



INTERIM REPORT 1

'Batwa Women Breaking the Cycle of Poverty & Food Insecurity'
November-March 2017





'Batwa Women Breaking the Cycle of Poverty and Food Insecurity'

Grant Amount: \$42,100

Sarah Koch, Executive Director
999 Peachtree St. NE Suite 2300
Atlanta, GA 30309
USA
+1.619.274.7218

info@reaplifedig.org
facebook.com/ReapLifeDIG
twitter.com/ReapLifeDIG

www.reaplifedig.org

Intended Outcomes of Project

RECAP BRIEFLY OUTCOMES THE PROJECT WAS DESIGNED TO ACHEIVE

Development In Gardening launched the 'Batwa Women Breaking the Cycle of Poverty and Food Insecurity Project in collaboration with women leaders in the Batwa community and Global Batwa Outreach (GBO) to provide experiential training in sustainable agriculture, nutrition, improved cooking practices, and business record-keeping, develop three community demonstration gardens, and 400 women-led home gardens benefitting over 1,600 Batwa women, girls and families to break the cycle of poverty and food insecurity.

The objectives are to improve 1) nutrition, 2) economic wellbeing, 3) food security and 4) empowerment of 100 Batwa women per each of the three communities. Through skills building and the development of three demonstration gardens and 100 household gardens per community, DIG intends to: Improve nutrition by a) increasing diversity and climate resilience of foods grown and consumed and b) enhancing nutritional status of Batwa women, girls, and families; 2) Improve economic well-being by a) increasing household income through sales of produce from home gardens and reducing food expenditures and b) enhancing planning and management skills of human, economic and environmental resources; 3) Improve food security by a) increasing self-reliance in local food production and b) improving land use, conservation of natural resources and climate resilience; and 4) Improve leadership and empowerment by a) reducing stigmatization and discrimination experienced by the Batwa and b) providing opportunities for the Batwa to be leaders in their community

To achieve the objectives above, DIG is engaging farmers in a five-month hands-on training in sustainable agriculture at each of the community demonstration gardens using DIG's Mobile Farmer Field School (MFFS) model based on the Garden Cycle (planning, preparing, seeds, planting and transplanting, maintenance, pest and disease, harvesting, and rotating). Workshops in cooperative business planning and record keeping are being incorporated in the program. Concurrently to the agriculture training, DIG is following DIG's Seed-to-Plate nutrition curriculum to address specific nutritional life-cycle needs of the Batwa families through cooking demonstrations and nutrition training.

Along with training, this program will support gardens at the individual household-level. DIG and local facilitators will train 100+ Batwa and design and support their household gardens. The gardens will be designed to include local food preferences, changing climate patterns and innovative gardening techniques (i.e., soil restoration and conservation , companion planting, integrated pest management, etc.).

Funding Sources

HAS FUNDING CHANGED?

The funding for this project has not changed, although we intend to lengthen the original timeline of our project into a second year to ensure sustainability at the household level is achieved.

Current Project Situation

IS YOUR ORGANIZATION OR PROJECT SITUATION DIFFERENT THAN PRESENTED IN THE APPROVED PROPOSAL?

Our project design has evolved to increase impact for women-led Batwa households according to their unique cultural setup. For example, our demonstration gardens have grown from the anticipated 3 to 6 to

accommodate for the far distances of households and increase inclusion amongst Batwa households living further from the centers. The community identified Food Security as the most the immediate issue to address so we have prioritized that objective. Taking advantage of the local weather patterns, agricultural concepts and trainings have taken precedence over specific trainings for group capacity building. The community has had great input in the development of their gardens and the local food variety that they wish to plant. We will focus on complimentary trainings and forming of cooperatives during the second phase of our project.

Additionally, when completing a stakeholder analysis, we found that an extremely prominent organization that has been providing advocacy and livelihood projects alongside the Batwa for the past 30 years recently implemented a Village Savings and Internal Lending Committees within our project communities, therefore the focus of our financial management trainings have shifted to focus solely on Gardening As a Business and repeat topics that the organization feels like may need additional support.

Projected Beneficiaries

Has the number of beneficiaries changed?

The anticipated number of beneficiaries for the project were 400 women and girls and indirect beneficiaries of 1,200 community members. This number was sourced from a study done by our introduction partner, Global Batwa Outreach. After getting on the ground and discussing with Government and other stakeholder organizations, it became clear that the number of households in these three Batwa Communities was much less. During our Baseline Study, we were able to locate, contact, and interview 148 households. 55% of these household participants were women. Currently, we have 215 documented farmers enrolled in our Program and 174 Farmers have attended one or more trainings. On average, we have 110 farmers actively engaged in our trainings each week, 75% being women.

