Vibrant Village Foundation Grant

This report covers activities carried out in the four villages of Wagaba, Kamuli, Namagera and Kabagezi under the programs of Health, Agriculture, Nutrition and Education.

Kabagezi and Namagera demonstration gardens were still the focus of this quarters Agriculture and Nutrition program activities because the two programs complement each other. As family demonstration gardens train parents/guardians in food production, the nutrition program is designed to train them on how to prepare nutritious meals using what is locally available. At the demo, farmers observe and participate in improved farming skills and cooking lessons and thereafter transfer the knowledge and skills to their home. However the main challenge has been the prolonged draught, rains came towards the end of February and continued sporadically until April. Although a few crops managed to germinate, some like maize was severely hit by the American bollworm which has proved resistant to any pesticide.

Main activities carried out under agriculture were: construction of two energy saving stoves, hosting farmers at BKB main farm, seedbed preparation, supply of good quality seeds and farmer to farmer visits.

In nutrition we continued with the feeding program, nutrition status assessment, nutrition education and food demonstrations, farmer exposure visit to BKB farm and hygiene and sanitation trainings and demonstrations.

In health, the MHC which operates in the 4 villages; maintained its main activities of: diagnosis and treatment of general medical illnesses, malaria prevention and treatment, referrals, health education and counselling, behavioral change communication, raising awareness on nutrition, family planning, breastfeeding, HIV/AIDS, antenatal care, hygiene and encouraging the use of sustainable alternative means of treatment (use of local drugs). The clinic visits different locations in the villages providing free medical care to the most vulnerable communities in Kakiri Sub County in Wakiso district.

Under Education our main objective was to induct teachers towards use of school gardens as a teaching/learning aid. The training incorporated aspects of nutrition, hygiene and sanitation.

**OVERVIEW OF MAJOR ACTIVITIES & EVENTS:**

***Agriculture***

1. **Training and construction of the energy saving stoves**. Four energy saving stoves were constructed by both the trainer and the farmers. At each demo, one stove was constructed while the other two were constructed at two different homesteads. The beneficiaries in Kabagezi village were New Generation Primary School and Natongo Amina. While in Namagera village it was Namagera Primary School and Grace Sempa. The training factored in the aspect of growing and managing trees along with their conservation through use of energy saving stoves. The purpose here is to minimize tree cutting, environmental degradation and pollution as all folk here depend on wood energy for cooking.
2. **Exposure visit to BKB Organic Demonstration Farm:** We hosted 60 farmers from our two demos of Kabagezi and Namagera. The intention was to raise their self-esteem and inspire them to adopt what they have learnt. They were taken through a practical session on pest management (biorational), bottle irrigation and soil fertility management where they participated in making heap compost.
3. **Seed bed preparation**: Various types of appropriate seed beds were prepared both at the demo and participants’ homes. These included Zai-pits, basket gardens, trench beds, key-hole gardens; sack gardens, container gardens among others. Variety is to provide farmers with a range of options to enable them choose what is most suitable to their situation.
4. **Distribution of planting material to farmers:** Farmers were supplied with vitamin A fortified potato vines. These are the most important sweet potatoes available with vitamins. They mature in 3 months, resist diseases, and have an orange color with a good aroma. This will increase the consumption of vitamin A among these poor country folk and reduce malnutrition. Farmers also received good quality vegetable seeds to enable them produce enough food. The seeds included: egg plants, spinach, collards (Sukuma week), beet root, onions (bulb and leek), celery, cucumber, beans, squash, okra, cauliflower and soya beans. Unfortunately their germ inability level was low due to prolonged draught.
5. **Farmer to farmer visits**: This was done to assess their adoption levels and enable an in depth sharing of skills necessary for food production. The visits also generated statistical data as indicated in our monitoring tool (PME). This time, lead farmers based on their adoption rates have been used to guide the rest during these farmer to farmer visits. A total of 110 (57 from Kabagezi and 53 from Namagera) farmers were visited. There is a steady progress in adoption of some farming techniques; evident among them is soil fertility management where a good number have made pit compost and mulched their gardens. Many have also taken on planting more crop varieties, a key skill which farmers have liked.
6. **Other learning areas:** Participants also learnt about postharvest handling, value addition marketing, soil and water conservation, water harvesting for crops, livestock and human consumption. Composting for instance managing domestic waste such as lawn trimmings to generate manure. Management of planting materials of several crops such as vitamin A fortified potato vine and agro forestry.

