

**SCHOOL GARDENS PROJECT
SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT - 2ND BI-ANNUAL NARRATIVE AND EXPENSE REPORT**



NOVEMBER 30, 2024

Introduction:

For the 2nd half of year one, Bega Kwa Bega continued with the completion of the set-up of the School Gardens Central Demonstration Farm and field stakeholder engagement for the phase one district. This report covers the narrative of the work done between May and November 2024.

Program objectives for the second half of year one (May to November 2024):

1. Complete set-up of the Central Demonstration Farm.
2. Complete School Gardens Manual.
3. Complete staff recruitment.
4. Purchase one of the project vehicles
5. Develop a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan.
6. Engage different stakeholders.
7. Conduct a feasibility study and select the final participating schools and champion teachers.

Achievements:

1. Completion and set-up of the Central Demonstration Farm:

The farm structures:

The farm structures were completed. The reserve water tanks and incinerator are also yet to be constructed.

Below are pictures of the current status.



Interior and exterior of the central demonstration farm training room



Administration block and car garage

Farm residences:



Animal Shelters:



Hutch



Chicken Coop



Cow shed



Goat barn

Gardens:

Planting has been completed with longitudinal raised beds and pathways in between to enable accessibility during training.

Planted gardens include: fodder pastures, legume pastures, orchards, root tubers, cash crops, herbs and spices, cereals, creepers and legumes.

The produce from the garden is sold to Gogolo Junior School, the community market and individuals who come to purchase from the farm. Harvesting has been ongoing since September.



Set-up of the urban garden using space saving techniques at the central farm



Harvesting from the urban garden and vegetable sales to Gogolo Junior School

Biogas system:

A biogas system was installed, and the kitchen staff were trained on its maintenance and usage. Biogas is being used in the kitchen for cooking. The bio-slurry produced from the system is used in the garden as fertiliser.



Biogas digester system and the staff being trained in its usage.

2. Development of the School Garden Manual:

The School Garden Manual was developed with two sections, i.e. the agriculture section and the nutrition section. The agriculture section comprises guidelines on how to set up, manage and use the school garden for experiential learning. The manual also highlights the different stakeholders required for the project's success and their roles.

The nutrition part comprises guidelines on nutrition education, the importance of various food groups, healthy food preparation, preservation, storage and promotion of the School Garden produce.

3. Purchase one of the project vehicles:

Only one vehicle (a pick-up truck) has been purchased so far for the project work. This is because there is a truck that was being used for the family gardens project that is currently redundant. The second vehicle will be purchased when the need arises.



4. Recruitment of Project staff:

The second phase of staff recruitment took place in October, recruiting the assistant central farm manager, the second project driver, the second nutritionist, the assistant field farm managers, and the administrative assistant.

Recruitment was done through NFT Consult. The agency scouted and presented the top four candidates per vacancy for BKB to screen and select final candidates. Background checks and academic document verifications were done and certified.

5. Development of the project M&E plan:

Given the magnitude of the project, BKB found it imperative to have in place an M&E plan, to enable us to assess the success of the program, identify any potential issues, track progress, and measure outcomes. This will help us to assess the effectiveness of the project strategies, identify areas of improvement promptly, and ensure that we meet the project goals and objectives.

6. Engagement of stakeholders

This includes district and municipal administrators, school heads and representatives. Meetings were held with the above stakeholders to discuss the project and select participating schools. This has so far been completed in three districts out of the four, i.e. Mityana, Mukono, and Buikwe. The meetings included the Resident District Commissioners, the Chief Administrative Officers, the District Community Development Officers, the District Education Officers, the District and Municipal Production Officers, the District and Municipal Inspectors of Schools, the District Health Officers, the District Headteacher Chairpersons (primary and secondary schools), the District Internal Security Officers, the District Chairpersons, and the Municipal Mayors/Town Clerks.





District Stakeholders' meetings

7. Feasibility study in selected schools:

From the stakeholder meetings, lists of selected schools were submitted to BKB, and feasibility studies were conducted to evaluate the eligibility of the selected schools and assess the likelihood of the project's success in the same schools. The study identified the potential strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and resources required to carry out the project and evaluate the suitable farming technique per school. So far, all three districts have been completed.

Data captured during the feasibility study includes; the name of the school, headteacher's name and contact, number of learners, number of teachers, appointed champion teachers' names and contacts, garden size, current crops grown and desired crops, animals kept, farm tools present, available water sources, current learners' involvement in garden activities, current school meals status, school security status, number of households, school location, and current hours allocated to gardening activities. Data entry for the findings is ongoing.





Field team inspecting potential gardening plots during the feasibility study

Financial Expense Report:

This financial expense report covers the period from June 2024 to November 2024. Details of the report are shared in a separate Excel file.

An updated financial expense report will be shared in January, indicating the total annual expense against the allocation for Year 1.

Challenges faced and learnings:

- Delayed response and bureaucracy from the district administration. Phase two district engagement will start in June, as opposed to September
- The fourth district, Mpigi, did not respond to our request. To stay within the project timelines, we have replaced Mpigi with Buikwe, one of the districts indicated with the highest malnutrition rates in central Uganda.
- While improving school meals is one of the project goals, it has been observed during the baseline survey that learners in most rural government-supported schools have a cup of porridge for lunch. Schools with ample land have requested seeds like maize, beans, soy beans, cassava stems and potato vines to plant food for the children. We believe that these children must learn how to grow food through the school gardens, which will equip them to do the same at home, hence improving the nutritional value of the only meal they have in a day.

Next steps:

1. Stakeholders' meeting and feasibility study in the fourth district.
2. Review of the completed feasibility study.
3. Appointment of the district model farm managers and coordinators.
4. Training of the district model farm managers and coordinators.

Our First Training:

On November 15, 2021, the central farm hosted the first training with 19 students from Makerere University School of Animal Resources and Management. Units of the study included: organic farming principles and practices, organic farming remedies and biorationals, ethnomedicine and biomedicine, organic animal participatory guarantee systems and bodies, and organic certifications and impact.

With support from the BKB team, the students related and interpreted the organic farming practices at the farm to what they learned at school. Through the garden study, the students examined various crop and animal practices, biogas preparations, and remedy formulations for poultry against Newcastle disease.





www.bkbuganda.org

Conclusion:

Apart from the setback faced in Mpigi, the School Gardens Project is progressing according to timelines. The project has been well received by the engaged stakeholders and school heads, who are excited and eager to participate in and implement it. The stakeholders have pledged to provide full support and additional on-site monitoring to ensure the project's success.

This report will be followed by a Teams call on March 15, 2025, and a written report to be submitted on May 31, 2025.