We have an overall target of reaching 150 farmers, continuing with the trend of focusing on woman farmers, aiming to increase female farmers to 112, at 75%. Our program is designed in two main phases, the Mobile Farmer Field School followed by a package of technical support at a household level, continued trainings at the demonstration gardens, and more elaborate nutrition and financial management trainings. We believe that after seeing MFFS participants graduate and establish healthy household gardens this will encourage more community members to get involved.

Beneficiary Story: Sanyu Mauda

Sanyu Mauda from Kinryaushengye is a mother of six and found it difficult to feed her family on the little land

and gardening knowledge she had. She grew a few greens like cabbage, amaranth, and a native forest green called Eschwiga.

Through the Mobile Farmer Field School, she's learned best practices on how to grow new vegetables like eggplant, spinach, peas, and Irish potatoes. She enjoyed our cooking demonstration and is



now trying to cook well balanced meals at home and not cook vegetables for so long. She's received 110 cabbage seedlings and 20 onion seedlings from our Garden Demo distribution and is looking forward to expanding through our MFFS Subsidy Program. She's eager to be a part of our MFFS Phase 2 to learn about planting carrots, green pepper, local tomatoes, papaya and beans. She's teaching her children how to help her manage pests in the garden, manage soil fertility, and weed. Sanyu is one of the first to receive seedlings as part of our home garden initiative. She's one of 44 farmers receiving over 1,765 cabbage, 100 spinach, and 360 onions with the intention of increasing to 150 farmers by the end of May.

Challenges and Solutions

WHAT CHALLENGES ARE YOU FACING AS YOU MOVE FORWARD WITH THIS PROJECT? HOW ARE YOU APPROACHING THESE CHALLENGES?

During our baseline study, we confirmed that literacy levels and socio-economic levels are very low amongst the Batwa population. 36.5% of participants surveyed have never been to school and 39.2 % have only attended up to class 2. This has led us to greatly alter our MFFS and Nutritional and Financial Management trainings from the traditional DIG curriculum. We have needed to revisit and review many topics to ensure farmers have understood and can replicate the sustainable agriculture, nutrition, or financial topic within their homes, but continuing to stay on track with our original timeline. Another challenge has been low income levels. Many of our vulnerable groups within other DIG projects are raising enough income through mixed business practices to be able to support themselves in buying simple farming inputs such as seed, tools, and fertilizers. This is not the case for the Batwa. The Batwa often borrow each others' tools and have not invested in these materials prior to the project.

Our MFFS Input Subsidy Program aims to solve that issue, by providing tools at a fraction of the cost to farmers who have attended at least 70% of the trainings. We believe that this will catalyze gardening as a business within the community for continual investment. This Subsidy Program will also be coupled with financial management trainings to encourage the cycle of saving and investment into agriculture. Further, we've had to develop appropriate technology approaches to sustainable agriculture. For example, instead of demonstrating rainwater harvesting with drums, which would be found in a typical rural African setting, we are teaching farmers to create clay-sealed holes in the ground lined with inexpensive black plastic. Our team is continually thinking outside of the box, creating inexpensive ways for the Batwa to resolve challenges on the ground.



Another example of finding cost effective ways to work with the Batwa is seen in this photo of Women from Nyabizi Group in Murubindi. They are fitting black plastic into a hole they dug to brew manure tea. They'll use this same approach to harvest rainwater to get them through the long, often unpredictable dry season – instead of purchasing plastic water buckets that run upwards of \$20 compared to \$2 cost for plastic.

Current Objectives

Have you revised your

original objectives since the project began? If so, why? What are your new objectives?

Our objectives remain true to the original proposal. During the first half of our program, we have prioritized objective 1 and 3 - improving nutrition and increasing food security, as this was the immediate need of these Batwa Communities. After providing adequate training for the farmers to provide themselves with sufficient food, we will then prioritize further discussions on nutrition and gardening as a business. However, in the first phase of our project, we have introductory trainings in both nutrition and financial management that have complemented our food security trainings.

