THE LEAD INTO GROW MORE FOOD WORKING IN KENYA
AND HOW ESTHER’S GROUP (EDCSWP) IMPROVISED
TO GROW THEIR OWN FOOD CROPS

Growing food with limited resources

Situated in the Ngong hills north west of Nairobi, Kenya, are rural communities among which is a very special ladies Group - the Ecumenical Day Care and Support Women Group (EDCSWP). This is a charity registered in Kenya and led by Esther Wanjohi. Esther supports approximately 150 women from the villages of Kibiku, Oloolua, Olkeri, Nweyo, Gichagi, and Umoja which are all located close to Ngong town. All of whom are HIV challenged in some way, and marginalised by their communities.

These photos taken on 25th February 2014 show how with great care and patience Esther is able to motivate groups of ladies into growing their own food, for the very first time – the key word here is IMPROVISATION.

They pierce holes in the caps of plastic water bottles, cut off the bottoms and plant them in the ground upside down beside the seedlings. Then they fill the bottles with any kind of water – the muddier the better.

The water slowly drains out into the soil and waters each plant. As you can see this works and after a few weeks of replenishing the bottles each day, the cabbages, etc have grown ready for harvesting.

What caught our eye in the top photo – the big black empty water tanks lying there doing nothing.
Carrying Water

The process of growing food has many stages, and when nature is on your side life can be very easy.

But in arid regions growing food is a real challenge. Even watering plants - which we take for granted here in the UK – can become a major part of daily life if water has to be pumped up from underground and conveyed to a crop using human labour and if you’re very lucky – a donkey.

We found this greengrocer in the middle of nowhere. It was quiet at the time but no doubt at some time in the day the owner is rewarded with a flurry of customers either on their way to work or returning home.

Incredibly there are hundreds of thousands of this type of ‘shop’ selling all manner of goods all over Kenya. In Nairobi alone, they must number in the tens of thousands and they are a vitally important part of the economy.

Perhaps from the Sublime to the ......

During our round robin mission, Oct 2014, we were guests for a day at the UN compound and met with many people working on relieving poverty throughout the African continent. We came away very much appreciating the essential nature of their work at a country and regional level - and climate change was very much on everyone’s minds.

But we thought also of Esther and the many other people like her who are working at community level, and having to improvise with very little resource against all the odds to help people to survive from day to day.

We believe that this is where Grow More Food can make a difference

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