

SUSTAINABLE GLOBAL GARDENS

ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015

INTRODUCTION

This is the ninth Annual Report of Sustainable Global Gardens [UK charity reg. no. 1116243]. The document has been prepared for the charity's AGM, which is to be held on Friday 5th June 2015. The report covers the period of SGG's ninth financial year which ended on 31st March 2015.

The approach I have taken when writing this report is to look at the objectives of Sustainable Global Gardens as given in the original Business Plan, and then to comment on how far such objectives have been achieved. In the initial Business Plan the five year target to be achieved by March 2011 was *'the annual raising of £100,000, which is to be transferred through at least 10 & preferably 20 small-scale sustainable projects to poor communities in the Developing World'* so progress can be judged against that long-term goal. A specific second 5 year plan was not developed in 2011, so those initial goals remain as SGG's general objectives. However, at the AGM in June 2011 it was agreed that over the next 5 years SGG should focus more on the activities where SGG had been more successful. This meant more projects related to environmental improvement [especially tree-planting and composting for soil improvement], income generation based on table banking, and fuller cooperation with other small development NGOs, who are undertaking similar work to SGG.

PROGRESS WITH REFERENCE TO CHARITY OBJECTIVES

SUSTAINABLE GLOBAL GARDENS [Company No 5733281] became an incorporated company on 7th March 2006 and a registered charity [Reg. No. 1116243] on 28th September 2006. By September 2006 SGG had raised a total of £873.35p and had invested £500 for polygardening work in Sri Lanka, as our first overseas project. The charity is nine years old now, but those two figures are still a useful benchmark against which to measure progress.

A priority in the first three years of SGG was to establish a network of supporters. By March 2009 we had made satisfactory progress in this matter, as there were some 35 individual supporters as well as 6 institutions which gave significant support to SGG. That pattern has not changed much since then. By March 2015 there were 56 individual supporters, and 5 Europe-based supporting institutions. There is no formal membership required to join SGG, so it is somewhat arbitrary how we estimate the number of our supporters. Our present estimate is that there are 65 people whom we regard as supporters. On this basis it would be fair to say that SGG has experienced gradual expansion in the UK in recent years.

If we count 'active partners' in East Africa rather than 'supporters' in the UK, SGG is experiencing more rapid growth with partners. The prime role of Sustainable Global Gardens within the 'OPTIONS' project is outreach work within Kenya, and this role has brought SGG into contact with more than 20 Kenyan NGOs who are now working as active participants within the OPTIONS project. Similarly the 'Treedom' project, although it is being implemented mainly amongst Maendelao Mashinani Organisation farmer members in Busia County, West Kenya, has also put SGG in contact with several new groups. Thus, it is in Kenya where we are making most progress in terms of getting new people involved in SGG projects.



Kitaingo Kilimo Hai in Makueni County are a community group interested in natural pesticides. They are particularly concerned about their French beans being denied access to the lucrative EU markets because of residual synthetic chemicals within their produce. As part of the OPTIONS project they were visited in September *[see top left]* to encourage members to grow *Tephrosia vogeleii* for use as a natural pesticide. The annual conference of INADES in Machakos attracted over 200 delegates in November 2014 *[see top right]*. SGG was invited to speak on the topic of pesticidal plants, and received invitations from 16 community groups to visit them & promote the production of such plants. MMO in Busia agreed with Treedom to plant some 25,000 trees on members farms. Some MMO groups were slow to take up this opportunity, but others seized the moment. CIF near Sioport were in the latter category *[see bottom left]* and by now have planted more than 4,000 trees. The scenery around Sioport shows how badly they need further planting of trees *[see bottom right]*.



The initial Business Plan also mentioned the target of *"at least 10 & preferably 20 small-scale sustainable projects to poor communities in the Developing World"*. In this financial year SGG's work schedule has been dominated by one project i.e. Project 11 'Tree-planting and conservation in Africa'. In fact, within Project 11 there are two major projects,

- the OPTIONs project which aims to plant 40,000 pesticidal shrubs and trees by January 2017 ,
- the 2014-5 Treedom project, which has a planting target of 25,000 trees within the current forest plan, with similar planting targets to be considered after the completion of this first forest plan.

