



Self Help Africa



NEWSLETTER 2010



FIGHTING FOR SURVIVAL: AFRICA ADAPTS TO CLIMATE CHANGE



OFF FARM
ENTERPRISE 5



POTATO PRODUCTION
IN ETHIOPIA 10



EURO FARM CHIEF
IN KENYA 12

25TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

www.selfhelpafrica.net



CLIMATE CHANGE

ADAPTING FOR SURVIVAL



Dear Supporter,

When we reach a milestone, most of us look back at the road we've travelled and wonder about the journey that lies ahead.

In 2009, Self Help Africa will celebrate its 25th birthday, and so we've

been doing a lot of reflecting on the past and planning for the future. The successes and the achievements of this organisation and the communities we work with are a result of the great vision of our founders; the energy, commitment and dedication of those who have followed them; and the loyal support of so many who have shared our vision over the past quarter century. But our journey is far from over. Within the pages of this newsletter, you'll see that while much has been achieved since Self Help Africa started out in 1984, a great deal more must be done to tackle hunger and poverty.

There is no shortage of challenges ahead - spiralling world food and fuel prices, the global economic downturn, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, lack of access to agricultural inputs, poor standards of health and education, and unacceptably high infant mortality rates. Most worrying perhaps is the threat presented by climate change, which will have far reaching and potentially devastating consequences for millions of Africa's poorest and most vulnerable people.

We focus particular attention in this newsletter on climate change - how it's impacting across the continent and how Self Help Africa is working to help farmers adapt to it.

We also look at the vital role that women play in the development process, from credit unions to crop production. Other articles highlight how we are supporting farming communities as they develop new business opportunities.

In all of this work, your support is vital. For 25 years, you have been at our side as we worked with some of Africa's poorest rural communities. On behalf of everyone whose lives were improved by that work, a heartfelt thank you. And please, stay at our side, to allow this work continue.

Yours sincerely,

Raymond Jordan

Ray Jordan
Chief Executive

African farms face up to climate challenge



Tsewe Tshaga with his rain-harvesting pond on his farm in Ethiopia.

For anyone who has witnessed the conditions in which smallholder African farmers survive, the threat posed by climate change is frightening. In the nine countries in which Self Help Africa works, no-one is in any doubt that the change has arrived – and farmers are the first to see what the future holds.

There are around 80 million small farms on the continent, and over 70% of all Africans rely on agriculture for their livelihoods. In the last few years, new investment in farming brought improved harvests – last year, there was a 3.5% increase in output from the continent, mostly from small farms.

But African agriculture is particularly vulnerable to a change in growing conditions. Less than 4% of agricultural land is irrigated, so production is heavily dependent on the timing and quantity of rain. The world is heating up, and as it does, the rains will no longer fall to the same pattern.

Many scientists now believe that global temperatures will rise by up to four degrees Celsius by 2050, and rains will become ever

more unpredictable as a result. There will be more droughts and more floods. Staple crops will be unable to cope with a four-degree rise in temperatures, and yields will fall by up to 40%. There will be greater numbers of pests and soil fertility will drop.

The greatest irony is that the people most at risk from climate change live in countries that have contributed the least to the atmospheric build-up of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases linked to global warming. The state of Texas, with a population of 23 million, emits more carbon dioxide than all 720 million residents of sub-Saharan Africa.

The most vulnerable countries also tend to be the poorest. And the countries that face the least harm – and that are best equipped to deal with the harm they do face – tend to be the richest. Little wonder then that developing nations are asking the West for help in tackling this new threat.

Climate change has come to Africa, felt gradually at first but now so common that all are affected. Droughts were once experienced in East Africa every decade; now they are

coming every two to three years. In Ethiopia, the belg rains of spring have disappeared. Farmers across the continent are struggling through prolonged dry spells, flash floods and unseasonal heat. It's playing havoc with farming practices and with lives.

"Farmers across the continent are struggling through prolonged dry spells, flash floods and unseasonal heat. It's playing havoc with farming practices and with lives."

For African farmers, the challenge is to find ways to adapt to this change as it happens, as most of them simply don't have the resources to play catch-up. For Self Help Africa, the challenge is to develop new adaptation strategies for the communities in which we work. We do this by listening to farmers as they share their discoveries, by linking in with research institute programmes, and by sharing lessons with other organisations.



Baking heat and torrential rain has destroyed once fertile land, Ethiopia.

Overleaf, you'll find details of the Climate Frontline project, a collaboration between Self Help Africa and four other international organizations designed to show how climate change is impacting on farmers across the continent. It's part of a wider attempt by us to pool the information on climate change adaptation strategies from our projects and share this knowledge with others working in the farming world.

Farmers are on the front line of climate change, but the way in which they work – from the amount and type of crops they plant to the way in which they till the land and protect natural resources, including forests, can help to cut carbon levels.

As a global community, we must all face up to the challenge of a hotter and more inhospitable planet. Smallholder farmers have contributed least to global warming, and while they have most to lose as a result of it, they can help in finding a way out. Whether we focus on blame or on solution, the West must help Africa's farmers.

Climate Change: A Hot Topic for Self Help Africa

An extensive programme of activities is underway across Self Help Africa's programmes to support communities to adapt to climate change. Amongst these activities are:



➤ Holding onto rain

Collection and storage of rainwater is the most cost effective way of providing water to communities living in the dry and arid climates of sub-Saharan Africa. We have devised a range of 'rainwater harvesting' methods to support individual farmers, communities, schools and others to secure water for their drinking and crop irrigation needs – and in doing so are often lifting the burden of back-breaking water gathering from women and children in these rural communities. Roofs, roads, hillsides and ground catchments are amongst the methods being used to provide cost effective solutions to water shortage problems.

