



Livingstone Tanzania Trust

Edible Gardens Project

Babati, Tanzania



Proud owner watering her Sukumawiki

Progress Report – July 2017

Respect – Longevity – Opportunity - Partnership

[www.livingstonetanzaniatrust.com](http://www.livingstonetanzaniatrust.com)

Charity No. 1119512

## Executive Summary

Livingstone Tanzania Trust (LTT)'s mission is to unlock the potential inside people so they can improve their quality of life for themselves and so maintain personal pride and dignity. We work in partnership with schools and grassroots community organisations in Babati District. Together, we plan and implement programmes which create opportunities for sustainable, positive change by improving children's education, supporting adult livelihoods and promoting the wellbeing of women and girls. Our holistic approach reflects the complexity of poverty and the need to address its many contributing factors.

Our Edible Gardens Project forms part of our Agricultural Programme. It is a simple, replicable project that uses vegetable production as a means of improving household diets as well as household incomes through creating an additional supplementary income stream for often cash strapped households. Following the success of our office demonstration garden and the incredible levels of enquiry it stimulated, LTT, working with our local partner the Manyara Community Development Organisation (MCDO), have already established the edible gardens project in 3 additional communities. In each of these we have trained 3 householders to replicate what we have been doing and to build their own edible gardens as well as providing each group with additional training on basic health and nutrition. All 9 of these households have transformed idle land around their homes into productive space and are now growing vegetables to feed themselves and their families as well as providing a small income; the latter is helping to reduce the burden of competing and conflicting financial priorities.

The edible gardens showcase success and inspire others to copy what they see. Collectively these 9 households have so far trained 45 other households, spreading the knowledge further into the community. This number is expected to rise to 90 over the coming months.

Building on this success the project we have recently expanded to a 4<sup>th</sup> community where 3 households are currently being trained and their edible gardens created. Once established we look forward to reaching an additional 30 households here through our peer training model.

This report outlines the progress of the programme to date and provides an insight into the potential of this simple and replicable project to bring significant benefits to those involved.



Bag Gardens growing Mnafu (front right), Sukumawiki (back right) and Chinese Leaf (back left) and new bags (middle bottom)

## Introduction

In Tanzania, 42% of children under 5 years old are affected by stunting<sup>1</sup>. Stunted growth is described as the silent killer because it affects the immune system and means many die from diseases that they would otherwise have been able to fight. Low levels of awareness of the importance of a healthy balanced diet and the relationship between diet and well-being, chronic poverty and a lack of simple resources and skills are the major contributing factors to the poor nutrition of children. In Babati, the area where the Livingstone Tanzania Trust (LTT) have been working for the last 10 years, family incomes are low, frequently less than £0.80 a day, creating daily conflicts between competing priorities – food, fuelwood, medical costs, clothing, community levies, schooling costs, house repairs, vet fees, the list goes on. It can be an extremely demoralising situation in which each decision has repercussions on other areas. LTT's Edible Gardens Project was developed to respond to this situation, offering a simple, practical, grassroots response to the income and health challenges that communities face and it is already inspiring people to take advantage of new opportunities so that they can change their futures for the better. The project aims to establish networks of edible gardens in 10 communities in and around Babati town.

## LTT's Edible Gardens Project

The edible gardens project has been designed to provide householders with a theoretical knowledge of nutrition, well-being and basic health and sanitation alongside the knowledge, practical skills and start up resources to begin small scale domestic vegetable production on the land they already have around their homes.

The edible gardens project aims to:

- Enable households to produce their own vegetables
- Reduce pressure on the household purse by reducing expenditure on fresh food and creating an additional income source
- Improve household nutrition and well-being through encouraging increased consumption of fruits and vegetables and increased awareness of the importance of diet and basic health and hygiene
- Empower women to take an active role in household income generation and community development
- Establish a network of peer educators who can train other households and their fellow community members



Bag gardens established by a community member with the support of the peer training network

Working together with our local partner MCDO we identify potential communities (or streets in the more urbanised areas) and through consultation select 3 households to join the programme.

