



Urban Agriculture Demonstration Garden

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The Beginning :

With the support of KGI we started the project - Urban Agriculture Demonstration Garden . This project was mainly to promote food production by transferring technologies to children and women of Urban Slum named Rickhaw Colony of Niladribihar, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India which could reduce hunger at their family level by growing their own food.

The Process :

We imparted training to the children, the primary stakeholders of this project and transferred technologies on vegetable cultivation, irrigation, fertilizer application, etc through Soil Less Agriculture.

We provided 100 families seeds, fertiliser, bamboo and other materials so that they could be able to plant in front of their respective houses and grow food. As space was little, we decided to have crops that can be grown above ground as we have more space in the air. So mostly creeper / Guard varieties of vegetables were planted like - ridge guard, Chachndra, Kunduri, Janhi (all are local names) that are crept above in support of bamboos, and some are stages made above the ground (as per the photos attached).

By this time some creeper vegetables are flowering and fruits are coming up, as we started late. Some varieties are also producing fruits.

This was a first opportunity to work with KGI that shows the children and women the path ahead to grow food at little places with no problems that are entangled with agriculture. They used liquid fertilizer to the plants that had a polythene base with sands.

The Challenges :

In India we had our General Elections, and so in our state too. There was a Election Code of Conduct in force up to April 17 2014, so we started the project little bit late. We faced this challenge at that time.

Again another challenge arrived relating to the space/place farming as planned but most of the children and women suggested to provide support to each family so that they can watch, maintain and guard the plants and produce. As in the slum there are many bulls moving around and fighting among themselves and they could bring harm to the demo farm. So we changed the plan little bit according to the suggestion of the children.

The Impact :

" I did not expect any day that I will grow food of my own hand, that too in a place where we do not even have space to play" - she added " I will never give up this knowledge but grow my food, up to death" - says

Laxmi, a 11 year old girl who came with her parents 5 years back in search of job in the capital.

" I am a farmer now, Maa (Mother) ! " - tells Srimanta, 14 , to his mother with excitement, while touching the fruits on the creeper bush.

" I am very happy to see vegetable fruits coming on the climbing plants that one day will feed us fresh, plucked by my own hand and will prepare curry for my children and husband and my father and mother - in - law" adding it to - thanks KIGi (Kitchen Garden International) as she could not pronounce it well, while smiling in the face. " we will produce more and more by planting and allowing the creeper vegetable varieties up to the roof top hence"

The Way Forward:

We plan to intensify the process among other slum dwellers of the urban area through trainings. By using the urban garbage and wastes we plan to have several kitchen gardens by asking small piece of lands from the Municipal Corporation Chairman / Mayor. Hope KGI will support us in this initiative.

Image (optional):

Crops:

[asian greens](#) [1]

[gourd](#) [2]

Type:

[general](#) [3]

Season:

[summer](#) [4]

Topics:

[gardening for beginners](#) [5]

[mulching](#) [6]

[planning and design](#) [7]

[seed-starting and planting](#) [8]
[seeds and seed-saving](#) [9]
[vegetables](#) [10]
[watering](#) [11]
[weeds, pests and diseases](#) [12]
[gardening with children](#) [13]
[health and nutrition](#) [14]
[container gardens](#) [15]
[community gardens](#) [16]
[urban gardens](#) [17]
[raised-bed gardening](#) [18]
[food security](#) [19]
[Sow It Forward grantees](#) [20]

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Links:

- [1] <http://kgi.org/crops/asian-greens>
- [2] <http://kgi.org/crops/gourd>
- [3] <http://kgi.org/blog-type/general>
- [4] <http://kgi.org/season/summer>
- [5] <http://kgi.org/topics/gardening-beginners>
- [6] <http://kgi.org/topics/mulching>
- [7] <http://kgi.org/topics/planning-and-design>
- [8] <http://kgi.org/topics/seed-starting-and-planting>
- [9] <http://kgi.org/topics/seeds-and-seed-saving>
- [10] <http://kgi.org/topics/vegetables>
- [11] <http://kgi.org/topics/watering>
- [12] <http://kgi.org/topics/weeds-pests-and-diseases>
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- [14] <http://kgi.org/topics/health-and-nutrition>
- [15] <http://kgi.org/topics/container-gardens>
- [16] <http://kgi.org/topics/community-gardens>
- [17] <http://kgi.org/topics/urban-gardens>
- [18] <http://kgi.org/topics/raised-bed-gardening>
- [19] <http://kgi.org/topics/food-security>
- [20] <http://kgi.org/topics/sow-it-forward-grantees>