

Vibrant Village Foundation Grant - Update

As described briefly in the previous newsletter, the Vibrant Village Foundation in Oregon funded major BkB projects over a two year period, from August 1, 2015 to July 31, 2017.

We recently received the wonderful news that the Vibrant Village Foundation have awarded BkB a follow-on project of even greater scope, totalling about £90,000 over two years! We will describe the plans for that in our next newsletter. In this newsletter we will briefly outline the work completed with the previous project

Family Demonstration Gardens

The Vibrant Village Fund grant funded the establishment of four Family Demonstration Gardens. These activities were in the villages of Kamuili, Wagaba, Kabagezi and Namagera.



Achievements

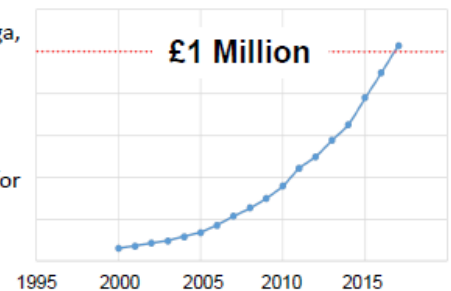
- Participants have learnt how to grow different crops including onions, leeks beet roots, sesame, leaf cabbage, sunflower, amaranths, okra and Teke which were not common in their tradition cropping system. They have also picked interest in consuming them.
- The number of meals served to family members have increased from one meal to two or three.
- Trainees have increased their saving. This is evidenced at Naggulu demo where members organised among themselves a savings scheme. Members have continued to save and borrow.
- Trainees have acquired skills in farming but most interesting is dry processing of leafy vegetables such as doodo (Amaranths). The powder processed takes them through the dry season when vegetables are scarce. In addition to domestic consumption some farmers sell to traders from Kakiri trading centre.



BkB worldwide has raised over £1 Million since 1999

It is now 18 years since Conche, the founder of Bega kwa Bega first invited volunteers from the UK and the US to help provide clean water tanks for families of orphans, work with the children and teach the women some skills. This was in her home village of Kisubi. This fund raising group was founded as Bega kwa Bega, meaning **Shoulder to Shoulder** in Swahili

We are very pleased to announce that the cumulative funds raised for Bega kwa Bega during those 18 years now amounts to **over £1 million!**



New BkB Logo and revision to our Charitable Objects

As you can see above, we have revised the Bega kwa Bega logo, to emphasise the focus on helping whole communities in Uganda; to help the communities help themselves—hence the name Bega kwa Bega—which means shoulder to shoulder. This focus on communities also ties in with a revision to our Charitable Objects.

The fund-raising activities for Uganda Orphans Bega Kwa Bega in the UK were registered with the UK Charity Commission in October 2003, and the purposes of the charity were written into the Charitable Objects.

With the expansion of BkB's capability over the years, the Charitable Objects no longer express all of the activities of BkB. So the Charitable Objects were recently reviewed, and below is the updated version which been submitted to the Charity Commission.

UGANDA ORPHANS BEGA KWA BEGA

Charitable Objects

The Charity's objects ("the objects") are to improve the life chances of orphans and vulnerable children within rural communities in Uganda by:-

- providing sponsorship for named children throughout their education
- supporting the operation of our Mobile Health Clinic in delivering Health Education
- funding access to clean safe water thereby providing girls and women* with time and better health to further their educational prospects
- providing instruction in best agriculture and nutrition practice
- supporting the development of income generation through the teaching of business management skills
- protecting orphans' land rights

* This phraseology reflects the fact that it is usually girls and women who fetch and carry water.

Water—more Protected Springs

The main objectives of the water project are:

- To improve the health of communities by increasing access to year round high quality water and sanitation facilities;
- to save energy and time walking miles to fetch water and to ensure the safety of children especially the girl child who is more vulnerable to all kinds of abuses.

We have protected 182 springs, sunk 18 Boreholes and installed 27 water tanks for the 18 years that BKB has been in existence.

This year alone (2015- 2016), we protected 4 springs , drilled 2 boreholes and installed 2 water tanks for two families, thus increasing clean and safe water access for over 3500 people.

To help villagers keep their hands clean, simple treadle arrangements are put in place, so the precious water that has been carried from a protected spring can be easily dispensed, ensuring water isn't wasted and remains clean until used.

Challenges

- The demand for safe water is still high despite the achievements. For instance Stoney spring, located in Kitanawula village is often jammed with people because it is the only protected spring serving five villages.
- Some springs are seasonal and dry up during the long dry spells forcing people to trek long distance in search of water.