Participants in the programme take part in a theoretical and practical training programme which is delivered at our demonstration garden in Babati town and at participant's own homes. Our established edible garden at the office in Babati shows participants what can be achieved in a small space, the benefits of appropriate management and use of compost and how simple and effective organic pest control can be at deterring insects. Training covers how to build and maintain small vegetable gardens, small space solutions to growing vegetables and conserving water, soil enrichment, composting, organic pest control, transplanting and management for vegetables and fruit trees. Training is also provided on nutrition and basic health, hygiene and sanitation to improve householder's knowledge, which acts as an additional motivator to grow and eat vegetables.

Together with the MCDO agricultural team the householders establish their own edible gardens, including raised beds and bag gardens. Once they have completed their training each household then trains 10 other local households, enabling us to reach 33 households per community.

<sup>1</sup> UNICEF Tanzania (<https://www.unicef.org/tanzania/nutrition.html>) accessed May 2017

## Progress

Since June 2015 we have established edible gardens in 4 communities/streets in and around Babati town.

Our first project was launched in 2015 at the Mruki Community with 3 households (two women and one man) attending workshops covering the edible gardens curriculum and 2 days of nutrition training. On completing the training all 3 households embarked upon vegetable production. Their success generated interest from neighbouring householders and through peer training the participants have now reached 30 households resulting in 30 new edible gardens. Some of these 'copycats' have truly embraced what they have learnt and established sprawling vegetable production at their own homes while others, who have certain limitations due to space or time, have focused solely on bag gardens, enabling them to meet some of their domestic needs. Now the 33 households have come together as a group and regularly meet to support each other in maintaining, and where possible developing, their edible gardens.



*“As the vegetables are just a few steps from the door it means we can eat them more often, we now add greens to every meal” – Peer Trained Household, Mruki.*

### Motivated by this initial success LTT scaled up the project to other communities.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> communities to join the project are the Gendi (5km from Babati) and Sawe (2km north of Babati) communities. In Gendi and Sawe 5 women and 1 man have completed all their training and, working with the MCDO agricultural officer, established their own edible gardens to produce sufficient vegetables to support increased domestic consumption and to create a surplus that can be sold. The participants have also completed 2 days of nutrition training to support improved knowledge of diet and nutrition as well as basic health, hygiene and sanitation. This is followed up with onsite visits to demonstrate how to make a 'tipi-tipi' (a simple hands free hand washing system) that can promote improved sanitation at the home.

In Gendi the edible gardens programme is proving particularly successful due to the significant local demand for organic vegetables, the result of local concerns over the use of pesticides and other chemicals. As a result 2 of the households have already, through their own efforts, expanded their edible gardens, turning fallow land into vegetable beds or adding to their bag gardens. Through their peer training efforts, the group have already passed on their knowledge to 12 other householders, 4 of whom have already begun growing vegetables. Others are hoping to begin implementing their training later in the year, once the busy harvesting period is over. Peer training will be continuing in Gendi to reach their target of 30 household.



In Sawe the 3 households, who joined the programme more recently, are focusing on growing vegetables for their domestic needs, they are hopeful that in the coming months their production will increase to create a surplus which they can sell to the surrounding community. Peer training has also begun in Sawe with 3 neighbouring households already trained and further households being identified.

In June 2017, a 4<sup>th</sup> community joined the programme; Mkuyuni A, approximately 5km from Babati. 3 householders have been selected, have completed the programme entry survey and are currently being supported by the MCDO agricultural team to create edible gardens at their own homes. They will be completing their training, including the health and nutrition sessions, and beginning to engage their neighbours in peer training in the next couple of months.



## Outcomes in communities

Collectively 9 households have been trained by LTT and MCDO with a further 3 currently participating in training. To date 45 additional households have been engaged in and inspired by the training of our edible garden peer educators. This has created a network of kitchen gardens and vegetable growers in 4 communities.