➤ Encouraging crop diversification

We are assisting and supporting farmers to introduce new crop varieties. In Zambia, for example, farmers in the eastern Chipata region have begun to grow groundnuts for guaranteed southern African markets, rather than relying solely on maize or cotton, as previously.

➤ Increasing access to water

The use of treadle pumps and drip kits in small-scale irrigation has had a profound impact on farming across our programmes. Small and medium scale irrigation has allowed large numbers of farmers to produce horticultural cash crops such as onions, mustard, cabbage and tomato, which increase food availability and household income. These activities are invaluable because they can also take place during the traditional dry season. Farmers who can irrigate from streams, rivers or shallow wells save a huge amount of time and labour by deploying simple yet practical pump technology.

➤ Developing drought resistant crops

In collaboration with agricultural research institutes, we are facilitating the develop-

ment of crop varieties that are robust enough to withstand harsh weather conditions and others that are early yielding, and thus in the ground for a shorter time.

➤ Managing the water

Building check dams and repairing gullies are just two examples of activities being promoted to manage soil moisture and control water tables. Water from dammed areas is available to farmers for irrigation, while slowing down rainwater run-off can raise the water table and make groundwater more accessible to local communities.

➤ Investing in the land

Communities using degraded land are encouraged to 'enclose' this land, keeping livestock out, planting shrubbery and trees and putting further soil erosion techniques in place. This allows the land to 'recover', and can also have an impact on local rainfall patterns.

➤ Disaster Risk Reduction

All activities identified on this page are part of an overall approach designed to reduce the vulnerability of communities to climate change. These activities are part of a programme of Disaster Risk Reduction, to help people cope with extreme climatic events. With the number of people affected by such events expected to rise by 25% by 2015, we are focused on building local preparedness, merging new technologies with local know-how to give communities a sense of ownership of these strategies.

➤ Using fuel efficient stoves

The use of wood for cooking has resulted in widespread deforestation and soil erosion. In an effort to respond, we promote a range of improved cooking stoves that are being made available to rural families. Although the stove designs differ from country to country, the principle is the same – these stoves use less fuel to generate similar heat and also burn with less smoke – creating a cleaner and healthier cooking environment in the home.



Zai brings land to life

Adapting to climate change is one of the main challenges faced by farmers across Africa, and sometimes the solution lies in the past.

Self Help Africa is promoting a range of measures to improve the soil fertility of degraded farmland in both the Bam and Zondoma Provinces of Burkina Faso. Soil bunds, fertility trenches and the promotion of manure making and compost are amongst the approaches being championed by SHA's local partners ASCDIS and PER, who have been reviving the ancient tradition of 'Zai holes', or planting pits to support agricultural production. The holes, between one and two feet wide, are excavated to a depth of eight inches and then filled with organic fertilizer, manure and crop residues.

Insects and natural decomposition aid the breakdown of the Zai, which collect and store water during the rainy season. The result, according to researchers who have studied the spread of zai hole planting practices throughout the region, has been extraordinary. Hundreds of thousands of hectares of semi-arid land that could no longer be cultivated have been restored to productive use.

In the past year, more than 20 acres of land in Boussou has been covered with Zai holes as part of a programme to rehabilitate land. The use of Zai holes dates back centuries in West Africa, but their modern success owes much to a revival sparked around 30 years ago by a sorghum farmer in Burkina Faso. Increased yields led to a gradual spread through West Africa and now further afield. The Climate Frontline publication documents the use of Zai holes in Malawi, where 41-year-old Etrida Luhanga has enjoyed bumper harvests despite falling yields elsewhere. Etrida uses the Zai method – known in Malawi as maize pits – which she fills with bocash manure. Spreading adaptation strategies such as the Zai hole to other farmers across Africa is a key focus for Self Help Africa.



Zai holes being dug in Burkina Faso

International concerns

International concern about climate change is rising, though international action lags behind. While there is a wealth of reports and data demonstrating the effect that climate change will have at global and regional levels, the voices of individuals on the front line are heard less often.

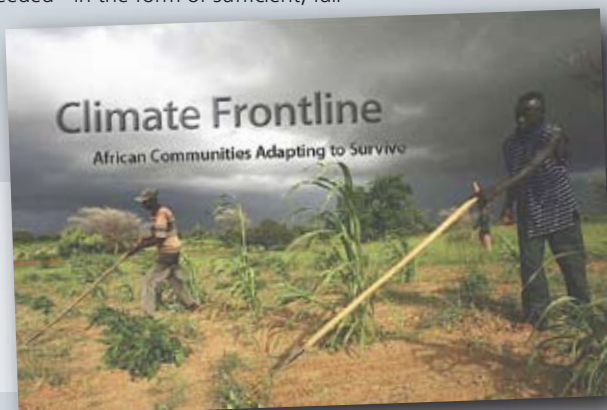
Joining with four other development NGOs, Self Help Africa has produced a report – Climate Frontline Africa – which allows these

voices to be heard directly. They describe, in their own words, how climate change is affecting them, and how they are adapting. The report's publication is timed to coincide with the forthcoming international conference on climate change in Copenhagen in December. The five NGOs involved in its compilation believe that action to tackle climate change must start by listening to and supporting those on the 'climate frontline'.

The farmers accounts in *Climate Frontline* demonstrate clearly that:

- Climate change is already a major challenge in vulnerable areas which is most of Africa.
- People are adapting as best they can, building on local knowledge and diversifying livelihoods. There is lots of knowledge and good practice to share and learn from, but much more support is needed - in the form of sufficient, fair and reliable funding for adaptation that is spent in a coordinated, responsive and cost-effective way.

Climate Frontline is available from Self Help Africa. It can also be downloaded from our web-site at: www.selfhelpafrica.net



Eight risks for farmers

Climate change is expected to affect African agriculture in the following ways:

➤ Reduction in crop yields and agriculture productivity

In the tropics and sub-tropics, where crops have reached their maximum tolerance, crop yields are likely to decrease due to an increase in the temperature. In some regions the change in weather patterns will lead to violent destructive storms and extreme flooding.