Both of these projects could absorb all of SGG's time and energy for the foreseeable future. This is largely because they both involve hundreds of farmer participants who are members of scores of autonomous community self-help groups. Thus, work on other recent projects and on projects where local leadership appears to be unsatisfactory has come to a halt.

In the previous 2013-2014 financial year the funds raised in the UK were £53,423.11p with a further £6,332.83p raised by members of Maendeleo Mashinani for their own income-generation Project 4 schemes. In the 2014-2015 financial year SGG raised £32,247.54p in the UK. This figure is a disappointing reduction on last year, but accounting practices are partly responsible for this discrepancy. By January 2015 Treedom informed us that they had sold 12,000 trees at a price of \$1.20/tree payment to SGG. This includes SGG's production costs of £5,268.30p, so we are currently owed £4,193.84p by Treedom. Furthermore, we have successfully completed our first year of the three year OPTIONs project, but the EU has yet to pay our second year funding of £15,447.57p. This perhaps customary accounting practice of delayed payments has given SGG some real cash flow problems during the financial year under consideration. In recent months we have managed only because the Natural Resources Institute, who are the lead partners in the OPTIONs project, have forwarded SGG an advance of 10,000 euro until the EU funding is available.

The major funding disappointment for SGG was the sponsor for the 'Special Orphans Project' announcing in September 2014 that he was withdrawing from the project. This means that the anticipated £16,000 sponsorship was reduced to a final payment of £2,000. The reason cited for the ending of this previously agreed sponsorship was the increasing security risks of visiting/working in Kenya - and I accept that this is a valid view.

The consequence of this is that the excellent progress made last year with reference to table-banking & income-generation among guardians of orphans has come to a halt. We hope that this proves to be only temporary. It should be noted though that there have been a few cases of table-banking during this financial year. Lonely Orphans, who are one of MMOs OVC groups, are renovating their property, which the local authorities had previously condemned as unfit for use. By March 2015 they had replaced much of the roofing and renovated one of the classrooms.

During the 2014-2015 financial year some projects have made steady progress, despite our focus being on Project 11. A full list of SGG's current enterprises is as follows: -

- **Project 1**- the supply of 'moneymaker' water-pumps to encourage dry season vegetable production among farmer groups in Busia District. This project is now closed, but occasionally we receive requests. This year SGG provided funding for a new well at MMO's demonstration plot in Matayos. The purpose of the well was to enable intensive, all year round vegetable production.
- **Project 2** - In September 2013 it was agreed to modify this project from one centred around a weekly supplementary meal for some 500 OVCs ['orphans &/or vulnerable children'] to one which focussed on provision of microcredit and other resources so that guardians of OVCs could improve their economic status, and therefore care for those children on a more sustainable basis. As reported previously this approach appeared to be a great success a year ago, but in September the sponsorship ended. At that time the various groups who were feeding OVCs agreed to continue as best they could without any support, so SGG used the final £2,000 donation for that purpose. Table-banking for OVC guardians came to an abrupt halt at that time.



The Special Orphans Project encouraged the carers of orphans to invest in income generation projects, and there were many successes here. Julia Ojwang is a member of Siritanyi, a grandmother and carer of 3 OVCs. She used her microcredit to purchase timber for her furniture shop [see top left]. This was sufficiently profitable to enable her to open a small tearoom where she sells bread and mandazi [see top right]. Other members of Siritanyi chose completely different activities, such as cereal trading. Profits from such enterprises may be very small, but these activities encourage an entrepreneurial spirit, which is so lacking in many areas. SGG intends to continue supporting such small business development, but is in need of new sponsors to support this work.