**Education**

78 teachers representing 8 schools were trained on how they can improve teaching of agriculture in schools and contribute to food production in the community because teachers are key stakeholders in the fight against hunger and malnutrition. The theme for the training was *“increasing food production through agricultural education”*. Topics such as agriculture teaching methods, role of schools in food production, management of school gardens, using small spaces to produce food, organic food production, handling agricultural tools were handled among others. The teachers were taken through hands on sessions especially those related to use of the school gardens, the science kits, workshop tools and garden tools among others. Each participant was also given seeds to take back to their schools. Seeds received by teachers were leaf cabbage, carrots, egg plants and onions. Besides training in agriculture, teachers also had sessions on nutrition particularly the balanced diet, hygiene and sanitation at home and in the community which was crowned with demonstrations on hand washing and how to make a tip tap. Both teachers and pupils would be good at impacting the community with appropriate skills that can help increase food production.

After the training, 4 of the schools; Kirungarunga, Namagera Church of Uganda, Kabagezi and New Generation Primary School received a science kit each. The kits have agriculture and nutrition, hygiene and sanitation items. These kits are real teaching and learning materials rooted in the curriculum of Ugandan education system. The garden kit contained a wheelbarrow, knapsack sprayer, manure folk, spade, shovel, watering can, hand hoe, panga and rake. While the hygiene and sanitation kit contained a small plastic jerry can (tip taps), a string and message tags which had different messages on nutrition, hygiene and sanitation. The science kits are to be displayed in the school compound such that the pupils can read them and practice the message that they convey. These tangible teaching aids are to facilitate practical agriculture lessons and provide hands on training for pupils and teachers in the convenience of their school. If correctly used, the performance of pupils at school will improve and so will the food production at school and back home.

**Nutrition**

Main areas covered under the nutrition program were nutrition education, food demonstration, management of malnutrition among children and hygiene and sanitation.

**Activities carried out were:**

**Food demonstrations:** These includedpreparation of nutritious foods forboth home consumption and income generation. Doughnuts, daddies, vegetable pies, cakes and biscuits were for commercial purposes while the former included fish and rice, ground nut and mushroom luwombo (luwombo means steamed in banana leaves); fruit punch which is very rich in vitamins and minerals that boost body immunity and water which rehydrates the body; Kachumbala (a mixture of cut onions and tomatoes) which is rich in vitamins and mineral and helps boost the body’ immunity against diseases. It is also rich in dietary fiber which prevents constipation.

**Nutrition education** covered the following aspects: Nutritional management of anemia, cough and underweight. Anemic patients were advised to eat foods rich in Iron like liver, meat, and dark green leafy vegetables; foods rich in vitamin C which enhance the absorption of non haem iron (Iron from plant sources) and to avoid drinking coffee and tea with food because they form an insoluble complex with Iron.

**Hygiene and sanitation** focused on raising more awareness on tip taps/handwashing facilities for washing hands after visiting the toilet, plate stands for draining kitchen utensils, pit latrines with doors, latrine covers to keep off flies, enclosed bathrooms, rubbish pits and kitchens. Most families now have these facilities save for few who may lack one or two especially kitchens and latrines as they may require one to part with some money.

**Exposure visit:** The 60 farmers from our two demonstration gardens in Kabagezi and Namagera also got a chance to see our local oven and how it works. They baked biscuits in the oven to prove our point which is “there are alternative and relatively cheap local facilities that they can use to achieve the same results as one who uses an electric appliance. All that is required for the local oven is an old metallic drum/something in that shape.

**Nutrition status assessment:** This entails carrying out anthropometry, clinical and dietary assessments which is a continuous activity, done regularly to help identify other malnutrition cases. 12 more children were identified for the feeding program.

**Feeding program:** Five children were found moderately malnourished and put on the feeding program for a period of one and half months. Two of these; John Mark Tamale and Nampala Florence have already gained the standard weight and won’t be continuing while the remaining three will have to remain on the program.

**HEALTH (MOBILE HEALTH CLINIC)**

1725 people were treated at the mobile Health Clinic. 675 were children and 1,050 were adults. Female adults were 621 while male adults were 429.

This quarter the clinic step up its health campaign on; proper dieting during antenatal period. Beneficiaries were also argued to eat fruits on a daily basis; eat green leafy plants to minimize anemia; to continue using local alternative drugs where possible and to immunize their children against immunizable killer diseases.