➤ Increased incidence of pest attacks

Increased temperature leads to a proliferation of pests detrimental to crop production.

➤ Limited water

It is expected that the availability of water in most parts of Africa will decrease as a result of climate change. There will be a severe reduction in rainfall in Southern African countries.

➤ Exacerbation of drought periods and unpredictable rains

An increase in temperature and a change in the climate are predicted to cause recurrent droughts, while unpredictable rains creates challenges at crop planting times.

➤ Reduction in soil fertility

An increase in temperature is likely to reduce soil moisture, moisture storage capacity and the quality of the soil, which are vital for agricultural crops.

➤ Low livestock productivity and high production cost

Climate change will affect livestock productivity directly by influencing the balance between heat dissipation and heat production and indirectly through its effect on availability of feed.

➤ Availability of human resources

An increase in temperature and humidity will create ideal conditions for malaria, sleeping sickness and other diseases that will affect human resources available for agriculture.

➤ Rural to urban migration

As farming becomes more difficult, more people will abandon the land - creating greater urban sprawl where there are limited job opportunities.



OFF-FARM ENTERPRISE

ALTERNATE WAYS TO EARN A LIVING

Fruits of the forest

A forestry regeneration project being undertaken in Northern Malawi is a testimony to the benefits to be gained when communities are supported to work together to a common goal.

As a direct result of the local conservation scheme, dozens of householders are now earning an income from the production and sale of medicinal plants and other non-timber forest products, while many more are using the restored forest as a habitat to rear colonies of bees and harvest honey.

Householders in Ngagalagala and people from more than a dozen outlying villages first came together more than seven years ago in a bid to tackle widespread deforestation and the consequent erosion of soil on the nearby Nkhala Hills.

With assistance provided by FAIR, Self Help Africa's collaborative programme in Malawi, the villagers worked to reinstate 120 acres of natural forest and put in place an agreement for its future management. Their combined efforts have succeeded not just in restoring the forest as a nature habitat for local wildlife, but has also established the Nkhala Hills as an environment that supports a range of income generating activities for villagers.



Thousands of trees have been planted in Nkhala Hills.

Plant derived medicines are highly sought-after in Malawi, where natural botanics are used to treat a wide range of ailments including malaria, cancer, diarrhoea, and the palliative care of people living with HIV/AIDS.

"Plant derived medicines are highly sought-after in Malawi"

To ensure the ongoing protection of the reinstated forestry, the community has been assisted with the formulation of its own by-laws, which have been registered with the Malawian Government under the country's Forestry Act.

Local communities speak of the positive effects of the afforestation of Nkhala Hills on the local micro-climate too and say that the project has also reduced the amount of water run-off from the hills, the extent of soil and gully erosion and has allowed surrounding land to be reclaimed for productive farming activities.

Queen bees now 1,000



Eritrea's six-year-old beekeeping



development programme has

reached a notable milestone with the distribution of the 1,000th colony reared at the queen bee rearing centre being supported by Self Help Africa at Mendefera. The facility is one of three rearing centres we are backing as part of a national programme to promote apiculture as an alternative income generating activity for rural households. Although environmental and climatic conditions continue to challenge beekeepers, who often face hive absconding rates of 20%, the project has been a significant success. By providing training, supports and an extensive programme of planting of foraging crops such as sunflower, rapeseed and euphorbia, hundreds of rural families have been helped to establish successful small beekeeping enterprises. Work is also under way to organise hive owners into honey producer associations in Maekel, Emni Haili and Eritrea's Southern Region.

Net profits from fish farming



For Sibeso Mukela and Nalishebo Musheba, the sale of fish in local markets provides a valuable supplementary income to subsistence farming in Zambia's impoverished Western Province. The two friends, who are members of the Lyambali Fish Farming Group, established two years ago in the Litoya area of Senanga District, generated €40/£35 from the sale of farmed river bream in local markets last month alone.



Sibeso Mukela & Nalishebo Musheba at their fish pond.

Half the 30 members of the Lyambali Fish Farming Group are women and, according to Sibeso, they all played an equal part in the excavations and other labour required when the fish pond was first being constructed on a low lying wetland area adjacent to the village, back in 2007. "We built the pond together and dug a channel from a nearby stream to bring water to it," she says. The fish pond is populated with 1,000 fingerlings at any one time and these are harvested on reaching maturity after six months.

"We always lose some of our fish to disease and to predators, but to date it has been a good enterprise and we are happy to be involved," she added.

The fish farming group was established as a commodity producer group by Self Help Africa's local partner, Keepers Zambia Foundation (KZF), and was provided with training in fish farming and assistance with sourcing local markets for their produce by the organisation.

OFF FARM ENTERPRISE

Self Help Africa supports rural families to generate income through a wide range of 'off farm' activities including beekeeping, fish farm and petty trading.

Millions of Africans rely on the land to produce most of the food that they eat. However if they cannot produce a year-round supply of food, they must generate the income to buy the food that they need.

Activities such as beekeeping, fish farming and other off-farm enterprises can provide that income, can supplement earnings existing income from agricultural activities and can be invested in education, clothing and improved living conditions for the household.



WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

EMPOWERING WOMEN, POWERING AFRICA

Loans spark enterprise culture



As mothers of young families, Edith Nakiyemba and Mirabu Mokoda say that a few years ago it would have been 'unthinkable' for them to be able to borrow money to start their own businesses. But as founder members of the Bamukiisa savings and credit co-operative (SACCO) established by Self Help Africa in Namwendwa district in Uganda three years ago, the window of opportunity was opened for both of them.

32-year old Edith, a mother of seven, established a small enterprise buying and selling agricultural produce, before using the profits to purchase a second-hand sewing machine and renting a small premises in which to set up a local tailoring business.

