



STAD- UGANDA

KITCHEN GARDENING PILOT PROGRAM REPORT.



Ayimini Village Degiba Parish Koboko District.

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List of Abbreviations.

STAD:	Support Trust for Africa Development.
OSLP:	Open Space Learning Program.
PLE:	Primary Leaving Education.
NFI:	Non Food Item.
SOP:	Standard Operating Procedures.
VHT:	Village Health Team.
LCI:	Local Council One.
F&CMO:	Field and Community Mobilization Officer.
AF&CMO:	Assistant Field Community Mobilization Officer.
TOR:	Terms of Reference.
ETWA:	European Third World Association

1.0 Executive summary.

This project hatched timely especially when schools are closed due to the COVID-19. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) tracks the educational impact of Covid-19 globally and shows that schools in Uganda have been closed for more than 77 weeks, close to 20 months, and counting.

Without drastic preventive and supportive responses to counter the impact of the pandemic by individuals and the government at large, communities with less access to basic needs are grossly at high risk and hence the need to assist communities confronted with this situation.

The kitchen garden pilot project beneficiaries with STAD staff executed most of the field tasks that included land preparation, planting, weeding and pest control and a facilitator contracted to facilitate a three (3) days training with clear Terms of Reference (TOR). STAD field team supported the kitchen gardeners with specific knowledge in planting these crops and seeds. The demonstration garden is open to the community to get experience in land preparation, growing, planting, and caring and management of crops, harvesting among others.

The trainings were organized to suite the agricultural knowledge gap in the community. This includes awareness campaign for sustainable agriculture and 64 were in attendance, 48 farmers were trained on organic manure and on the last day, 37 famers were trained on organic pesticide. Total of 148 farmers were trained.

Funds received especially from ETWA was used to implement the kitchen gardening pilot project.

1.1 Project back ground.

Support Trust for Africa Development (STAD) received funds from European Third World Association (ETWA) and Haella Foundation for its Open Space Learning Program (OSLP). Due to the lockdown measures and closure of all the schools from June till January 2022, STAD decided to focus on providing the community members with some practical skills and knowledge- part of its educational programs by setting and implementing the kitchen garden pilot project under OSLP.

Ayimini community faces lots of challenges due to limited social services including developmental agricultural intervention by both the government and humanitarian organizations. This has affected the livelihoods and or food baskets of the area. STAD strives to strengthen these communities with some practical learning skills through establishing a demonstration kitchen garden to provide practical farming skills that might prove useful when the children grow up; awareness raising on peace building activities for peaceful co-existences and distribution of some food and non-food materials/items.

Training the children and community members with improved methods of farming and or to grow vegetables to supplement their nutrition is in line with STAD motto or the expression that: **“Give me fish, and I will always depend on you, teach me how to fish and I will be a lesser burden to you.”**

The kitchen garden project is designed to provide knowledge and awareness on sustainable agricultural practices in Ayimini village Degiba parish Midia sub county Koboko district under the context of COVID-19 regulations.

1.2 Project specific objectives.

- To establish kitchen gardening farm used to demonstrate/train the farmers with the most sustainable farming practices.
- To raise awareness on mindset, change and sustainable agricultural practices
- To train 130 farmers on making organic manure and pesticide.

- Provide the elderly, widows, people with disabilities (PWDs), teenage single mothers with some food and non-food items
- Support the communities with tools to grow some vegetables to supplement their nutrition and earn some income for basic needs.

1.3 Training methodologies

With limited education and knowledge on the various topics presented, the participants participatory methods including: brainstorming, probing, role plays explanations; testimonies, questions and answers periods were used.

2.0 Awareness building meeting.

Meetings were organized in various locations within Ayimini (project location) with the community, LC1 offices of Ayimini and Bongo Villages. In the community meeting, 23 member turns up this is due to the government restriction of 20 at that time due to the COVID-19. Present were the Village Health Team (VHT), Local Council One (LC1), elders, and community members.

The aim and objectives of the kitchen gardening project was clearly explained to the community members to ensure sustainability of farming knowledge and practices During the meeting, names of project participants were unanimously selected. These included representative from the youth, women and men. And a total of 20 beneficiaries were selected that time. It was resolved that beneficiary must be willing to participate in trainings, learn and adopt the new practices. However, issues such as teaching youth skills in laying blocks for housing construction emerged brought up by one community member who attested that he has the expertise together with five other community members in doing the work of laying blocks.

This to STAD was a great opportunity for improving the youth's skilling who are redundant due to lockdowns and effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. The community members acknowledged the importance of the Open Space Learning Program (OSLP) in Ayimini Village. One member was able to testify that, due to the intervention by STAD through the OSLP, his child was able to score good grades in the recently released Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) results and his child scored second grade.



The community members and STAD team attending the awareness meeting.