Demonstrated Progress

I) Improve nutrition by-

- Increasing diversity and climate resilience of foods grown and consumed
- Enhancing nutritional status of Batwa women, girls, and families

During our baseline study, the following data was collected about vegetables being grown and sold at a household level. The results are as follows;

Vegetable	Growing (%)	Selling (%)
Beans	70	14

Irish Potatoes	68	25
Sweet Potato	61	7
Nightshade	44	9
Cabbage	40	15
Pea	39	1
Pumpkin	16	0
Onion	10	1
Eggplant	7	1
Kale	7	0
Tomato	5	0

Taking this data into consideration, we have incorporated onion, eggplant, pumpkin, cabbage, irish potatoes, and peas in the first growing season of our demonstration gardens to add diet diversity and growing knowledge around a larger number of crops and vegetables. In the second phase, we will further diversify by planting carrots, green pepper, papaya, tomato, and kale. These demonstration gardens have a home garden initiative so that seedlings are shared at a household level while being maintained at the demonstration sites. Once vegetables are being harvested, household nutrition should increase.

During the month of February, 111 farmers, 83 women and 28 males, attended our cooking demonstration that introduced the basic building blocks of nutrition and the benefits of a balanced meal. The cooking demo used vegetables and crops being planted our demonstration gardens and showed specific cooking techniques that would improve nutrition uptake. The second phase of our project will focus more on nutrition, including

nutrition for pregnant mothers and under 5 children, continuing to follow DIG's Seed-to-Plate curriculum.

II) Improve economic well-being by-

- Increasing household income through sales of produce from home gardens and reducing food expenditures
- Enhancing planning and management skills of human, economic and environmental resources

See above chart for the percentage of households selling per vegetable type. Although gardens have not yet matured to harvest, families are already beginning to anticipate extra money being saved from eating from their garden and will have the opportunity to invest more money into scaling up their gardening business, paying school fees, medical costs, or other household costs. During our recent financial management training, we conducted a comparative analysis of two types of farming that occur within the region--- farming for others, which is often the case in Batwa Communities, or splitting your time between gardening for yourself and working for others. This practical example touched many, with Benon Midago in Kafuga stating he will no longer rent land to the neighboring tribe and will work for himself.



Farmers in Mumudugudu Group in Kinryaushengye Community create a well-balanced meal of eggplant, cabbage, beans, and irish potatoes. Typically, a dish is cooked putting all the vegetables in one pot, reducing the cooks actual time in the kitchen. However, we discussed that overcooking can greatly decrease the nutritional value of some vegetables. The groups enjoyed the meal and many women have started practicing these new cooking techniques at home

III) Improve food security by-

- Increasing self-reliance in local food production
- Improving land use, conservation of natural resources and climate resilience

Since launching the project, we've seen a consistent 110 farmers attending our trainings and so far, 44 are now growing at home. Our household gardening initiative being launched in late March, we aim to see this number increase to 150 as seedlings continue to mature.

Our demonstration gardens follow best practices of the region. Implementing a soil and water conservation method called Fanya Chini, farmers learn how to construct terraces on their steeply sloping land and dig trenches to allow water to seep into garden, extending the growing season and protecting their land from soil erosion. Additionally, we've planted colliandra, an agroforestry species, as well as elephant grass at all of our demonstration sites, encouraging the utilization of grass bands as a soil stabilizer. We've seen many farmers replicate this at home. Actual figures of our impact will be captured during our Midline Survey that will take place in June.



Farmers in Rwamahano construct a Fanya Chini terrace. With the heavy rains they're experiencing, farmers are witnessing the benefits firsthand.

Kafuga farmers practicing precision planting with peas rather than using the traditional broadcasting system. The group learns why minimum tillage is important for soil conservation.

leadership and empowerment by-

- Reducing stigmatization and discrimination experienced by the Batwa
- Providing opportunities for the Batwa to be leaders in their community

Local facilitators, Robert and Wilber, are members of Kinryaushengye Community and are proud to be Batwa. They play a crucial role in creating a trust between the community leaders, farmers and DIG. Often participating in other organizations' projects, but never having a formal leadership role, DIG is excited to employ our local facilitators and build their capacity in sustainable agriculture, nutrition, financial management, and community development.

Additionally, we heard many stories already like Sanyu, of Batwa women, taking control of their household needs and becoming local model farmers for their fellow neighbors.

IV) Improve



Current Timeline

We do not anticipate any challenges to complete our activities on time. The project has seen measurable success thus far and we intend to continue moving forward to deepen agricultural, nutrition, and financial knowledge at a household level.

Farmers like Edward Katama, have been learning innovative techniques to achieve household food security. These hanging baskets are traditionally used as traps to catch crayfish. We've turned them into hanging pots that will receive roof rainwater and address the lack of land availability.



Expenses

These are the category of expenses occurred so far for the project supported by DFW:

Budget Item	Total Costs
Personnel (Project Coordinator – on site)	\$8,502.67
Transport/Lodging	\$2,005.88
Materials (Gardens/Trainings)	\$4,430.11
Total (Expended as of March 31st, 2017)	\$14,938.66