In September the leaders of groups caring for OVCs decided that they would continue with or without external support. Anne Nanjala's farm was the location for the Namulekhwa Wedinye OVCs' meal [see top left]. When SGG started the feeding programme in 2007 there were large numbers of underfed, undersized children within the communities we visited. What we have noticed recently is that not all but many of these OVCs now look in far healthier condition - as can be seen with some of the Siritanyi orphans [see middle left]. We offer our congratulations to all those who have voluntarily struggled to support OVCs over the last decade! Siguli Orphans Centre is one of those groups [see bottom left]. In October they volunteered to accommodate an OPTIONS training session and also provide a lunch for the trainees. From that small income, they managed to pay for an extra meal for their own OVCs. Lonely Orphans are another OVC group [see below]. At present they are table-banking in order to save money to renovate their facilities.



- **Project 3** – improvements in composting techniques. Nearly all the training for this particular project has been done in recent years by two MMO coordinators, Phillip Namulundu and Mohamed Wandera. This year SGG and MMO wished to demonstrate the value of composting by establishing a demonstration plot based on double-dug raised beds incorporating large quantities of organic matter. See details in Project 15. Soon after this work started Phillip was offered a full-time salaried job working on agricultural improvements [very similar to those promoted by SGG] throughout Busia County. We are sorry to lose Phillip who has been a faithful underpaid volunteer for several years, but we wish to congratulate him on his promotion and thank him for his many days of volunteering.

Since September the other trainer Mohammed Wandera has been managing the demonstration plot at Matayos. A particular feature here is that a wormery has been developed and later in 2015 we plan to start selling worms as a new source of income for MMO.



The demonstration plot has two trays on a slight incline so that 'worm wee' can drain away and be collected [see top left] for use as a fertiliser. The worm population has been increasing [see top right], so before the end of 2015 MMO should be in a position to begin commercial production and training

- **Project 4** – table-banking. After a surge of interest in the table-banking scheme, as reported in the last Annual Report, this activity was greatly reduced from September onwards following the loss of sponsorship. This shortage of available capital was also compounded by a reluctance of many groups to repay agreed loans. While this project remains in abeyance at present, it has been so successful in the past that it is likely to start again in the future but confined to groups who have shown themselves to be reliable.

- **Project 5** - the construction of a health centre at Soni, Tanzania was completed in 2009.

- **Project 6** – a tree-planting project at the same location has also been finished.
- **Project 7** - support for Upendo Children's Home in Moshi, Tanzania where the Precious Blood Sisters care for 60 abandoned babies. SGG gives financial support to Upendo in accordance with the wishes of some of our donors.
- **Project 8** – In recent years SGG has found it difficult to visit or maintain contact with this small tree-planting project based around the villages of Mengwe and Mamsera in Rombo District, Kilimanjaro where email possibilities are limited. However, a day visit in February 2012 was sufficient to confirm that this local group remains active. In June 2013 they estimated that they had planted 3,600 seedlings during the period covered by this report. This small scheme is also part of Project 11 as SGG plans to continue working with this grassroots community group.
- **Project 9 & 10**—Once again, the rapid development of projects in East Africa have meant that there has been no time to visit Zambia, so it is now nearly four years since the last monitoring visit. Nevertheless, I wish to continue offering occasional support to SGG's Zambian partners.
- **Project 11 Tree Planting & Conservation in Africa.**
Recent field experience suggests that tree-planting can be one of the most effective ways of alleviating poverty in many parts of rural Africa. In the areas where SGG works there is a strong local demand & ready market for wood to be used for both energy and construction. Local seedlings are usually cheap and trees grow rapidly, so many farmers can recover any initial investment tenfold within a few years. Tree-planting is not just for commercial gain: an increasing number of go-ahead farmers now see agroforestry as a better, more sustainable land management system than the traditional practice of woodland clearance.