Since receiving the training the householders have:

- continued to grow a variety of green leaf vegetables, varieties include: mnafu, mchicha & sukumawiki as well as aubergine and okra
- increased their number of raised beds and bag gardens to boost vegetable production
  - one householder in Gendi aims to grow every vegetable you would need to make soup so that they can become a one stop shop for vegetables locally
- improved their monthly income
  - incomes from the sale of vegetables range between TSH 2,000 (£0.80) a week and TSH20,000 (£8) subject to farm size and seasonality
  - for some the priority is providing for their domestic needs, so they sell smaller amounts less regularly
- saved money which they would normally spend on vegetables
  - this ranges from £0.20 to £1.60 a day subject to household size
- improved their diet by eating vegetables daily instead of weekly
- built *tippi-tippi's* outside their toilets
- trained 45 additional households the majority of whom are now growing vegetables for their domestic needs

## Impact

This project is quietly changing people's lives in a truly sustainable way. Since starting the training and growing their own vegetables the householders have all grown in both confidence and ambition, their social standing has improved and for those more established they no longer struggle to meet their daily needs. The savings and additional income made by the households goes towards things such as meat and fish, adding additional protein to the household's diet which is otherwise unaffordable for many. The improved diet will have a long-term impact on their health and that of their children. Some households have put the additional funds towards exercise books and other school equipment for their children as well as covering any water costs incurred by their expanding kitchen gardens.



*“The best thing about the project is the additional income that we can get, it means we can take care of family expenses.... previously we struggled to meet these so it has relieved a lot of pressure” – Edible Gardens Participant*

Another significant impact was expressed by women involved in the program; by growing their own vegetables the regularity of needing to go to the market for fresh food has been reduced and as a result women found they had more time for other chores and activities. Although not an intentional result this ‘time-saving’ is highly valued by many of those involved.

Another interesting development that has come out of our work on edible gardens in Babati, is that LTT and MCDO have been approached by the charity World Vision to provide training to their local farmers. Part of this training included taking the farmers to Mruki to visit the initial households trained through the programme, to see what they have achieved and how, and to hear first-hand about their experiences in setting up and running their own kitchen gardens. This is a really exciting endorsement of our work and of this particular project.

## Challenges and Lessons Learnt

**Selecting participating households:** Motivation and commitment from participating households is key to the successful spread of knowledge through peer education. In Gendi we are currently in the process of selecting a new household to join the programme as one of the original participants is unable to continue with activities. Based on the lessons we’ve learnt here we have revised how we select the three central households in each community. Focusing not only on how the individual will benefit but also reviewing their capacity, time and interest in and for the programme which are key to them effectively training others and maintaining their commitment to the program. As a result of refining our approach and included exposure visits to already established edible gardens we are seeing increasing interest in and understanding of the programme throughout Babati.

**Free roaming livestock and protecting vegetables:** One of the lessons each household had to learn quickly is the importance of protecting their vegetables against chickens and other livestock that roam freely around their respective neighbourhoods. Each household has addressed this in their own way either creating a fenced area using the dried stalks from their farms beans or recycling mosquito nets or fishing nets to protect their bag gardens and vegetable beds. One household decided to construct a raised platform on which to place their bag gardens which not only keeps them out of reach of most livestock but also makes them easier to weed. With each new community moving forward we will include protection strategies in the training we provide.

## Moving Forward

The project is proving extremely successful, demonstrating its ability to quickly, effectively and sustainably improve household diets and create a supplementary income through providing the household with the appropriate knowledge skills and initial resources to start growing their own vegetables.

The 4<sup>th</sup> community will be completing their training in the coming months and the communities of Gendi (including the new household), Sawe and Mkuyni A will be continuing with their peer training efforts to bring our total to 120 households reached through the edible gardens network.

We hope that with the success of the project to date and additional fundraising we will be able to push forward, taking the benefits of this simple, replicable and effective project into new communities over the coming months and years, to reach our target of 10 communities. With 30 individual households trained by LTT and MCDO we are able to support peer educators in 10 communities, reaching 300 additional households and creating a network of edible gardens throughout Babati.

## Budget

	Budget	Gendi	Sawe	Mkuyuni
Research to find households	40	40	53	50
Household survey	24	24	24	25
Nutritional workshop	150	150	150	150
Edible Garden training	350	430	430	430
Accounting training	75	75	75	75
Transport	120	94	87	100
M&E	450	450	450	450
Local Project Management	300	300	300	300
UK project support and report writing	500	500	500	500
Compost bin development	180	154	154	160
Tall bag gardens and small bag gardens	36	38	38	40
Keyhole gardens changed to Raised bed gardens	75	86	86	90
Manure	180	175	175	180
Hoe, buckets and assorted equipment	45	51	51	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,525</b>	<b>£2,567</b>	<b>£2,573</b>	<b>£2,600</b>