided 48,996,990/= through the Quaker Services Australia for the project that is being implemented from July 2016- June 2017. In this first quarter, 19,860,000/= was received for the implementation of project activities.

During this quarter, there has been intensive management of FFS and demonstration sites which were established last quarter to act as learning centres on sustainable beans and maize production and they have been harvested successfully. The host farmers and the group members have played a big role in the management.

Trainings in sustainable crop production, agro-forestry, poultry production and enhancing of savings were conducted. Improved sustainable practices ranging from land preparation to harvesting are being promoted for improved sustainable agriculture production. Permaculture has been highly promoted in favour of food security and proper utilisation of the available small pieces of land. Training in entrepreneur skills was part of the activities conducted in the quarter.

Procurement and distribution of technologies to set up Demonstration Sites was done successfully. The technologies procured included Kroilers, poultry feeds, vegetable seeds, irrigation buckets and saving boxes. Adoption of the construction and use of energy saving cook stoves was realised amongst the group members.

The beneficiaries had an exposure training visit to St. Jude family project in Masaka which was intended to enhance their learning on sustainable agriculture.

Monitoring and midterm review of project activities were conducted to assess the progress of the planned objectives.

Acronyms

DS: Demonstration Site

FFS: Farmer Field School

GAP: Good Agronomic Practices

OFSP: Orange Fleshed Sweet Potatoes

PHH: Post Harvest Handling

TDS: Technology Development Site

QSA: Quaker Service Australia

VSLA: Village Savings and Loans Association

PROGRESS OF THE PROJECT

TRAININGS

Training on sustainable crop production:

All the three groups received trainings in sustainable crop production through the field officer and project coordinator. **The major ways of implementing sustainable gardening ethics in our lives were**

Plan for generating income and enough food for your family and the community, Grow what your family and local people need, Focus more on indigenous plants than exotic species, Plan for sustainability on a long-term basis, Grow traditional food plants, Cultivate the smallest possible land area, Use different plants to suit different weather conditions, Save seeds and grow your own seedlings as far as possible, Use low energy environmental and biological systems to conserve and generate energy, Bring food growing back into the cities and towns, where it has always traditionally been in sustainable societies, Assist people to become self-reliant, and promote community responsibility, Plant forests and restore fertility to soil.

Use everything at your disposal and recycle all wastes, Control pests and diseases biologically, See solutions, not problems Diversify your production, Grow plants for beauty as well, Work where it counts (plant a vegetable; assist people who want to learn), Network with organizations in the same business, Train others, especially your own children. These will enhance crop production and create a healthier environment. To have the trainings conducted effectively and efficiently, mobilization was done through radio announcements, phone calls and group mobilizers.

Six trainings were conducted per group for two groups and five trainings in the third group making a total of seventeen trainings in sustainable crop production.

During the quarter, trainings in savings were conducted to enhance savings.



A technical staff demonstrating bucket irrigation. Florence harvesting her tomatoes

Trainings on poultry production:

The project coordinator & the Field Officer trained the farmers in poultry feeding, hygiene and disease management. Ten trainings were conducted.



Florence with her chicken

A demonstration on poultry management

Training on agroforestry: All the 90 women (three women groups) have been trained in agroforestry practices and demonstration done. These included boundary tree planting, alley cropping and wind breaks. The trees promoted were *Greveria robusta*, *Mangifera indica*, *senna spectabilis*, *Makhamia lutea*, *Albizia chinensis*, *Autocarpus heterophyllus* and *Carica papaya*. These trees will provide fuel wood and fruits to the farmers.

Degree to which the outcome was achieved: The outcome was 100% achieved because all the trainings were conducted timely and successfully.

Constraints/hindrances: There were no constraints that prevented the outcomes being achieved

Lessons learned: the use of locally available tree species eased the exercise and will easily enhance project sustainability. On farm training makes the work lively

Challenge in achieving this outcome: The sunshine affected crop productivity thus low yields were attained. The women still have it that some trees take long to mature hence showing less interest in planting them.

PURCHASING OF TECHNOLOGIES TO SET UP DEMONSTRATION FARMS AND FARMER FIELD SCHOOLS

In order to ease the activity of establishing demonstration farms and farmer field schools, it was thought wise to purchase the necessary technologies. These were purchased from reliable source by the procurement committee. The purchased items included Kroilers, poultry feeds, saving boxes, irrigation buckets and vegetable seeds.

Degree to which the outcome was achieved. The activity was 100% achieved whereby the targeted 500 Kroilers, 300Kg of poultry feeds, 60 tins of vegetables, 30 water irrigation buckets and 2 saving boxes were purchased and distributed.

The **reason** for the success was that the procurement committee was in place and conducted the procurement process timely and the items were delivered in time which favoured their distribution to the intended beneficiaries.

The contributing **factors** were: bidders quick response and having quality technologies. Having technical staff on the procurement committee who assessed the items to be supplied especially Kroilers.

Constraints/hindrances: Finding one bidder to supply all the 500 kroilers of good quality at once was a tag of war.

Lessons learnt

Calling for open bidding made it possible to choose the best quality items.