In the 2014-5 financial year SGG's activities have been dominated by two projects which fall within Project 11. One is the OPTIONs project [ie. optimising the use of pesticidal plants through technical innovation, outreach and networks]. SGG is a partner within a prestigious group of institutions, including the Natural Resources Institute at Greenwich University, Kew Gardens, the International Centre for Research in AgroForestry [ICRAF] in Nairobi, Kenya National Museums, and various universities in Tanzania, Malawi and Zimbabwe. SGG's specific responsibility within this partnership is outreach work, particularly in Kenya. This involves networking and making contact with interested community groups, who wish to take up the growing of pesticidal plants as an alternative to using synthetic pesticides. After making initial contact with farmer groups, SGG is organising 'sensitisation meetings' to be followed by training sessions where farmers learn about growing & using pesticidal plants. So far we have organised 15 such training sessions, and we anticipate doubling this number by the end of 2015.



SGG's fieldwork for OPTIONS began in June 2014 when we conducted a 'baseline survey' to find out current knowledge & use of pesticidal plants. Here *[see top left]* Phaustine Ogolla of MMO is asking members of Upendo-Buloma Women's Group about their use of pesticides. Another aspect of OPTIONS is the actual growing of pesticidal plants. Here *[see top right]* in July Sylvester Simalla of Abakhaywa Mulukongo is handing out seedlings of *Tephrosia vogeleii* to members the group, so they can plant in their own shambas. Perez planted her seedlings in her beans and cassava plot, and you can see the size of her *Tephrosia* in October *[see middle right]*. We have also organised 15 meetings in various locations in Kenya. Some meetings have included basic practical skills, such as 'how to establish a tree nursery' e.g. this meeting with KFS at Busia *[see bottom left]*, but others involve direct use of natural pesticidal plant material e.g. the pounding of *Tithonia* leaves at Kilimo Hai in October *[see bottom right]*.





The ICRAF workshop provided an opportunity to learn new skills. Here *[see top left]* Paul tries his hand at grafting. We also learned about the potential use of several pesticidal plants, such as *Azadirachta indica* *[see top right]*. This tree is already widely used in Monsoon Asia for both medicinal & pesticidal purposes, but its use in Kenya is so far quite limited. Tea break at ICRAF *[see middle left]*! Perhaps the most important value of the workshop was networking. The 3 days spent at ICRAF has opened up scores of new contacts with whom SGG can work during the next two years of the OPTIONS project. Here is one example of how interest in OPTIONS is spreading *[see bottom left]*. Here Prof. Steve Belmain of NRI, UK is presenting a certificate of attendance to Erik Warangai. Erik teaches at Manor House near Kitale, where he specialises in integrated pest management [IPM]. As Manor House runs courses on organic farming for students from across Eastern Africa, the information and skills available within OPTIONS can reach a much wider audience than the 4 partner countries of Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi and Zimbabwe.

The highlight of the OPTIONS programme in 2014 was the Kenya national training workshop held at ICRAF, Nairobi in late October. This was attended by more than 50 delegates, and most of them have requested that SGG visit their groups to facilitate training and the promotion of pesticidal plant use. SGG sees this as important work, as it is currently estimated that approximately 1/3 of crop production in Africa South of the Sahara is lost because of pest damage. If OPTIONS can provide farmers with a viable alternative to costly & damaging synthetic chemicals, the work SGG is now doing has the potential to remove millions from the global hunger list. Thus, we are considering whether or not SGG should focus solely on this project.

The second major project in 2014-5 was the Treedom project, where SGG in partnership with MMO have agreed to plant some 25,000 trees from a selection of 10 species on the farms of MMO members.



The Treedom project was officially launched in late March 2014 when Treedom representative Riccardo Alessandrini met MMO community leaders [see top left]. Many farmers in MMO, such as Eugene Barasa of Asante Kwa Jembe group, saw significant advantages in being paid a small fee in exchange for planting & caring for trees which would then belong to the farmer.

