



beyond
subsistence

NEWSLETTER

November, 2015

beyondsubsistence.org.au

Ethiopia hosts its first Master TreeGrower Program

A small farming community in the central highlands of Ethiopia was the location for its nation's first ever Master TreeGrower (MTG) program. Hosted by SIM Ethiopia and facilitated by Beyond Subsistence, the five-day program trained forty of the region's leading farmers and government personnel with life-changing agroforestry skills.

Ethiopia is Africa's second most populous country with over ninety million people. Sadly, Ethiopia is regularly found near the bottom of the Human Development Index world rankings. Over 80% of Ethiopia's people are subsistence farmers. Overgrazing and deforestation have significantly impacted the nation's agricultural productivity. Change is needed to improve livelihoods and conserve the landscape.

The Forest, Fruit and Forage for Farm Families (Five Fs) project is run by the international mission organisation, SIM and is located on the outskirts of the small town of Injibara, in the central highlands of Ethiopia. It is a beautiful place with rocky outcrops and a pretty landscape sitting near the head of the Blue Nile some 2,500 metres above sea level. The region receives approximately two metres of annual rainfall and is blessed with fertile soils and a cool temperate climate. Despite these favourable conditions, poverty abounds.

The Five Fs project has made a significant contribution to the Injibara region, re-introducing a range of valuable indigenous trees, many in danger of being lost from the area. The project has also successfully introduced a range of fruit trees to the local farmers, improving nutrition and providing a source of income through the sale of seedlings and fruit. This platform of knowledge, combined with strong local farmer relationships, made the Five Fs project the perfect host for Ethiopia's first ever MTG program.

A total of thirty-five men and five women completed the MTG program. The group largely consisted of leading farmers in the region (those who have demonstrated an ability to adopt new ideas) but also contained a scattering of government personnel. Together they learned the basic science of how trees grow and the advantages of trees in the landscape. They visited local markets and learned about the many wood and non-wood products that they can sell. Amazingly, for many, it was the first time they had investigated opportunities in the local marketplace. These activities were followed up with some specific training on measurement and management of trees.

As part of the training, dramas were performed and role-plays undertaken, all with the purpose of communicating in a familiar format and assisting participants to retain the knowledge imparted. After five days, each farmer has the skills, knowledge and empowerment to begin their own agroforestry journey and to challenge their communities.

As a result of the MTG program, many relationships were formed or improved between farmers, local government people and the Five Fs team. This has great importance, ensuring that participants have peers around them to continue discussions, knowledge sharing, accountability and advice. It is our experience that investment in relationships is the key ingredient for transformation to occur.

In Uganda and Niger, we have seen the MTG programs stimulate a whole range of activities from farm plans being drawn up, new seedling nurseries established, agroforestry networks formed, radio programs transmitted, school programs initiated and requests for new MTG programs in neighbouring regions. We look forward to the outcomes from the first Ethiopian MTG program and the long term impacts in the region.

Special thanks goes to Dr Steve Enticott and the team at CIA Tax, for sponsoring all forty participants to attend this life-changing training opportunity. Thanks also to the Crawford Fund for their sponsorship of travel and our MTG partner the Aust Agroforestry Foundation.



Pictures: Top - Exploring bamboo markets; Second - Role Play on tree management; Third - Horrific gully erosion; Bottom - Graduating MTG participants

Walk for Wood Makes an Impact

"I thought I'd seen it all" was the comment from one of the marshals as a team of fifteen firewood-laden Beyond Subsistence representatives passed by at this year's Melbourne Marathon three kilometre walk.

Walk for Wood is an initiative of Beyond Subsistence that we hope will become a major annual event. It involves volunteers (of all ages) carrying firewood bundles in recognition and support of the millions of women and children in developing countries collecting wood each day for survival.

Without firewood, subsistence families cannot cook their food or boil their water. In some highland areas, firewood is also essential for keeping warm at night. In countries like Uganda, it is estimated that some women and children are spending up to ten hours every week searching for an ever-depleting resource. The cost of this activity is significant with respect to time and effort for all involved.

For mothers, the opportunity cost is income generation and nurturing the family. For children, it is often schooling that is sacrificed. In some regions, collectors are also in danger of violence and abduction.

Beyond Subsistence is committed to tackling this problem from both directions. Our agroforestry training initiatives promote and encourage the integration of trees into farms, providing future firewood resources. To compliment this, our fuel-efficient stove workshops quickly cut a family's firewood use by two-thirds.

Participants in this year's Walk for Wood found the going difficult at times as

arms, legs and necks were exercised to transport bundles of wood over the three kilometre circuit. However, the experience helped us identify in a small way, with the plight of so many people less fortunate than ourselves.

Our efforts in the October Melbourne Marathon raised awareness and generated over \$5,000 in donations.

Special thanks to all those who joined us for the event and contributed financially.

Please join us next year!



Pictures: Left - The real thing, women in Uganda 2014; Left Middle - In action during the walk; Right Middle - Entering the MCG; Right - Team Photo

A Great Celebration at our Annual Dinner

This year's Beyond Subsistence's Annual Dinner hosted over one hundred people for a night of fine African food, live music and an insightful interview with our friend and colleague from Africa.

Visiting from her home in Uganda, our special guest at this year's Annual Dinner was Joy Tukahirwa, our Beyond Subsistence East African Representative. Attendees were captivated as Joy shared her experiences growing up in rural Uganda. She recalled life as a little girl in a simple three-bedroom home with twelve siblings and no running water. Her chores included working on the farm with her mother and collecting water from the well. As a child she never had shoes and often missed the first few weeks of school because she was the youngest and the family often couldn't afford the fees.