Agriculture—News of the Organic Demonstration Farm

Gerald Kamoga Farm Manager

BKB organic demonstration farm has continued to serve the community by providing many new training opportunities to the community within the agricultural spheres. The BKB Organic Demonstration farm has given rise to family gardens that are active in villages around Kakiri. To date, there have been many activities which our stake holders need to learn about. All our activities are guided by the organic principles and practices.

Soil and water: We have tried to conserve soils by using mulches, cover crops such as comfrey, beans and pumpkins. Keyhole gardens are also used to prevent surface run off. Cut off drainage channels are also common on the farm to prevent soil erosion. All these are supported by water tanks which supply water for irrigation during dry spells.

Livestock: The **dairy cow** successfully managed to calve one good looking male calf. The uneconomical point to mention here is that male calves do not fetch good prices like their counterparts (female calves). When we keep it to mature, the value of milk it consumes in 4 months for example is 336,000 if it drinks 2 litres of milk per day in 120 days. At this age the calf can be sold between 200,000/ 220,000 Ug Sh (around £50). For this reason we intend to sell it off as early as possible.

Pigs: We also have 4 pregnant sows whose farrowing dates differ. The first one to farrow is expected at the end of this month. Our aging senior boar Henry was replaced with a new boar, plus a younger standby replacement in case of any problem. So we have two boars now. One sow gave birth to 19 piglets of which 6 are males and 13 are females. We have four other pigs of which one is a sow, 2 replacement gilts and 1 castrated pig.

Our **goats** have shown good adaptation to the local environment. except the Billy who has a low carcass and weight gain. We intend to cull it and replace it with one of the proven kids from the existing nanny.

Crops: We are making use of the space saving techniques with crops like lettuce, legumes, green pepper and leek. In other fields of the farm we have a diversity of crops such as celery, coriander, onions, beet root, spinach, squash, carrots, several legumes, vitamin A fortified potatoes, okra, lima beans, fruit trees

(lemons, oranges paw paws, mangoes, jackfruits, cocoa, avocado etc), bananas and many others.

Chick peas: We have secured new legumes such as chick peas

(Garbanzo). These will be important legumes to multiply and to feed to the entire community, the residues will be eaten by the goats

and the excess provide ingredients for our compost. Having a variety of legumes will also be a good approach during trainings on legume establishment and management. These are the Garbanzo seeds in the picture . They were obtained from Serere agricultural research centre.

Intern: We have enrolled one student of RUCID in Mityana for internship. His priority goes deep for organic principles and practices. We hope to stay with him for three months.

The bees: Our apiary works well with 3 bee hives. Due to limited space and above all in a densely populated area, we do not intend to expand the apiary.

Challenges

- Fluctuations of labour supply especially during the rainy season.
- Pests and diseases reduce our yields especially viral diseases in oranges. Bananas are also affected by nematodes which are difficult to kill since they are soil based.
- Unreliable rainfall put us at losses as we have to use a lot of water for irrigation.
- High costs of inputs. These include seeds, off farm manure, animal feeds and equipment.





News of Nanyanzi Angel Angel is in her last term in primary two. She has grown into a jolly girl, always smiling and you could think everything in her life is perfect. Last term she was second in her class and her teacher says she is a very active girl in class. Angel says her grandmother is not doing so well. She has been having issues with hypertension, so sometimes she and her cousin help out at home. Angel enjoys school so much. She enjoys studying and also playing with her three best friends. Her favourite meal at school is Cassava and beans (locally known as katogo). Her all-time favourite meal is rice and meat which she rarely eats since the grandmother cannot afford it all the time.

Education—news of some of our sponsored children

We began sponsoring orphans and other vulnerable children for their education back in the early part of this century. Now a number of these young people have left school or further education and we give here what some are now up to:

- A young woman studied for two years in a Medical Lab and is now employed as a Lab Assistant in Kiwoka Hospital.
- Four gained teaching qualifications and are now in schools, one in Nursery, two in Primary and one in Secondary.
- A young man is now employed by one of the foremost factories in Uganda after he received a degree in Procurement and Logistics.
- A woman wishes to set up a clothes shop after taking a course in business administration but she lacks the capital to start.
- Another woman did her apprenticeship as a tailor and after being given a sewing machine by BkB she is able to earn a living for herself and her siblings.
- A young man has qualified in electrical engineering and is now looking for employment.
- A woman has completed a catering course but we have been unable to discover if she has found a job.
- There is a young man who wished to be a driver but was persuaded to undergo an apprenticeship as a mechanic first. This he is doing.
- Another young man has completed such an apprenticeship and is working in a mechanic shop.
- A woman aged 17 left school and without further qualifications managed to get employment in a salon.