The organisation and implementation of this project has, however, involved considerable work for SGG as Treedom require that each planted seedling is photographed and georeferenced. [see middle left]. Here Dr Nehemiah Mihindo is using a GPS machine to register *Azadirachta indica* seedlings in Kwale County. Most of the trees planted within the Treedom programme have been planted in Busia County, but we have found out that some species [e.g. *Azadirachta*] do not grow well there. SGG would like to acknowledge what a great help Nehemiah Mihindo of the Africa IPM Alliance has been in both the OPTIONS and Treedom projects.

The main registrar of seedlings in Busia has been Augustine Owino [see bottom left.]. Here he is registering a *Grevillea robusta* seedling planted in a maize field. *Grevillea* has proved so popular with MMO farmers that they have planted 5,000 more than the planting target of 7,500 seedlings.

There have been problems which have made the implementation of the Treedom project more difficult than anticipated. In particular, many MMO members greeted the scheme with great enthusiasm and were given seedlings to plant, but then some of the members gave much less attention to caring for the young trees they had received. SGG now recognises that there are too many farmers participating in this project, so that proper monitoring of all the participants is costly and time-consuming. We now know that many MMO members are not really interested in growing fruit trees, which are badly needed to improve child nutrition, because there is no large ready market for those fruits. We also have learned that many Busia farmers have limited experience or knowledge of how to care for small trees, especially the fruits, so we accept that in future forest plans there needs to be increased resources for training.

Such problems should not blind us to the fact that in some aspects the Treedom project in Busia has been very successful. We should mention here that within one year of the start of the Treedom programme, more than 25,000 trees have been planted in a location where there is no long tradition of tree-planting nor a significant local market where tree products can be sold. This scheme has also introduced more than 300 MMO farmers to the value of agroforestry, a land use management system which is essential for the improvement of farming in Western Kenya.



Farmers have many reasons for growing trees within the Treedom programme. Joram Unwa of Abakhaywa Mulukongo has intercropped Tephrosia and maize [see top left] in order to improve soil fertility as well as to grow pesticidal leaf material. Rehema Kazi of MABS has planted Markhamia lutea in order to promote sustainable biodiversity within her already well-forested shamba [see top right]. It should also be remembered that wood provides about 95% of energy needs and is an important commercial crop in Busia County. As Kenyan farmers are increasingly concerned about climate change, many MMO members view trees as essential for good environmental management.

The OPTIONS and Treedom work have taken so much of SGG's time & energy this year that we have been unable to spend time on other tree-planting initiatives, especially those around Kilimanjaro. It is expected that in the next financial year much more attention will be paid to agroforestry development in Tanzania.

- **Project 12 partnership with Community Initiative for Rural Development [CIFORD].** This Kenyan NGO is a coalition of 15 women's groups with a total membership of approximately 450. See www.cifordkenya.org for details. CIFORD organise a variety of activities, but SGG has focussed on the promotion of agroforestry. Since CIFORD declined an invitation to the OPTIONs workshop at ICRAF, SGG has not found sufficient time to develop this project. However, we wish to continue our agroforestry activities with CIFORD in the future.
- **Project 13, support for Maendeleo Mashinani Organisation [MMO].** Maendeleo Mashinani Organisation is SGG's main partner in Kenya. Our previous partners in Busia struggled to get themselves on a proper sustainable footing with their own land, facilities and reliable staff. To avoid a repeat of this problem SGG has one standing order donation which is now being used to be provide a small but regular budget to cover core costs at MMO. MMO have been informed that they need to become self-sufficient by September 2016.
- **Project 14, partnership with Breakthrough Foundation at Juja Farm.** Breakthrough Foundation is a UK charity which is constructing a new school for orphans and other children in Juja Farm near Thika, Kenya. SGG has provided funds to support this work. In February Carole and I visited Juja Farm school. As the construction there was virtually complete, we informed Breakthrough Foundation that we would not be continuing financial support for this project in the future.
- **Project 15, promotion of organic gardening in Kenya.** In June 2014 we started a scheme to introduce multistorey gardens & urban growbags to contacts in Kibera, the largest shantytown in Nairobi. As yet we are uncertain of what progress has been made. In July work finally began on the establishment of MMO's demonstration plot at Matayos.