2.1 Procurement of gardening tools and items.

To progress to the practical stage of the program, farm tools were purchased. These tools were purchased at different stages involves at the field. First, tools like hoes, slashers, pangas, forked hoes, watering cane, spraying pump. Protective gears like gumboots, masks, hand sanitizers during meetings, hand gloves. These tools greatly helped in site clearance, cultivation, watering, spraying of the crops.



Gardening tools and items.

3.0 Primary land tillage.

This phase entails mainly digging, and shaping the land for planting. The selected participants for the project turned up overwhelmingly to dig the land and carry second digging. This was a clear indication that the community took the positively. After cultivation, the garden was allowed to ferment for 2 weeks before secondary tillage.



The project beneficiaries tilling or digging the land (first stage).

3.1 Secondary land tillage.

In this stage, work was basically on the primary land already dug. Focus was on reducing clod size, weed control, leveling soil surface etc. which is a prerequisite before planting. This helped in mixing the upper fertile soil profile with the lower profile which influenced soil organic carbon and distribution of water and aeration in the soil profile hence manipulating weed residue and later controls/ removes unwanted plant growth-leaving the garden in a suitable condition for planting seeds and seedlings.



The ideal piece of garden ready for plantation

4.0 Purchase of seeds and seedlings.

The strength of agriculture lies in the quality and variety of seeds and seedlings. We purchased high-quality and sustainable seeds and seedlings in order to sustain the production of this project. This helped in reducing seed dormancy hence mitigating losses. The variety of crop seeds include; maize, okra, cow-

peace and groundnuts and seedlings include egg-plant, garden-egg and potato vines. In addition to that, the community and the STAD field team were engaged in peeling the groundnuts.



The seedlings of garden egg/eggplant and next is the heaps of potato vines.



The STAD volunteers and the community/ participants peeling groundnut pods.



Okra seeds

and

groundnut pods

5.0 Planting of the seeds and seedlings.

STAD field team supported the kitchen gardeners with specific knowledge in planting these crops and seeds. The demonstration garden is open to the community to get experience in land preparation, growing, planting, and caring and management of crops, harvesting among others. During planting, the community mobilization officer demonstrated to the kitchen gardeners the best practices needed during planting these include; adequate spacing, proper depth, watering among other. However, broad casting method was used for planting cowpeas. The spacing between the crops and rows were as follow;

Table 1, plant spacing guide used;

Vegetable	Spacing between plants	Spacing between rows.
Okra	(18-38 cm.)	(90-106 cm.)
Sweet potatoes	(30-45 cm.)	(90-120 cm.)
Eggplant	(45-60 cm.)	(75-71 cm.)
Maize	(90 cm)	(95 cm.)
Groundnuts	(8-12 cm.)	(45-50 cm)



The F&CMO demonstrating to the beneficiaries how to plant and next is the participants planting.



The project beneficiaries and STAD field team planting groundnuts.



The two photos are taken during plantation of okra seeds.



The field team and beneficiaries making heaps for planting sweet potatoes.

6.0. Distribution of food items and Non-Food Item (NFI).

Since this program is volunteer driven, STAD staff did their best for the community by giving skills, knowledge and time. And all community engagements towards the project were on voluntary basis due to the urge to learn sustainable farming practices. We motivated the kitchen gardeners by giving them maize flour and soap. The distribution of food and NFI went beyond to most needy especially the most vulnerable in the community. However, one family whose members are all disabled was supported with maize flour, soap, sugar, tea leave, and matchbox, beans and cooking oil.



The assistant community mobilizer issuing maize flour for the kitchen gardeners after planting.



The assistant field officer delivering food and NFI to a needy family

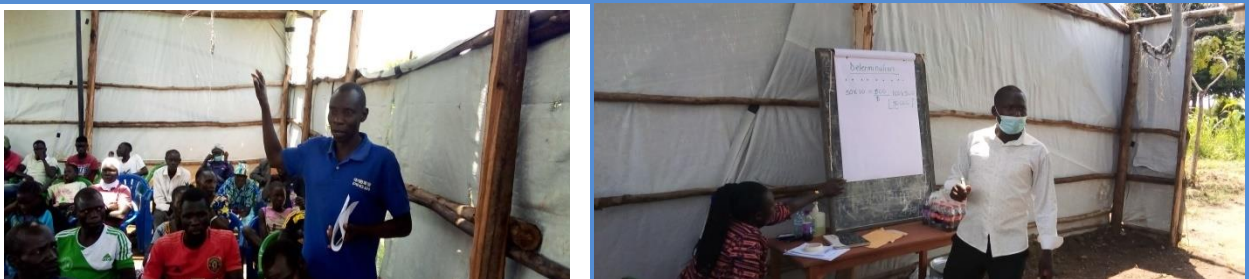
7.0 Awareness campaign for sustainable agriculture.