Timely calling for expression of interest gave the suppliers time to supply their best

Challenge in achieving this outcome; finding bidders with all the necessary qualifications was hard.

Progress towards sustainability

The birds will be raised under free range system which will enable them get used to harsh conditions hence improve on their survival rate. The training in feeding of birds on local feeds like sweet potato peelings will enable farmers provide supplementary feeds all the time

ENERGY SAVING COOK STOVES

After realizing the importance of energy saving stoves like easy to use, affordable, and environmentally friendly and reduce the risk of children from accidents like burning because the fire is shielded. These stoves are constructed with a simple a chimney so that smoke is emitted outside the kitchen reducing the risk of respiratory diseases. These advantages have prompted many other members to adopt the technology and the rate of dissemination is very high.



Women preparing the mud to make a cook stove. Women working together to construct the stove



At a stage of removing banana stems



A field officer finishing the saving stove

Degree to which the outcome was achieved. The activity was 100% achieved whereby the targeted six energy saving cook stoves were constructed as demonstrations and other beneficiaries have adopted the technology

The **reason** for the success was the technology selected is using locally available cheap materials which could be afforded by all the members. Such include couch grass, clay or anthill soils, sweet potato leaves, banana stems and water.

The contributing **factors** were: the beneficiaries highly welcomed the technology and were ready to participate at all times. Conducting demonstration with all the members present enabled them gain practical skills and they were able to copy and set the technology at their homes.

constraints/hindrances: The technology needs a lot of water hence women found it hard fetching water for the construction of the stoves.

Lessons learnt

The demonstrations made in a group enabled members to transfer the technology to their homes quickly. Group work reduces on the time spent when carrying out the activity

Challenge in achieving this outcome; The water sources were far away which was hectic for most of the beneficiaries to construct the stoves.

Progress towards sustainability

All beneficiaries have learnt how to construct the stoves hence replication to other households is very easy.

CHILD PROTECTION

During the period, no challenges related to child protection were experienced. To prevent the condition from occurring, trainings on child protection were conducted. The purpose of the training was to have the members aware of the children's rights and be able to create strong reporting and referral mechanisms, while providing quality support to vulnerable families. A child protection hot line 116 was also still promoted. Parenting skills were instilled in the beneficiaries so as to avoid and/or reduce violation of Children's rights. One training per group was offered.

FAMILY PLANNING:

During the quarter, much emphasis was put on natural methods of birth control.

Natural family planning is a method used to help a couple determine when sexual intercourse can and cannot result in pregnancy. During the menstrual cycle, a number of changes occur in a woman's body. By keeping track of these changes, couples can plan when to have intercourse and when to avoid intercourse, depending on whether they are trying to achieve or avoid pregnancy. During each menstrual cycle, one of a woman's ovaries releases an egg. This process is called ovulation. The egg moves toward the uterus through the fallopian tubes, where fertilization may take place. An unfertilized egg may live for up to 12 hours. The egg will be shed later during the menstrual period if it isn't fertilized. A woman is most likely to become pregnant if sexual intercourse takes place just before or just after ovulation.

The calendar, basal body temperature, and cervical mucus methods are combined to give you the awareness of when your body is most fertile. As you become familiar with your body's ovulation and fertile window, it provides you the opportunity to abstain from sexual intercourse or use a barrier method during that time. This method was promoted because it is cheap and health friendly.

Quotes from participants

I Nakandi Robinah from Itara village feel proud to be part of the QSA project which has greatly improved my lifestyle. I have highly benefited and indeed I have moved a great step in my personal life and the entire family at large. All along, I used to grow food for home consumption and starve financially. I had no knowledge of how to plan for the little money got and would always find difficulties in taking my children to school. When I had that there was a project coming to help women of Itara, I was so excited and rushed to join the group. When they introduced the savings scheme, I took myself as a failure because I could not imagine getting weekly savings. But, with the various trainings conducted and the inputs provided, I was encouraged and kicked off with savings successfully. I first planted beans and vegetables like short egg plants, green pepper and tomatoes. The vegetables were grown under sustainable crop production system where there has been continuity in production. The crops have provided food throughout and have been able to sell the surplus to get income. When I harvested the beans, I was able to increase on my savings and provide the necessary materials to the family members. The vegetables have provided income on a continuous basis which has made me economically strong. The knowledge gained from entrepreneurship skills has enabled me search for good market around Hoima town.

The project went ahead and provided me with chicken which I have raised under free range system. I expect to get good returns after their sale and be able to excel financially. The eggs from the birds will improve on the nutritional status of my family and some will be sold.

Prior, I used to have problems with getting enough firewood since I was using a traditional tree stone stove, but, now I have an energy saving stove which consumes 2-3 woods and cooks faster. Above all, I have gained self confidence and can now express myself before other members and my views are hard.

Long live QSA, long Live Eco-agric Uganda and your generous support.