Vegetable production in Kibera [see top left]. These yards are usually less than 10 square metres in area, so only the most intensive methods can be used e.g. multistorey vegetable production. MMO's demonstration plot [see top right] shows the benefits of composting, double-dug raised beds for vegetable productions, irrigation and agroforestry. One species we wish to promote in Busia is *Moringa oleifera* [growing in front of Mohamed]. This is a multipurpose tree with leaves which are particularly nutritious. SGG would like to see a few of these trees on every MMO farm.

- **Project 16, promotion of organic gardening at Morena Tshohisi Moloi 11 School.** The basis of this project is that we had a contact who was Head Teacher at this school. That person is no longer working there, so this project is now finished. SGG believes it is crucial to find a reliable person to local manage those projects which I do not have time to personally monitor, so we shall not consider continuing support here until such a person is found. However, we would be pleased to have the opportunity to continue work in some capacity in South Africa, and later in 2015 we shall investigate through our already established contacts there.
- **Project 17, support for tree-planting & poverty eradication initiatives in North Kigezi, Uganda.** In 2012 SGG began a tree-planting scheme based largely at 5 diocesan schools there. Initially progress was very satisfactory, but by 2014 we noticed that our local partner there was failing to fulfil their side of the bargain. Thus, SGG has halted any support until this issue can be properly resolved.
- **Project 18, improved rural energy.** This project started in 2013 when 50 women members of MMO were trained to use energy-efficient stoves as an alternative to the traditional "3-stones" method of cooking. It is hoped to continue this project at some time in the future, but for the present we lack the manpower and funding to do so.

FUTURE PROSPECTS & RELATED ISSUES

We have every reason to be optimistic about the future of Sustainable Global Gardens. There has been a substantial increase in the funds available for development projects. This year we have developed a much larger network of partner NGOs and stakeholders with whom we cooperate. Several of our larger NGO partners are making great progress in their own right. SGG's prospects are good.

However, this leaves a few important issues for Trustees and all supporters to consider. These include:

- how can supporters best promote progress in **all** our projects, especially those which have received little attention recently? Progress has halted on some projects because I have insufficient time to visit those locations. With this issue in mind, SGG will continue to look for those who are willing to volunteer for at least one month on overseas work;
- over the last 3 years I have found that my time and SGG finances have been increasingly focused on Kenya to the detriment of projects in other African countries. With both our Treedom and OPTIONs projects based there SGG could readily spend all future fieldwork time in Kenya, so there is the issue of how best to 'regularise' SGG position in that country. Are we now at a stage when it would be worthwhile

applying to become an officially registered Kenyan NGO? Are there other options we should consider?

- if you are looking for greater involvement in SGG, you may wish to bear in mind that we have a list of appropriate projects where supporters can be more fully involved. For those thinking on such lines it is worthwhile to bear in mind that our most rapid progress has been made with table-banking [we would like to start this at locations other than Busia] and agroforestry [there are several places where the local community would like SGG to implement such work]. However, there are other potential projects where specific and individual interests could be engaged. Your help is greatly needed;
- SGG has many supporters who do not have the time to commit to greater involvement in development projects. If you are in such a position, please do not forget that the progress we make each year in some of our projects is dependent on financial donations from our supporters;
- lastly let us remember that the aim of SGG is to contribute to the eradication of poverty and hunger, and so to help children like these have good prospects of a better future.



Thus, I wish to thank all of you, our supporters, for whatever contribution you have been able to make to our many successes this year. All supporters of Sustainable Global Gardens have a vital part to play in the development and progress of the charity, so I look forward to working with you in the coming year on Millennium Development Goal No 1, the eradication of extreme global poverty and hunger. My best wishes to all of you.

Paul Keeley
4th June 2015