This program was deliberately organized to provoke the negative attitude and practices of the community members towards agriculture. Agriculture here has been characterized by poor farming methods (harvest and post-harvest, purely subsistence); the energetic youth have become lazy towards agriculture.

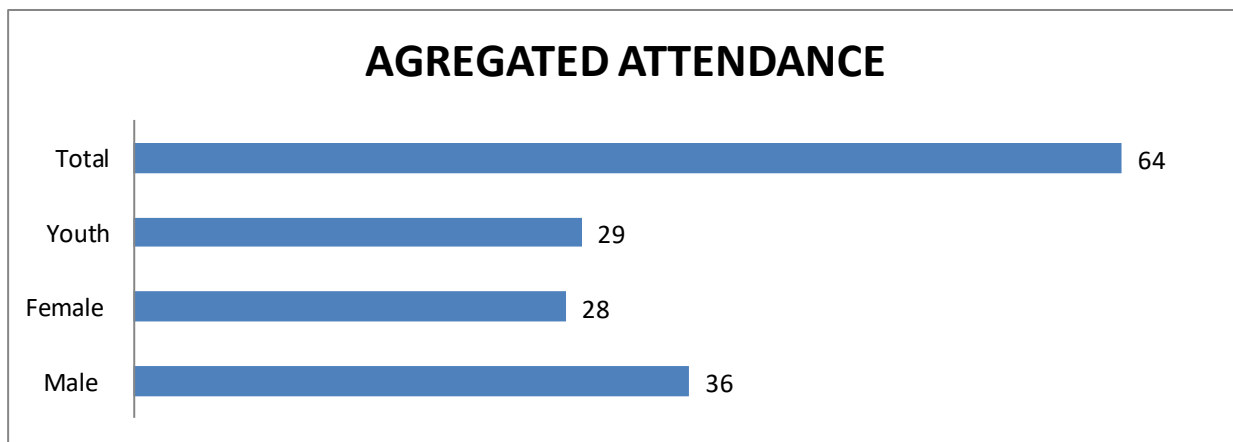
They prefer to stay in urban and semi-urban areas. Most importantly this awareness was designed deliberately to enhance knowledge of the farming community on kitchen gardening and organic agriculture, which offers optional strategies in food production. The area of mind set change on personal development, sustainable agricultural practices, farming as a business, urban farming technologies, addressing youth challenge through agriculture were covered during the awareness.



The facilitator giving a presentation and next are the participant having refreshment



A trainee asking a question and is being answered in the next photo by a facilitator



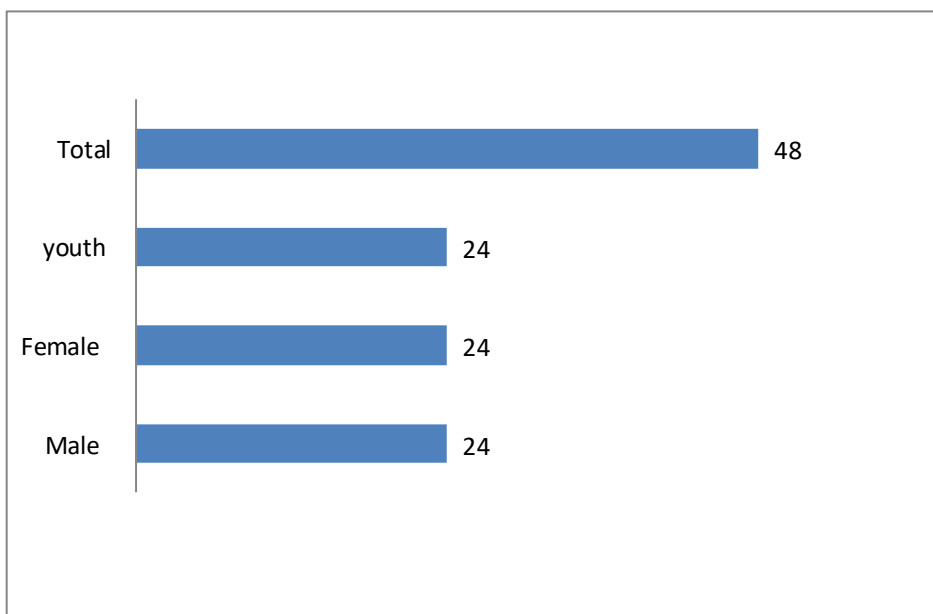
7.1 Training on organic manure.

This training took place on the 12th October 2021. In the training, a total of 64 participants attended describes as women, youth and female. The materials used include; Twigs (maize stem), green hairy leaves, ash, water, loam soil, goat droppings, manure stick. And a pit of 60cm wide 100cm long and 60cm dip was dug to fill the materials as arranged in the profile illustration bellow.

Profile of the Manure pit.

