

JULY 2023

KWETU hubs project in Tanzania

Empowering Women Farmers in Mwanza Region, Tanzania, with an Agricultural Technology Hub



Phase 1 For a 10 month period, from June 2022 till March 2023, EI Tanzania ran an innovation trial that was financially supported by FIT (Fund for Innovation Transformation) through Global Affairs Canada. The project introduced agricultural technology hubs, locally known as KWETU-hubs, into 3 communities: Luchelele, Nyamatongo and Katunguru in the Mwanza region, Tanzania.

KWETU is an acronym for Kituo cha Wakulima na Elimu ya Teknolojia Kwa Urahisi (Centre for Farmers and Education about Appropriate Technology) but also “Our Place” meaning a communal place.

The project has truly transformed these communities! Across the villages, 9 “master trainers” recruited 330 catalyst famers (239 women, 91 men) and facilitated their training in low-cost organic agricultural methods using a video based curriculum, accompanied by practical demonstrations. Our gender partner, Action for Women Organization, successfully trained 283 participants (217 women, 66 men) on a variety of

contextualised gender-in-agriculture training seminars. This training contributed to a shift in perception of all male participants towards an acceptance of women holding leadership positions and making financial decisions.

Subsistence farmers, especially women, were encouraged to try out technology which also includes labour saving technologies such as seed planters and drip irrigation systems, though some were met with mixed reactions. The training and technology, together with the introduction of kitchen gardens, allowed them to grow an abundance (and often surplus) of vegetables and marketable produce. Unfarmed and infertile wasteland was turned into a productive and dependable asset.



Keyhole gardens

A keyhole garden is a circular raised garden with a keyhole-shaped indentation on one side. The indentation allows gardeners to add uncooked vegetable scraps, greywater, and manure into a composting basket that sits in the center of the bed. This type of garden can be constructed on infertile ground and near the kitchen, for ease of access. Greywater from the household that would normally be discarded, can be used to water the garden. A variety of vegetables can be grown and often yield more than one crop, a welcome source of food in the dry season when food is scarce.

Abundance in a dry place

When we visited Nyamatongo in November 2022, it was dry season. The wells had dried up and, though water was available from Lake Victoria, it is a long, hot walk of a couple of miles to fetch it. The water is not clean either.

Rosemary is a catalyst farmer in the village. She has established and maintained a keyhole garden near her house after being introduced to the idea by the KWETU hub. She was able to not only feed her family from the produce from this garden, but also fed 5 visitors who came to support the family during a difficult time!



Sack gardens



Katunguru master trainer, Rebecca, who also has a thriving keyhole garden

Sack gardens are very productive as you can plant almost 100 plants on a small footprint area. They can be challenging to set up due to the materials used and are susceptible to damage by animals and the sun, so some participants have decided to only focus on kitchen gardens or keyhole gardens.



Rebecca shows off the prize carrots that she grew in her garden. She planted these carrots in July 2022, during the dry season when she would not usually plant anything.

Drip-feed irrigation put to the test

In the dry season, there is no rain. Water is a scarce resource and should be carefully conserved. Though wells and pumps are available in some areas, this is labour intensive. Running water over a whole area of crops is not an option!

The alternative is to have a drip-feed irrigation system that drips water at the roots of the plants. This would usually be too expensive to try, with the plastic piping not available nearby or too expensive to buy to try it out. The KWETU project gave farmers the opportunity to rig a simple watering system, using plastic buckets and drip-feed pipes so that they could test this and see if it would be feasible for them.



Watch an excellent 5 min video update of the KWETU project on youTU. [be/4v_0zPgI5dM](https://youtu.be/4v_0zPgI5dM) or scan the QR code.



Phase 2

EI Tanzania learned a lot through the planning and implementation of the innovation trial in phase 1 and has now started an extension to maintain the progress being made in the project communities. During this phase, they are building on the successes of the hub concept, working towards making the existing 3 hubs financially sustainable, and also looking at expanding to other areas with locally-owned “branch” hubs established in proximity to the original locations.

We are developing an integrated curriculum that will be adaptable for community groups, schools, and discipleship groups. The curriculum explores, over a number of sessions, the 3 keys areas of climate, gender and food security. There is also a focus on creation care. In these three years of implementation, the project will target women, men, girls and boys, engaging them through new VICOBA (village community banking) groups.



If you would like to contribute to this exciting second phase of the KWETU project, you can do so on our secure online platform Enthuse on this link tinyurl.com/2p9b9m5e or scan the QR code.



Emmanuel International UK Conference & AGM

10:30am-4pm Saturday, 2 March 2024

ST JOHN'S CHURCH, SOUTHBOURNE

We are celebrating 40 years of serving God in mission next year! We'd love to celebrate together with as many of you as possible! Please keep the date open! The brochure and booking form will be available from next month.

We look forward to hearing in person...

- **Fred Silva**, EI Country Representative in Brazil
- **Paul and Helen Jones**, International Director
- **Richard and Pam McGowan**, EI Canada Director

...and on Zoom...

Thanks to technology, we'll be able to hear personal updates from our project countries and staff. Watch the media for news updates on who will be joining us!

Our **2024 Annual General Meeting** will also take place during the day.