



Kitchen Garden Promotion and Education in Kenya: An Activity Report

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The development of kitchen gardening among Kenyan communities is moving in a positive direction. Many people are becoming aware of the importance of kitchen gardening at grass root level and especially in Kigumo District where the Organic Agriculture Centre of Kenya (OACK) is currently operating.

Since March 2010 with the support of Kitchen Gardeners International, OACK has been able to reach and train 161 new gardeners. These gardeners are able to produce enough vegetables for their family consumption. Consequently, OACK and the community were able to organize and celebrate World Kitchen Garden Day which was attended by 105 farmers and 9 facilitators. During the event farmers exhibited their produce and gave their testimonies on how the gardening has impacted on their livelihood and food supply.

Activities:

To accomplish our objective of reaching 150 new gardeners in 2010, the following activities were undertaken by OACK's staff and farmers.

1. Awareness creation

Five awareness creation meetings by OACK staff were conducted to sensitize the community on the need for kitchen gardening.

2. Training

OACK was able to train 161 farmers instead of the projection number of 150 farmers. This included 120 women, 31 men and 10 youths. (4 boys and 6 girls) This shows that women are interested in kitchen gardening than men.

3 Follow-ups:

Out of the trained 161 new gardeners, 83 have been able to be followed up to verify their training compliance.

4 Monitoring and Evaluation:

OACK was able to monitor the work once and evaluated the activities at the end of the training.

Challenges:

* Transport: Most of the gardeners working with OACK are scattered in different areas and individual home visit becomes a challenge.

* Seed problem: Majority of the farmers do not have seed bank and need to be trained on seed saving for seed sustainability for future use.

* OACK operate in a small hired office and would like to expand it in order to meet the farmers increasing needs and other OACK's operations.

* Climate change. This result to unpredicted weather variation which affect the growth of the plants.

Lessons learnt:

* Farmers trained are able to produce enough healthy food for their livelihood.

* Farmers are able to give testimonies on how kitchen gardening have been helping them in providing fresh vegetables from their own gardens.

* The farmers' confession is that, their health is improving after the consumption of health organic vegetables.

* During our World kitchen Garden Day celebration, more new farmers were attracted by kitchen gardening activities.

* With kitchen gardening activities, it is possible to achieve the millennium development goals of fighting extreme hunger, poverty and achieve sustainable environment especially in third World countries like Kenya.

Conclusion:

OACK would like to appreciate its partners and especially KGI for the support and good working relationship as we continue to spread the message of kitchen gardening. It is anticipated that OACK will continue in training more gardeners in future which require more support from like minded partners.

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