"I do alterations for people and also make dresses and suits for people for special occasions," she says. Edith has used the revenue she has generated from her dress making to diversify her income even further too and after initially purchasing three female goats she has built her herd up to six in the past year. She is a member of a small women's development group in the village and is involved in efforts to set up a parish-based savings and credit co-op for Bamukiisa.



Edith Nakiyemba is pictured at her tailoring shop in Namwendwa.

Mirabu Mokoda used her first loan from the village SACCO to develop a small retail trading post in Bugobi and returned to the co-op for further loan support when she decided to trade agricultural inputs and produce in her business, alongside household goods.

"I had nothing that I could offer as security against a loan, but now I have a business"

A mother of six young children, Mirabu says that until the SACCO was created she would have had no chance of borrowing money for any purpose at all.

"I had nothing that I could offer as security against a loan, but now I have a business, and have also started my own herd of goats," she says. The creation by Self Help Africa of a micro-finance programme had allowed dozens of women in Bugobi to get their feet onto the ladder and move beyond subsistence, she says.

Water kit pays off for Rose



It took 57-year old grandmother Rose Magure just one year to repay the loan she took out to buy a drip irrigation system from Self Help Africa in Elementaita Division, Kenya.

A member of the Kioambogo Farmers Association,



Rose Magure shows the onions she is growing.

ciation, Rose received training on the use of irrigation equipment, a drip kit and 250gms of red creole onion seeds on a revolving loan basis at the outset of the project in Autumn 2007.

The post election violence that erupted just months later following Kenya's disputed national ballot threatened to seriously disrupt Rose's efforts as she prepared to get her first commercial onion crop to market, but the enterprising grandmother says that she sold locally and thus succeeded in keeping her venture on track.

"I made 12,600 Kenyan shillings (€115/£100) from that harvest and used the money to repay the loan and buy more onion seed," she says.

Within just two years she has also increased the amount of land she is farming with drip irrigation from an initial one-eighth of an acre and says that she has enough onion seed to plant a half an acre with the crop in the coming season.


FACTS ABOUT WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

Self Help Africa supports micro-finance projects that provide women with small loans to begin income generating activities. We also provide training, support gender awareness programmes and seek to ensure that African women have equal access to inputs, so they can share equally in the fruits of their labour.

Up to 80% of farm work in Africa is done by women. Along with the traditional responsibilities of home making, gathering firewood and collecting water, women play a key role in planting, harvesting and processing the food that is grown on the farm.

Millions of rural African women see little or no financial remuneration for their efforts, are often not allowed by tradition to own land and are unable to access even the most basic supports and inputs that are available to their male counterparts.

Groundnut day

 In Ghana's Upper East region, it is traditional for guests to the home to be offered groundnuts when they call and for visitors to bring a parcel of nuts with them when they go to see their relatives. The tradition illustrates the cultural importance of a crop that has been devastated as a result of drought and excessive flooding in the country's three northern regions in recent years.

In 2008 Self Help Africa targeted a group of 20 women members of the Nayire tribal group in the Talensi-Nabdam district of Duusi to initiate a groundnut programme in their community. A five-kilo bag of improved variety groundnut seed was provided to each member. Group chairperson Souk Kam-




Souk Kambey with groundnuts

bey estimates that after harvest, all of her members were able to return six kilos to the revolving seed fund, as promised, so that the seed can be 'revolved' to other households so that they too can start to produce groundnut again. In a short time we will have fully reinstated groundnut production within this locality, Souk Kambey predicts.

All credit to Zambian groups



Members of Chibombo savings and credit co-op.

 Self-help has turned out to be the best help for the group of women gathered in the shade of the village meeting hut in Chibombo, Zambia. Traditionally, when smallholder farmers have been unable to access credit from banks, development agencies have encouraged them into credit and loan co-ops by providing seed capital for the first set of loans. But in Chibombo, the capital came from within. 'We came together in 2007,' said Joyce Konta. 'There were 15 of us who began saving together, bringing 500 kwacha (7c/5p) to our weekly meetings. After six months, the women had enough to make their first loan. They discussed their ideas and decided which one of them should get the money. The best idea was chosen, on the basis that if it failed, there would be no capital to make another loan.'

The business idea was modest – buying chickens in the village, taking the bus to the capital, Lusaka, to sell them and using the proceeds to buy and sell second hand clothes on the way back home. It made the expected profit, the loan was repaid with interest, and the next woman in the

group was given a loan. Many months later, most of the women have borrowed, and repaid. The funds have in most cases been used to pay school fees for their children. The women of Chibombo have learned an enormous amount – about saving, credit, business and mutual dependence - and they have achieved what seemed impossible. More than two years into this project, there are over ten groups with over 100 women running viable savings and credit cooperatives without having received a single cent in funding from outside.

Self Help Africa, through its local partner – The Organisation for the Promotion of Meaningful Development (OPAD) has provided training, support and advice along the way, but the entire capital – and so the entire risk – was the women's own.

'We've very happy with what has been achieved,' says OPAD'S Voice Vingo "and the benefits are not just in credit. The women discuss health issues when they meet and now buy seed in bulk to get a better price. Soon, we will register these groups with the national credit and savings movement.'

Inspiring garden

 Kenyan widow Ruth Kipsang lived with mounting fears – that she would not be able to pay her orphaned grandchildren's school fees, that she would not be able to clothe them, or even that she wouldn't be able to feed them. The formation by Self Help Africa of a women-led rural development initiative in Koibatek District changed all that. It allowed Ruth to take a leading role in an awareness campaign that seeks to promote crop diversification and a range of sustainable farming practices in her community. As a leading member of Tuiyobei Women's Group, Ruth attended a number of training courses and now uses her own homestead as a demonstration plot to promote the farming activities she is undertaking.

