UPDATE FROM COMMUNITY OF WOMEN
AND CHILDREN AFFECTED BY HIV

Kits reach families in community

By mid-November 2014 the first donation of 150 small drip kits from Grow More Food was made. It consisted of eighteen boxes destined for the Ecumenical Day Care and Support Women Group (EDCSWP), a charity in Kenya led by Esther Wanjohi. The charity works with more than 150 extended families with, in many cases, three generations of people affected by HIV and AIDS. Grow More Food’s donation means that each family within the network of families is able to start a small kitchen garden to grow fruit and vegetables to feed themselves.

Having received all the drip kits, Esther from EDCSWP has been delivering them to all of the 150 families that are spread out in seven villages about 17 miles from the capital city of Nairobi. Esther trains the women on how to install and use the kits for a well-managed vegetable plot. All of the families in the network live on the margins of rural village communities, and have been discriminated against due to stigmas associated with HIV and AIDS. The villages include Kibiku, Oloolua, Olkeri, Nweyo, Gichagi, and Umoja which are all located close to Ngong town.

World AIDS Day

Monday 1st December marked World AIDS Day, a symbolic day for Grow More Food in which people all around the world show their support for people living with HIV, and challenge the stigma surrounding HIV and AIDS.
Growing aspirations

The groups of women were also given some strawberry seedlings, amongst other seeds, to start up their kitchen gardens. They have now planted them up and are excited to nurture the plants as they watch them grow into healthy plants bearing plenty of fruits.

The women have also enjoyed learning about the new technology by watching Esther’s practical demonstrations, and learning how to incorporate the drip irrigation kits into their daily lives. Apart from growing fresh fruit and vegetables, maintaining a healthy kitchen garden provides women affected by HIV with a practical and valuable new hobby.

Empowering people

We have received excellent feedback from Esther on an unexpected benefit that the drip irrigation technology is having on the groups of women and children affected by HIV. Introducing the drip kits into the communities is creating interest from onlookers from the local villages. With their new knowledge and skills the women are regaining some respect, and starting to feel valued by their inquisitive and fascinated neighbours who have previously denied their very existence.

We hope that the donation of relevant drip irrigation kits to vulnerable people in Africa will continue to provide positive benefits such as good nutrition, a sense of ownership and pride, and social inclusion. To ensure that we can make an impact in the future, Grow More Food is seeking sponsorship from commercial organisations and donations, where these can be afforded, from private individuals.

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