Loam soil
Water
Ash
Green hairy leave
Loam soil
Goats droppings
Dry grass
Twigs (maize stem)

Graphical attendance.



NB: The pit can be dug 1m/1.2m wide 60cm dip and of any length according to the materials.



The facilitator giving instructions for the trainees next the trainees doing practical work.



The training forming the different layers of the manure pit.



A general overview of the trainees during one of the training sessions

7.2 Training on organic pesticide.

The beauty with this training was that it gave each member a room to learn. And these was the procedure; Use of motor, we pounded Pawpaw leaves, Tephrosia leaves, Neem leaves, chili, Garlic separately. These materials are mixed in water at a ratio of 1:3 respectively

We cut the brown soap at match box size and this will mix 20L.

The table showing how each material was prepared: -

MATERIALS	QUANTITY	RATE OF H ₂ O
Pawpaw leaves	1kg	3L
Chili	2 cups	6 cups
Tephrosia leaves	1 1/2	4 1/2 L
Neem	1/4kg	1 1/2 L
Kerosene	1ml	2 L
Brown soap	Match box size	20 L



A facilitator giving a demonstration as the participants looks on in the next photos.

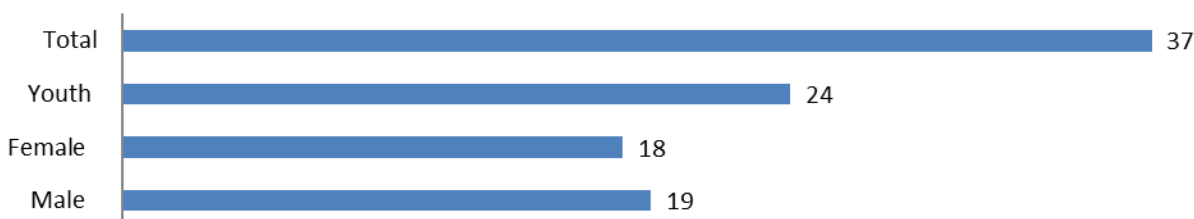


Trainees pounding chili and Neem and next is squeezing the chilly to make pesticide.



The various materials made in a liquid form and a group photo after the training

Agregated Attendance.



8.0 Farm management and maintenance.

After the three days of training, the project participants resorted employing the best practices learnt. Series of activities were done that includes weeding, spraying the crops with the organic pesticide among others. Lunch and breakfast were catered during this exercise.



Beneficiaries weeding groundnuts and next is during weeding of eggplant/ garden egg.



Germinated groundnuts and eggplants after weeding.



A woman cooking for the project beneficiaries.

9.0 Challenges.

- This is a community that feels neglected in most development initiatives and literally missed opportunities for innovations and or personal endeavors to come out of poverty. Changing their mind to self-reliance is going to be a slow and hectic process without sufficient financial and non-financial resources or innovative ideas
- Most of the participants had high expectations of big meals, sitting allowances. This kept shifting attention during the presentations.
- Poor weather conditions associated with rain, cold which affected time management in all days of training.
- Logistical challenges. The project area of intervention is very far about 5km a with poor roads and thus high transport costs incurred.
- Fluctuation in the market prices. This is for both commodity prices and a drop-in exchange rate especially euro to local currency.
- Limited space or meeting room. During the awareness campaign, the number of participants overwhelmingly reached 60 creating difficulties in this space as COVID rules had to be observed
- COVID-19 restriction. These restrictions on number social gathering, movement among others delayed early implementations of the project.
- High turnover of participants in the 3 days of training. This is due to weather changing weather conditions.

9.1 Lessons learnt.

- Deliberate and joint mobilization is key to achieve targets in any project implementation. This is by involving key stake holders like the LC, VHT and community members.
- Being flexible and having a good relationship with the community is key. During the awareness campaign, we run out of chairs and community members were able to support us with 20 chairs.

9.2 Recommendation.

- Need to renovate and expand the shelter. During the awareness campaign, the numbers of participants were many and these challenged sitting capacity.
- Need to organize additional training for the beneficiaries on the areas of food nutrition.

- Need to do a follow-up on the training conducted
- A clear strategic plan in demonstrations and agronomic trainings will help a lot in bringing the community to fight hunger and poverty

9.3 Conclusion.

This report has reviewed and identified the context and level of agriculture in the community. Farming or agriculture still is the leading source of livelihood in this area. This being the first agricultural intervention in the community, many more collective and similar interventions are still needed from both the government, private sectors and NGOs in order to incorporate some of the most sustainable agricultural practices that can provide food and livelihoods and for environmental sustainability.

Lastly, but not the least, the Ayimini community and STAD team in Uganda would like to register their gratitude and thanks to ETWA's unwavering support and trust in STAD. Thanks, for funding this projects that will definitely impact and contribute to change in the lives of this community.

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