Ruth Kipsang produces a variety of crops including sweet potato, beans, cassava, kale, cabbage and carrots in her 1.5 acre vegetable plot and has also succeeded in increasing the daily yield from her dairy cow from 1.5 to four litres by improving its diet and care.

" With this project I have discovered that my small farm contains hidden treasures "

"I used to earn an income doing casual work in people's houses, washing clothes and gathering firewood, but that was impossible when my four grandchildren came to live with me," she said.

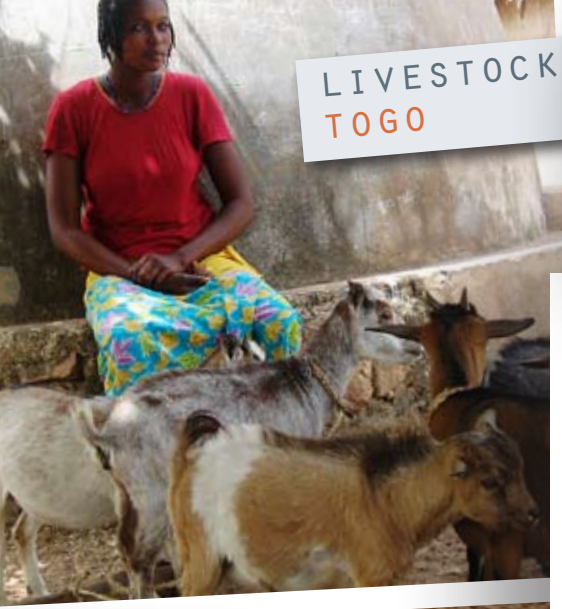
With this project I have discovered that my small farm contains hidden treasures." The Self Help Africa project, which has received funding support from USAID, has another dimension that is close to Ruth Kipsang's heart.

Since her grandchildren lost their parents to HIV/AIDS, she has wanted to help others to avoid the tragedy which befell her own family.

The Tuiyobei Women's Group is registered with Kenyan Social Services through the Constituency AIDS Control Council (CACC) and its members lend their support at a local level to national efforts to arrest the spread of HIV/AIDS.

"We provide people with information, help to remove the stigma from families who are living with the virus and also encourage householders at risk to attend for HIV/AIDS counseling and testing," she explains.

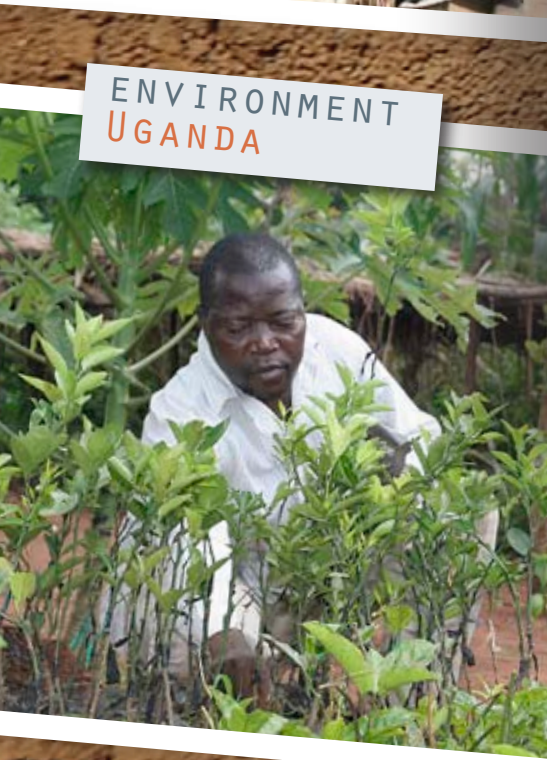




LIVESTOCK
TOGO



POULTRY
UGANDA



ENVIRONMENT
UGANDA



Self Help
Africa

2010

January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

May

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

June

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

October

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						



FRUIT
ERITREA

CALENDAR

March

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

April

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

July

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

August

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

SEED
MULTIPLICATION
ETHIOPIA

CRAFTS
GHANA

WATER
ZAMBIA

IRRIGATION
KENYA



ORGANISING AGRICULTURE

FARMERS WORKING TOGETHER

Seed potatoes sprout success



Seed potato producers Geshe Waktola and Hailu Tegenya sort their seed potatoes in a diffused light store in Holeta, Ethiopia.



Ethiopia is one of a handful of countries in East Africa where the potato is a major food crop.

Although the government estimates that nearly one-third of a million acres nationally is under potato production, yields are traditionally very low (approx 4 tonnes per acre), with many farmers using small and degenerated tubers from their last crop because they can't buy better seed stock. Self Help Africa, whose first work involved the distribution of Irish potato stock in 14 regions of Ethiopia from 1985 to 1987, is now running a major programme to improve access to quality seed potato stock to small-holder farmers.

Geshe Waktola farms on the rolling plains of Holeta, 40km west of Ethiopia's capital Addis Abeba, on a seed potato multiplication project that is supported by Self Help Africa. He's a member of one of 28 small primary co-operatives that make up the Robi Berga Co-Operative Union. All told, the union represents 25,000 farmers. Working in close collaboration with the state-run Holeta Agricultural Research Station, the primary co-op members initially provided field-testing for the research institute and in return secured access to improved grade seed potato stock that members multiplied in their own hand-built diffused light stores (DLS). "I joined nine of my neighbours and attended

a farmers' field school established by Self Help Africa to show us how to become potato multipliers," says Geshe. Seed potato producing members of Robi Berga Co-Op Union are now selling their high-grade stock to Ethiopia's Ministry of Agriculture and to a number of other NGOs working to develop agricultural production in the country.