Joy's life has been an amazing journey - she has lived through Uganda's independence from Britain, the rise and fall of Idi Amin and the horror of the Rwandan genocide, which occurred just over the border, a few hours from her home town. However, we were all reminded of the power of education as she explained how God blessed her with a scholarship to a girl's boarding school and then opened the door for tertiary education. Joy went on to achieve a Masters and PhD in natural resources.



These days Joy is using her education to work with Beyond Subsistence, caring for others and providing them with valuable training and support so that they can have a better life. Thanks to all those who attended this fantastic evening. We are so grateful for the generosity of many, which saw us raise over \$12,000 on the night!

Junior LandCare making a difference in Ugandan Schools

This month, Beyond Subsistence CEO Jon Lambert, visited three schools in the region of Kabale, south west Uganda to see first-hand the impact of Junior LandCare.

On the back of the first African Master TreeGrower program in Uganda 2013, the Kabale Agroforestry Network (KAN) was formed. One of the initiatives of KAN was to target five local schools to establish Junior LandCare programs.

With many public schools in Uganda struggling for resources, the school grounds are often dirt and grass. Seeing an opportunity, KAN has trained a teacher in each of these schools to be a Junior LandCare coordinator, and overseen the establishment of trees and vegetable gardens. With supporting funds from LandCare International and Beyond Subsistence, the school yards have now been transformed.

Areas close to the school's roof runoff water are now full of nutritious vegetables and fruit trees. Given that Ugandan schools are responsible for providing lunch to the students, these gardens are creating a significant cost saving along with a benefit in nutrition. The school playgrounds have also been planted with a sprinkling of trees like Australian silky oak. These trees will eventually provide invaluable shade for students and high-quality timber that can be progressively harvested and replanted.

In addition to the physical transformation, the students receive valuable education in nutrition, agroforestry and management of grazing animals. The LandCare curriculum uses dances, songs and poems to help students learn, retain and communicate this important information to their families.

Pictures: Left - Junior LandCare vegetable gardens; Middle - Beyond Subsistence East African Rep, Dr Joy Tukahirwa stands beside an Australian silky oak she planted at Rugarama Primary School alongside the school's Junior LandCare Coordinator, Principal and KAN Chairman Jimmy Musiime; Right - School Principal and children alongside one of their fruit and vegetable gardens at the Bubare Primary School.



FROM THE CEO



One of the great challenges of working in developing countries is understanding the causes of poverty.

There are many causes of poverty and they more often relate to social, cultural and spiritual issues than physical ones.

A great example of this is the region of Injibara, Ethiopia - the location of our November 2015 Master TreeGrower program. Injibara is blessed with deep, rich soils and rainfall in the order of 2 metres per year. Its elevation is about 2,500 metres and it is close to the equator, therefore the climate is highly favourable with average daily temperatures in the low to mid 20s all year round.

The climate is so good for plants that often they flower more than once a year, enabling farmers to produce more than one crop of grain or fruit per annum. Nevertheless, the people in the region of Injibara live in the type of poverty I have seen in parts of West Africa where droughts, high temperatures and infertile soils make agriculture difficult for even the best farmers. Hard to believe!

The message for all of us working in development is to be very aware that the causes of poverty are many and varied. Oppression, persecution, corruption,

poor health and spiritual beliefs can all have a profound impact on people. Although agroforestry training will be a wonderful investment for the local Awi people of Injibara, the biggest difference will materialise as relationships are formed and the people receive support, feel encouraged and experience unconditional love. As we so often remind ourselves at Beyond Subsistence, it's not just about the trees!

Thank-you for your support in 2015!
Jon Lambert



Changes to the Beyond Subsistence team

After six years of faithful service we farewell founding board member, Simeon Shinkfield, and thank him for his many hours of service and support. At the same time we also farewell Matt Beamish, after two years on our board, and his wife Shelly Beamish, who was the founder and coordinator of our prayer team. Thanks to Matt and Shelly for their tremendous contributions.

As two board members step down, we welcome two new members to our team. Dr Steven Enticott is a financial adviser, businessman and forestry enthusiast who is a member of the All Souls Anglican Church in Sandringham. Steve has two teenage children and is married to Ali. Heather Rayside has degrees in medicine and surgery and has spent a decade working in mission and development in South East Asia. Heather is a member of the Crossway Baptist Church in East Burwood. Heather is married to Paul and they have two teenage daughters. Welcome aboard!

Want to help?



Donations are tax deductible and 100% of your gift goes directly to our projects. Please tell us if you would like your gift to be directed to a specific project or initiative.

Pray for our work and those who volunteer to make it happen.

Consider a **fundraising** activity through GoFundraise and get fit at the same time. For upcoming events see: gofundraise.com.au



Follow us on **Facebook** to keep up with our work.

OUR MISSION

Beyond Subsistence is a non-profit, Christian organisation that exists to bring about long-term sustainable change through forestry and agroforestry development amongst the world's poorest communities.

THANKS to **Dr Steve Enticott** and **CIA Tax** for their generosity in supporting 40 participants to attend the Ethiopian MTG program. For financial advice Steve can be contracted on 1300 242 829 or visit ciatax.com.au



DONATE ONLINE

Donations to Beyond Subsistence are **100% tax deductible** and can be made by direct debit, Paypal or credit card. See our website at beyonddsubsistence.org.au.

Alternatively you can deposit direct to our bank account:

BSB number **083-841** **Account number** **89-376-7494**

Contact Us:

Write or send cheques to:
Stephanie Lambert
Secretary, Beyond Subsistence
PO Box 1076, Warragul, Victoria 3820

Web - beyonddsubsistence.org.au