As told by Nakandi Robinah

Appendix 1: Chart detailing the total number of direct and indirect beneficiaries from the quarter's work

Direct beneficiaries							
				Disabled			
Men	Women	Boy	Girl	Men	Women	Boy	Girl
19	73	0	0	0	0	0	0

Data per indicator for Eco-Agric indicators 2016/17

1.400 - FAMILY PLANNING

Number (2) of family planning services provided

Direct beneficiaries								
				Disabled				
Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
	36							

2.500 - GENDER –Increasing women's voices in decision-making, leadership and peace building

☑ 2.513 - Number (22) of women's groups, organisations and coalitions supported

Direct beneficiaries								
				Disabled				
Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
	22							

2.600 - GENDER – Empowering women economically and improving their livelihood security

☑ 2.605 - Number (92) of people who participated in training and vocational training to assist them to access increased and sustainable livelihoods

Direct beneficiaries								
				Disabled				
Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
19	73							

3.100 - FOOD SECURITY and RURAL DEVELOPMENT – Lifting agricultural productivity

☒ **3.101 - Number (92) of poor women and men who adopt innovative agricultural practices**

Direct beneficiaries								
				Disabled				
Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
12	54							

100 - FOOD SECURITY and RURAL DEVELOPMENT – Lifting agricultural productivity

☒ **3.102 - Number (89) of poor women and men with increased incomes**

Direct beneficiaries								
				Disabled				
Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
18	71							

3.200 - FOOD SECURITY and RURAL DEVELOPMENT – Improving rural livelihoods

☒ **3.201 - Number (92) of poor women and men who increase their access to financial services**

Direct beneficiaries								
				Disabled				
Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
19	73							

All of them are saving

3.920 - CLIMATE CHANGE – Reducing the impacts of climate change and other environmental factors

☒ **3.929 - Number (72) of people with a new income source from sustainable environment and natural resource use**

Direct beneficiaries								
				Disabled				
Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
14	58							

6.100 - CAPACITY BUILDING OF IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

6.103 - Number (1) of local in-country partners reporting an increased organisational and project implementation capacity as a result of participating in ANCP funded projects/program

Direct beneficiaries								
				Disabled				
Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total
3	8							

Baseline

Expected

Target

300	90	90
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Direct Urban

Direct Rural

0	90
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Explanatory notes

FAMILY PLANNING

8 Pregnant women were referred for assistance to the health centre to enable further health education and safe delivery. Sensitization on family planning methods especially of the natural one has been ongoing. Members who had complications with family planning methods were also advised to seek for medical advice from the health workers.

GENDER –Increasing women’s voices in decision-making, leadership and peace building

12 women in Tukurakurane Women’s group and have gained leadership skills. Whereby two are village health team workers, 8 are in church leadership and 2 are village mobilisers. 4 members from Tweheyo are also leaders in the community whereby one is a councillor, 2 are mobilisers and One is a chairperson flag bearer.

GENDER – Empowering women economically and improving their livelihood security

Most of the women have started income generating activities like weaving of baskets and mats. Some are involved in local processing of coffee from fruit tree seeds which coffee is essential in mitigating the effects of blood pressure and diabetes. These activities are fetching the women some income which has enabled them provide for their domestic needs, pay school dues for their children and improved on their livelihoods. Sustainable crop production has enabled production of vegetables throughout the year which the members sell and get money.

FOOD SECURITY and RURAL DEVELOPMENT – Lifting agricultural productivity

Permagardening has been highly promoted amongst the beneficiaries. The beneficiaries have

established gardens of half an acre or 40x40M and planted a variety of crops. The crops planted include: sweet potatoes (local and orange fleshed sweet potatoes), common African yam, bananas, vegetables like long and short egg plants, tomatoes night shade and cabbages, cassava, ground nuts, beans, pigeon peas. Agroforestry trees have been incorporated in these gardens.

FOOD SECURITY and RURAL DEVELOPMENT – Improving rural livelihoods

Sustainable agricultural practices have resulted in constant production which has enabled food security and the selling of surplus has brought some money to the farmers. The beneficiaries can now provide for their domestic needs timely and also get other requirements as need be using the money got from the sale of their crops.

FOOD SECURITY and RURAL DEVELOPMENT – Improving rural livelihoods

Number (92) of poor women and men who increase their access to financial services

The old group is stable and conducting its activities steadily under minimum supervision and they managed to apply for a grant for women groups from the municipality for which they are still waiting for the reply. The two new groups which were formed have now also caught up with the system of saving and giving loans to their members. All members have chances to access loans and do other personal investments. The groups have been visited by political leaders who have promised to support them if the groups apply for any financial assistance from the government.

CLIMATE CHANGE – Reducing the impacts of climate change and other environmental factors

In addition to the tree seedlings which were given to the beneficiaries last quarter, planting of the indigenous available tree species has been promoted to mitigate climate change. Irrigation farming is also under practice to enhance nonstop crop production. Other beneficiaries have adopted the use of energy saving stoves which will reduce on the amount of wood used for cooking improving on conservation hence combating climate change.

6.100 - CAPACITY BUILDING OF IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

Women with reproductive problems have been referred to Reproductive Health Uganda for provision of health services. The services included health education, treatment of sexually transmitted diseases and reproductive care. Reproductive Health Uganda also gave cervical cancer screening services at a subsidized price.