"They say we are responsible for producing more than half of all seed potato now being distributed in Ethiopia"

"They say we are responsible for producing more than half of all seed potato now being distributed in Ethiopia," Geshe adds. "This programme has been good for me, but it has also been good for people right across the country. Farmers who are using our improved seed varieties are now getting up to 20 tonnes an acre", he reports proudly. A father of seven, Geshe has his own diffused light store to multiply potato stock. "Apart from the initial training at the farmers field school we received nothing for nothing," he says. "We built the stores ourselves and returned an amount of seed potato equivalent to that we received at start up to the Robi Berga Union, who then gave it to other farmers to get them started," he says.

Sweet satisfaction in Kenya



"I would rather be a satisfied poor man than a hungry rich man,"

Simon Nderu concludes with a hearty laugh, as he reflects on the journey taken by members of the Ushindi Farmers Support Group in Gilgil, Kenya, since they began producing sweet potato commercially just over a year ago.

Although the tuber is a rich source of vitamins A, B and C, the sweet potato has for a long time been regarded as a 'poor man's food' and was ignored by most Gilgil farmers in favour of maize and other cereals. That changed when members of the Ushindi Group began to work with Self Help Africa to develop sweet potato production and

Simon Nderu agreed to set aside space on his farm to bulk sweet potato vines for group members. Simon describes how sweet potato has allowed him to reduce substantially the amount he spends on food each week. "It is a very resourceful food that can be eaten for breakfast, lunch or for dinner".

The 23 members of the Ushindi Group have scaled up their production of sweet potato this year, with Simon Nderu allocating an acre of land to the crop.

"We harvest the crop together and arrange for transport and sale of our surplus in the market. This crop is the answer to hunger and it can withstand the harshest of weather conditions," he says.

FACTS ABOUT ORGANISING AGRICULTURE

Self Help Africa provides training and support to small-holder farmers to organise into co-operatives, farmers associations and producer commodity groups.

This improves their ability to access market for their process, strengthens their negotiating powers and allows farmers to invest collectively in initiatives that may be beyond the capacity of individual landowners (such as group irrigation schemes, organising transportation and purchasing farm inputs).

Passion fruit diversification



Members of the Gilgil Passion Fruit group are pictured in one of their orchards.

A Kenyan fruit growers group is planning to buy a juice extraction unit this year, as it seeks to add value to an enterprise that has become the main source of income for members in recent times. The 17-strong Eburra Passion Fruit Group began producing the crop on a small scale on lands outside Gilgil five years ago and expanded its activities after receiving

training and support from Self Help Africa. Group members, who include six women and eleven men, bought an additional 2,800 new seedlings, increased to over five acres the land planted with passion fruit trees and sourced new markets at local hotels and in the markets of Gilgil town, where they are receiving 70 Kenyan schillings per kilo (€0.64/50p) for their produce.

An eye for the market

Focusing the attention of small-holder farmers on the commercial potential of their land is at the heart of an initiative being supported by Self Help Africa in Zambia's Western Province.

Just a year after work was first started on the European Commission-funded Market Orientated Rural Enterprise (MORE) project at Kaoma and Senanga Districts, over 2,500 local farm producers have been organized into producer groups and are involved in targeted agricultural production.

74 separate 'commodity groups' of small-scale farmers have been created and are involved in growing a wide range of market-orientated produce including groundnuts, rice, cassava, maize, onions, tomato, cabbage and sweet potato.

The groups, which vary in size from 15 up to 50 members, have each received training and support with the production of the agreed commodity on a portion of their farm holding and are being assisted by MORE with the marketing, sale and distribution of their produce to local and regional outlets.

Negotiations are under way too with a number of national agro-processors and food production companies to buy produce from the commodity groups – an effort that recently brought a tangible result for 30 rice produc-

ers in Sikuyu village, when they entered into a contract to supply several tonnes of rice to Zambia's National Milling Company. Group member David Lianga says that the price of 100,000 Zambian Kwacha (€15/£13) they are receiving per 50 kg bag of grain is 25% more than they were getting in the local market. He is hopeful it will be a secure market for his rice for years to come. The MORE Project has also helped tomato and cabbage growers to find new markets for their produce in local schools, hospitals and other institutions, and has helped a number of vegetable producer groups to sell their produce to hotel and resort operators on the banks of the nearby Zambezi River – one of the region's principal tourist attractions.



Farmers leading the way

The 12 founder members of the Asugie small scale irrigation group in Gogne, Eritrea didn't realise the influence they would have when they first started work on a pilot horticulture project in their area two years ago.

But the success of their irrigated activities has become a model for others, and in the past year six similar community irrigation groups, involving a total of 55 local farmers, have been formed in their district.

Situated in the hot and dry western lowlands of the country's Gash Barka province, landowners in Gogne relied primarily on herding and subsistence agriculture until Self Help Africa began a programme to promote horticultural production in the region.



The Asugie irrigation group in Gogne, Eritrea has become a model for others.

"We took charge of the upkeep and maintenance, and in return were given access to the water for our irrigated farming activities"

"I was able to produce food on my farm for just five months each year and used to spend the rest of the time selling firewood, palm fruit, and doing other jobs," says group member Ismael Gufe. "Now I can farm all year around".

The group received training in horticultural production and also benefited from the boring of a well and installation of a diesel pump for the district. "We took charge of the upkeep and maintenance, and in return were given access to the water for our irrigated farming activities," Ismael explains. The Asugie group produced chilli and other vegetables on six acres of irrigated land last year and earned more than €9,000/£8,000 from the plot. Six new horticultural groups have been established in the area, with in excess of 80 acres now irrigated for farming.



SUPPORTERS NEWS

HOW OUR FRIENDS ARE HELPING

Gift from goats



A major UK producer of goat's milk and other dairy products has lent its support to our goat development activities in Africa. St. Helen's Farm in the Vale of York has thrown its support behind our livestock development work, by providing one penny (1.2 cent) from every carton of milk that is sold in October to Self Help Africa.