Some, inevitably, have not done quite so well. Sadly one young girl was removed from school by her grandmother who refuses to tell us where the child is. Another, now aged 16, who had received favourable school reports indicating she has well above average intelligence, left school, and although being persuaded by BkB's Management Team to attend a different school well away from her area, she ran away from that school as well. Like many clever children might she have been bored? One girl ran off with a man. A nineteen year old in S6 (equivalent to second year A level) gave up his studies apparently due to peer pressure. Another around the same age did not do well in his A levels, refused to go back and resit the exam.

Thank you to all those generous people who have and are continuing to sponsor a child or children. These young people have achieved because of your support.

Our teams

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Income Generation

Our goal here is to increase family income from the sale of surplus agricultural produce and/or products of small businesses. In a bid to achieve this, about 40 beneficiaries from the initial two villages where we established demonstration gardens i.e. Kamuli and Wagaba, were trained in business management and skills under the theme *"sustainable management and establishment of income generating projects"*. 20 of the trainees are to receive monetary help to either enhance their already existing businesses or start-up capital for new businesses.

The knitting project is still going on despite Angelina's demise, her friends and relatives have not let us down. This year they, and Sister Martina Boylan, sent us 19 knitting machines and several rolls of wool and yarn to support these groups.

At the moment we have 14 knitting women groups operating in four districts. Besides knitting some of these women are also engaged in micro enterprises both at individual/group level.

They run businesses like mushroom growing; piggery, poultry and dairy farming, candle and craft making. .



BkB Virtual Supper

Last year we were unable to hold our traditional May supper. To keep this tradition alive we decided instead to hold a virtual supper, to which the whole parish was cordially invited. The menu choices are listed below:

Chicken	£5	School fees for one year	£96
Seeds & tools	£20	Mobile Clinic single session	£210
Piglet	£30	Protected Spring	£650
Pregnant Goat	£50		
Heifer in calf, with shelter and training			£1,200

If nothing on the menu takes your fancy, then a general donation will be equally welcome. So please join us and help us to turn this supper into a feast!

The Virtual Supper was described at three Masses at St Anne's and Immaculate Heart of Mary.

The total donated was well in excess of £3,000!

Donations

Please contact 'The Treasurer' Bega kwa Bega, 2 Kingfisher, Watermead, Bucks HP19 0FR.

If you write out a cheque please make it out to

Uganda Orphans Bega kwa Bega

Or Text Giving: BKBU22 £5 to: 70070

Many thanks!

The Mobile Health Clinic (MHC)

The objective is to control and treat tropical diseases, plan and deliver preventative health education, counselling and guidance, conduct home visits and give emergency response to high risk orphans & vulnerable children. The Mobile Health Clinic is providing health services to the poor and hard to reach populations. We appreciate The Maurice and Hilda Liang Charitable Trust (MHLCT) and Vibrant Village Foundation (VVF) for supporting this project.

Since its inception in 2003, the MHC has treated over 72,000 people in Kakiri Sub County, Wakiso district. In 2015 – 2016 MHC held 68 clinics (53 MHLCT Fund and 15 VVF) in which a total of 8213 patients received treatment. Of the treated, 4213 were children & 4000 adults.

Malaria prevalence is still high despite government provision of mosquito nets to all. It was discovered that scores of beneficiaries still lacked knowledge on proper mosquito net usage, handling and treatment. Although the nets have instructions printed on each pack, the locals can't apprehend the language used. The MHC has therefore integrated the aspect of mosquito net usage and treatment in their education and sensitization sessions. Patients have also been taught how to make home-made mosquito repellent, using natural medicine, deworming using natural methods like pawpaw seeds all in a bid to achieve sustainability.

Patient's stories

- "This is my second time to receive medical assistance through BKB MHC; I have not been suffering from simple ailments since I started utilizing BKB clinic, I now deworm myself and my children in time and don't have to wait for the next time the clinic comes to my village".
- An 18 year old mother, "I have learnt how to take my drugs appropriately and timely – understanding and learning the time intervals during which to take drugs was a very important aspect to me. All along I was doing it wrongly, but now I confidently use the 24 hour division rule to determine exactly after how long I should take my drugs and my child's
- "My children were having a strong fever and I was also feeling weak. Am a single mother and looking after the kids plus educating them is great a burden. However am very glad the clinic came here, close to my home. It's hard to go to the hospital – the transportation plus medical expenses are way above my means.

