

**IMPROVING FOOD SECURITY AND INCOME AMONG RURAL WOMEN HEADED  
HOUSEHOLDS AND ENHANCING EDUCATION AMONG ORPHANS AND  
VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN KITUKUTWE VILLAGE**



**A TOMATO NURSERY BED FOR ZINUNULA WOMENS GROUP**

**SECOND YEAR QUARTER THREE REPORT (APRIL-JUNE  
2016)**

**ACTIVITY PROGRESS REPORT  
SUBMITTED TO: VIBRANT VILLAGE FOUNDATION  
BY  
ECO-AGRIC UGANDA**

## **Introduction**

Environmental Conservation and Agricultural Enhancement Uganda (Eco-Agric Uganda) was established in 2007 as a Community Based Organization and registered with the Government of Uganda in 2010. It is a registered organization under the Uganda registrar of companies-as a company limited by guarantee with no share capital. It works with rural farmers, women, orphans, vulnerable children and persons living with HIV/AIDS. It aims at improving community livelihoods through improved health, agricultural production & environmental conservation. This organization is implementing a project funded by VVF. This project serves the purpose of improving food security and income among rural women headed households and enhancing education among orphans and vulnerable children in Kitukutwe village

In April 2016, Eco-Agric Uganda started its third quarter of project implementation. This project serves the purpose of supporting women with income generating activities and food production as well as supporting vulnerable children and youth attain education and vocational skills. During the quarter the following activities were undertaken: training in mushroom production, training in crop production, training in entrepreneurship skills, distribution of startup kits and scholastic materials and monitoring of project activities. These have been vital because they have created a positive impact in the livelihoods of the beneficiaries.

**The activities conducted during the quarter were as follows**

### **Distribution of scholastic materials to primary and secondary children**

Though struggle has been undertaken to have most of the vulnerable children in school, most of the care givers have not been able to support their children fully with all the required scholastic materials. Due to that, efforts were made to purchase and distribute the necessary requirements to them so as to have them at school. The scholastic materials included pens, books and uniforms. The distribution was done depending on the child's need (vulnerability level). Most of them received all the three items. In the due course, other services like guidance and counseling so as mend their psychological status were offered. Continuous home and school visits were conducted. The pupils were encouraged to work hard and put much emphasis on agriculture because it is the easiest and cheapest enterprise to invest in. messages on reproductive health were always part of the sessions so that they can grow in a health state and also be able to pass on the message to other community members especially at school and in their villages. This would have a great impact in behavioral change.

### **Distribution of startup kits to the vocational students**

On gaining skills in vocational courses, there was need to practice. This would not be practical without aid because most of them could not raise money to buy startup materials despite the efforts which were put forward to have the students saving some money during the training which would act as start up capital. To address that, materials like hand driers, shampoo and relaxers were purchased and distributed equally. This was after realizing that most of them could plait more than six hair styles. Amongst these are bagiya, bob, pencil, twist three strand, dreads, weave and the different styling done after hair treatment. It is believed that these students have the capacity to dress clients preparing for their functions like introduction, graduation and wedding. Along the way, students have been saving and this money will be supplemented on the startup capital.

### **Conducted training about mushroom production**

Mushroom cultivation has great scope in China, India and in some of other developing countries because of the cheap and easily available raw materials needed for this activity, coupled with faster means of communication and marketing (as a fresh commodity), and better purchasing power of the people. It is hoped that the avocation of mushroom farming will become a very

important cottage industry activity in the integrated rural development program, which will lead to the economic betterment of not only small farmers but also of landless labourers and other weak sections of communities. Mushroom farming is a complex business, which requires precision. Indeed, it is not as simple as what some people often loosely stipulate. It calls for adherence to precise procedures. The major practical steps/segments of mushroom cultivation trained in were:

- (a) Selection of an acceptable mushroom species
- (b) Secreting a good quality fruiting culture
- (c) Development of robust spawn
- (d) Preparation of selective substrate/compost
- (e) Care of mycelial (spawn) running
- (f) Management of fruiting/ mushroom development
- (g) Harvesting mushrooms carefully
- (h) post harvest handling
- (i) Marketing

These were considered because if you ignore one critical step/segment, you are inviting trouble, which could lead to a substantially reduced mushroom crop yield and mushroom marketing value.

### **Conducted training in crop production**

Vegetables are fast growing and can be sold at a higher price. They can be eaten raw/fresh as salads, fried, pasted or added to other sauce like beans. These crops serve a lot of nutrients for example minerals, vitamins A and C which are vital for vision and bone development. Therefore there is need for these crops to improve on their diet which will lead to good health. The purpose of these training was to equip the farmers with the knowledge of growing vegetables both on large and small scale (kitchen gardens) so as to improve on their diet and income generation. The

trainings ranged right from nursery establishment to marketing. The crops handled were spinach, tomatoes, cabbages, kale, short and long egg plants, green pepper and night shade.

### **Entrepreneurship and business skills training**

Too often people think there is need of a lot of money to start a business, but this is not really the case. Successful business implementation is accompanied by continuous trainings to instill the needed skills along the process. The entrepreneurship skills were a backup on encouragement of the beneficiaries to have income generating activities. The trainings aimed at enabling the beneficiaries do good enterprise selection, implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation. In all these trainings the following were at the back of the mind.

1. What is a business?
2. Identify functions of a business
3. Who is an entrepreneur?
4. Identify the role of an entrepreneur
5. Identify the characteristics of an entrepreneur
6. Understand the risk of becoming an entrepreneur
7. Recognize the benefits of being a successful business owner
8. Differentiate between an opportunity and an idea
9. Identify business opportunities
10. Asses the reason why you are thinking about starting a business

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

The project coordinator and M&E officer drew a plan to visit the project activities every month. Monitoring was done by the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, project coordinator and field staff. All activities that were conducted during the quarter were monitored. Three monitoring

visits were conducted to ensure that the project is on the right path. The key areas of interest were mushroom and crop production, status of vocational students and the businesses opened.

### Program monitoring and analysis for the quarter

Activity	Annual Performance indicator	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarterly Performance indicator	Annual Planned	Annual Achieved	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter Planned	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter Achieved
Distribution of scholastic materials to primary, secondary children	20	05	100	05	05	100
Distribution of startup kits	05	05	01	01	01	01
Conduct training about crop /mushroom	50	50	100	50	100	50
	10	10	10	10	10	10
	30	30	30	30	30	30

Entrepreneurship and business skills training	70	18	210	54	18	18

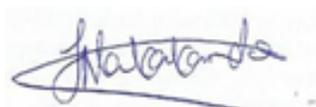
### MAJOR CHALLENGES/RISKS IDENTIFIED IN THE QUARTER

Risk and Challenges	Potential Impact on Project Implementation	Proposed Risk Management
Poor post harvest handling of both mushrooms and vegetables	Poor quality of the produce hence reduced income due to Reduced demand.	More training in post harvest handling of mushrooms and vegetables will be conducted. Technical staff will continue guiding them at the time of harvesting
Diseases still a serious problem in Mushroom growing	Many losses have been experienced	Purchasing of disease free spawn. Technical guidance in disease management will be provided.
Seasonal changes hence disrupted planting plans	Delayed conduction of project activities especially agriculture section	Application of irrigation

### Plans for next quarter

Month	July	August	September
Activity			
Monitoring and evaluation			

Compiled by;



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