With a 550-acre farm and a herd of over 3,500 goats, St Helen's Farm is a major supplier of goat's milk, cheese, butter and other products to retailers Tesco, Sainsbury's, Asda and Waitrose.

SHA in America

Self Help Africa has established a sister organisation in the United States. Self Help Africa Inc was set up in early 2009, with the twin aims of spreading the lessons learned in the last 25 years to a wider audience, and attracting increased funding for new programmes. Initially, the US operation will focus on the cities of New York and Washington.

The US office can be contacted through info@selfhelpafrica.net or directly to mhourican@selfhelpafrica.org.

Skerries support

Self Help Africa's unique link with a North Dublin community continued throughout 2009, as supporters in the Irish seaside town hosted a range of events to support our work in Sodo, Ethiopia.

A charity ball, golf classic, collections, music and other fund-raisers were held in Skerries, which has raised more than €65,000/£60,000 in the past three years. A group from Skerries visited Sodo this Autumn.

Food fair charity

Self Help Africa was the designated charity at this year's Ludlow Food Festival, one of the leading food and drinks fairs in the United Kingdom. The three-day festival was held within the grounds of Ludlow Castle in Shropshire, and attracted upwards of 20,000 visitors.

Established in the south Shropshire market town in 1994, the Ludlow Food Fair has grown to become a major tourist attraction and trade fair for artisan UK food producers.

Farm chief backs Self Help Africa

The head of the European Farmers Union (COPA) gave a ringing endorsement to the work of Self Help Africa, on a fact finding visit to Kenya this summer.

Farm chief Padraig Walshe spoke of the 'vital role' that agriculture had to play in the lives of Africa's rural poor, as he visited projects and communities working with Self Help Africa in the country.

The COPA President, who is also at the helm of the Irish Farmers Association (IFA) said it was only by focussing on agricultural production that many millions of Africa's rural poor would be lifted out of poverty.

"Close to 80% of Kenyans rely on farming for their survival. It is vital that the organisational structures are in place, so that they can

get access to markets and a fair price for their produce," he said.

Mr. Walshe added that by working at grass-roots level, promoting crop diversification, irrigated production, strengthening farming structures and improving access to markets, Self Help Africa could have a real impact in the fight to eradicate poverty.

During his fact finding visit with Self Help Africa board member Joseph O'Dwyer and CEO Ray Jordan, Mr Walshe also met with representatives of the Kenyan Federation of Agricultural Producers and with representatives of Kenyan smallholder farmers.

Self Help Africa is the designated charity of the IFA.



Farm chief Padraig Walshe speaks to sunflower farmer Joseph Kibe in Mitimangi, Kenya.

Farmers combine for world record

A group of Irish cereal farmers combined to achieve a remarkable record-breaking and fundraising feat in late summer.

The 'Combines4Charity' organisers both shattered the Guinness World Record when they assembled the largest number of working combine harvesters in a field at the same time, and also netted in excess of a quarter of a million euro (£220,000) with their efforts. A total of 175 harvesters from across the country took part in the event, which saw the harvesters take just 15 minutes to harvest a 120-acre field of wheat.

The event broke the existing world record - of 56 combine harvesters that had been assembled in Australia - by some distance and raised much more for charity when thou-

sands of people turned up to support a family fun day that was organised in conjunction with the spectacle.

Self Help Africa was one of four Irish charities to benefit from the remarkable and novel fund-raiser.

Meanwhile, Self Help Africa was associated with a further charity bid to gain a place in the record books when a young Irish golf professional attempted an assault on the world record for the fastest individual round of golf, in August.

Robert Hogan (24) narrowly missed out on a Guinness World Record when he completed his 18-hole round at Foxrock Golf Club in Dublin in a time of just 30 minutes.

Wheels for Africa

A group of four young volunteers who cycled almost the entire length of Africa for charity, have netted nearly €30,000/£28,000 to date from their efforts.

'BikeAfrica2009' participants Magnus Collins Smyth, David Burns, Brian O'Shea and Alan O'Dwyer set off from Ireland in early summer on a 5,500 km odyssey which took them down through more than six East African countries on their route south to Cape Town.

The quartet had initially planned to set off from Cairo, Egypt, but following concerns about the security situation in neighbouring Sudan, opted instead to start their fund-raising journey from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Self Help Africa is one of the nominated charities to benefit from the effort, with the cyclists donating funds towards an environmental rehabilitation project in Ethiopia and to build a grain store for farmers in Kenya. During their time in Ethiopia they traveled with Self Help Africa to see our work in Sodo.



Bike Africa cyclists (from left) Alan O'Dwyer, David Byrnes, Brian O'Shea and Magnus Collins Smyth cross the border into Kenya on their charity cycle.

UN chief booked by students



UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon with Irish Prime Minister Brian Cowen and student Ben Cooper, receiving a copy of the MDG Book.

United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki Moon is just the latest name to be associated with 'Twenty Fifteen', a unique compendium of new writing that was published by Self Help Africa's development education unit, this year.

The UN chief was presented with a copy of the collection by student contributor Ben Cooper when he visited Ireland in August. 'Twenty Fifteen' is a collection of poetry and prose by students and leading figures from literary and public life.

Taking its name from the year set by the UN to meet the objectives set down by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the compilation includes writing by Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney, by Man Booker Prize winner Anne Enright, by Costa Award winning author Sebastian Barry and by a host of other contributors.

'Twenty Fifteen' was the result of a year-long collaboration between Self Help Africa and transition year students from two Irish secondary schools – Colaiste Bhride in Carnew and St. Peter's College, Dunboyne. For their work on the project, the participating students went on to win the top award at the annual 'Young Social Innovators' competition in Dublin. The compendium is the first in a series of books that Self Help Africa's development education unit is planning to publish in collaboration with Irish schools, to provide a student response to each of the eight subjects that are addressed by the Millennium Development Goals.

For further information on buying a copy of the MDG Book contact Patsy Toland at Self Help Africa (patsy.toland@selfhelpafrica.net) or tel. +353 (057) 8694034.



Vitamin boost

Self Help Africa has teamed up with the One Foundation on an exciting new partnership that is now funding a range of irrigated backyard vegetable production projects.

One Foundation, manufacturers of natural spring water and other products, have agreed to donate 50% of all profits raised from the sale of a new range of 'One Vitamin Water', under the



terms of a partnership agreement that was signed earlier this year. Profits from the sale of the vitamin water range will support irrigated vegetable gardens in both Malawi and Zambia. 'One Foundation' is a charitable division of Global Ethics Ltd, a UK-based charity that works with communities in Africa to provide access to water, improved nutrition and

HIV/AIDS testing.

Profits from the sale of 'One' branded products are donated to humanitarian projects via The One Foundation.

In remembrance

For gifts that they left in their wills, two communities in rural Africa will be forever grateful to the generosity of the late David Orchard from Shrewsbury and James Byrne from Wicklow, Ireland.

In 2006 David made a bequest to Self Help Africa in his will, and last year James kindly left a similar legacy gift to us. Because of these gestures, our work tackling poverty and improving lives in rural Africa could reach out to more people.

If you are interested in leaving a gift to Self

Help Africa in this way, we would be pleased to talk to you and provide whatever advice and guidance you might need. We recognise that leaving a gift to Self Help Africa is an important and very personal choice. Family and friends should come first, but a small sum can make a big difference when it is invested in supporting our work amongst Africa's poorest and most disadvantaged people. Your legal advisor will also be happy to answer any queries that you might have.

For further information contact Louise (Ireland) on 1850 75 76 78 or Clare (UK) on 01743 277170.



DIVERSIFICATION

FRUIT GROWING: AN ALTERNATE ENTERPRISE

Back to bananas in Uganda



Sometimes, finding ways of diversifying farm income can be found in a country's past. The

banana is such an essential part of the diet in Uganda that the local word for the fruit, 'matooke', also means 'food'.

For generations, the crop has been a staple food and source of income for small-farmers, with Uganda amongst the top 20 producer countries in the world. Ugandans are also the largest consumers of bananas – eating an estimated 250kg-300kg per person per annum. But despite the huge available markets, many small-holder farmers have moved away from banana growing since the early 1990s, as declining soil fertility, bacterial wilt, banana weevils and the breakdown of agricultural extension service support led to diminishing yields.

Self Help Africa's Kayunga project is encouraging a return to banana production in the region and over the past two years has provided farm families with training and improved variety banana plantlets to promote the crop.

61-year old Charles Mawanda and his wife Sauda (42) are part of the Kisoga Tweekembe Farmer Development Group which has been piloting banana production in the Kayunga area.

The couple received 200 improved variety banana plantlets and training in modern plantation management, which encouraged them to resume a farming activity they had abandoned nearly a decade ago.

"We lost hope in banana as a source of liveli-



Gloria, daughter of Mr and Mrs Mawanda, pictured in their banana garden.

hood, because the yields we were getting were no longer enough to sustain the family," said Charles.

In 2009 they harvested their first bumper crop from the new plantation and sold enough bananas to pay school fees and buy books and materials for their school-going children.

The couple's plantation has also become a demonstration plot for other farmers, as the project continues to distribute banana plantlets on a revolving fund basis and encourage small-holder farmers to return to an activity which can add vital income and nutrition to their households.

FACTS ABOUT FRUIT

Self Help Africa encourages and promotes a broad range of crop diversification activities amongst small-holder farm families, including the production of fruit.

Fruit production enables rural Africans to produce marketable crop varieties, reduces the vulnerability of farm families to crop failure by producing alternate food and contributes to an improved family diet.

Africa is climatically suited to a wide range of fruit production and there are ready markets for the sale of surplus fruit.

No ordinary orchards



There might not seem to be anything extraordinary about an apple – until you witness how income from growing the fruit can help lift people out of poverty.

In 2006 Self Help Africa brought root stock for 3,800 apple trees from Spain and distributed them to farm producers in upland project areas of two existing area-based projects in the Oromia region of Ethiopia.

More than 40 individual and community nurseries grafted the fruit, while lead farmers in project areas were provided with technical training and assistance to pilot apple production on their farms.

Since then several hundred households in the area have planted apple trees, while efforts are underway at a wider level to secure new markets for a product which can realise up to €2/£1.80 per kilo in the fruit markets of the country's capital, Addis Ababa.

A father of eight children, Abara Gashawe is one of more than 60 farmers in the Huruta area who has been rearing apple trees. The young trees have yet to reach maturity, but Abara is optimistic that

within the next year or so he will be collecting a valuable bounty from his small orchard. Kebebusa Meresha from Wolmera Choke village in Holleta District shares this optimism and says that the 105 apple growers in her region have already been organized into a fruit producers co-operative as they prepare to sell and distribute their produce.

A mother of two, Kebebusa says that she has already been selling the fruit that she harvests from her 32 apple trees in local markets, but that when the co-operative begins marketing on their behalf, they will be able to sell to fruit markets and other institutions in the city.





**Self Help Africa is making a real difference
to people's lives in Africa.**



**Self Help
Africa**

www.selfhelpafrica.net

Self Help Africa - Ireland

Annefield House, Dublin Road,
Portlaoise, Co. Laois,
Ireland.
Tel. +353-(0)578694034
Registered Charity No. 66636663

Self Help Africa - UK

2nd Floor Suite, Westgate House,
Dickens Court, Off Hills Lane,
Shrewsbury SY1 1QU
Tel. + 44(0)1743 277170
Registered Charity No. 298830

Self Help Africa - USA

Self Help Africa Inc.
304 Park Avenue South, 11th Floor
New York, NY 10010, United States
Tel: 001-917-289-0670