

Outreach Abroad

OPERATION AGRI'S MAGAZINE

*Supporting
rural and urban
development
projects in
Christ's name*

SIERRA LEONE:
New agricultural project

BANGLADESH:
Shining a light
in Dhaka slums



1961-2025



Operation
AGRI
Christian love in action

WINTER 2025



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Operation Agri helps grow
food, increase incomes,
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women and much more.

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Welcome
from the Editor

Reaching the poor

Half the population of the UK will not be aware of the 'Y2K' slogan of the 1990s nor of the sense of relief when computers did not stop running on the stroke of midnight December 31, 1999.

Now, a quarter of the way through this century, we have more and more products available to us and an environment that suffers the consequences.

What continues, unabated, is the poor of this world. Your neighbour and mine. Let's make it a distant memory, one family at a time.

Thank you,
Nigel.

NigeJones@operationagri.org.uk

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Alexandra Lear joins the team

Nigel Jones, Chair of Trustees, introduces Operation Agri's new Charity Development Manager

It started with an email offering to volunteer for two hours a month. This is Alexandra's story in her own words:

From field to fundraising

Five years ago, I never imagined I'd be the Charity Development Manager at Operation Agri. I'm more comfortable lambing than drafting strategic plans! However, God has a unique way of guiding our paths, doesn't He?

A calling to agriculture

After leaving school, I worked in faith-based international communities, farming and environmental projects across the UK. These experiences ignited my passion for farming and community development, and I felt a calling to learn more. I pursued a BSc in Agriculture, focusing on international agricultural development, and interned in Northern Uganda with BMS. After graduating I worked for Linking Environment And Farming, on projects supporting sustainable farming practices, before moving to a tiny island in Shetland to croft. Eventually, I returned to Exmoor,

where I grew up – and that's when I discovered Operation Agri.

Inspired to get involved

Inspired by the incredible work they support; I knew I had to get involved. After a few months as an Associate Trustee, I was offered the role of Charity Development Manager.

I feel privileged to use my agricultural background to ensure that the roots of Operation Agri, which date back to providing tools for agricultural missionaries in the 1950s, are not forgotten. Each day brings new challenges and opportunities, from strengthening relationships with donors and partners, to sharing stories with our generous and faithful supporters. The role demands creativity, resilience, and a deep commitment to the cause, and I am incredibly honoured to have this opportunity from the Trustees and from the Lord to help develop this next phase.

If you'd like a chat or have any ideas about how you'd like to see Operation Agri develop in the future, then please send me an email at:

alexandralear@operationagri.org.uk

I look forward to hearing from you.

“ **... I'm more comfortable lambing than drafting strategic plans! However, God has a unique way of guiding our paths ...**

Alexandra Lear
Charity Development Manager





Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Romans 12:12.

Bangladesh

Project name: **Duaripara Family**

Development Project

Partner: **Christian Ministry to Children and Youth**

Empowering girls through education

PRAYER REQUEST:

For mothers who face struggles to provide care for all their children whilst they go out to work. May they find suitable care for their young children, releasing the time of older daughters to concentrate on their studies..

India

Project name: **Community Empowerment Project, Kalwa East, Mumbai**

Partner: **Oasis India**

Empowering the urban poor

PRAYER REQUEST:

For the work with local schools in Kalwa and parent groups, which strengthens educational foundations and supports student development. May these key relationships be strengthened for the sake of the students and for enhancing community cohesion.

Malawi

Project name: **Growing Greener in Malawi**

Partner: **African Pastors Fellowship**

Sustainable farming in Malawi

PRAYER REQUEST:

Pray for the new arrangements made for running the project, on a recent trip to Malawi by APF. Continue to pray for the church and the farmers as they re-adjust after Lloyd's death and the project restarts.

Nepal

Project name: **CHEST Ghusel**

Partner: **Multipurpose Community Development Service**

Handing over for sustainability

Pray that the right community representatives will come forward and take on ownership.

Pray that the community will see Christ's presence and love in the way MCDS support and respect other stakeholders.

Nepal

Project name: **CHEP Mahatgaun**

Partner: **Multipurpose Community Development Service**

Health and education in a remote village

PRAYER REQUEST:

Please pray that all involved from MCDS will be guided by prayer and seek Christ's wisdom as they steer the training activities. Pray that changes to the emphasis in approach will be positive and facilitate empowerment.

Nicaragua

Project name: **Community-based primary healthcare**

Partner: **AMOS (A Ministry of Sharing)**

Expanding the work

PRAYER REQUEST:

Pray for AMOS Health and Hope as it plans to reach more impoverished communities and expand its rural healthcare programmes in 2025. May God guide their efforts to bring health and hope to the most vulnerable.

Pakistan

Project name: **Women's literacy centres**

Partner: **Light for the Nations**

Literacy and skills training

PRAYER REQUEST:

Give thanks for the women and girls who have enrolled on the Adult Literacy, Beautician Training and Sewing courses.

Pray for the upcoming 12 Advocacy training days.

Pray for protection and safety for the women and girls.

Sierra Leone

Project name: **Joy Agricultural Project BMS World Mission and New Harvest Development Office (NEHADO)**

New work in Sierra Leone:

PRAYER REQUEST:

Give thanks for success in identifying opportunities to improve subsistence farming.

Pray for NEHADO project leaders as they introduce new activities.

Pray for the community representatives who will receive training.

Tanzania

Project name: **Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development**

Partner: **Farming Partnership Initiative**

Health, training and rain

PRAYER REQUEST:

Pray for the rain as there is an unusual shortage. This is managed, in part, by the conservation methods taught to the farmers.

Pray for good health for the members of the FPI team, particularly for the trainer Agnes.

Tanzania

Project name: **IMARIKA**

Partner: **Emmanuel International and Diocese of Ruaha**

Community development in Tanzania

PRAYER REQUEST:

This project was filmed for this year's Annual Appeal last autumn. Pray for production of an effective video.

Pray for the team as they develop the work in new villages and schools and support continuing work.

Uganda

Project name: **SDKF vocational training**

Partner: **Setting Development and Keeping the Foundations**

Imparting vocational skills

PRAYER REQUEST:

Vocational teachers who use their God given skills for the benefit of the students.

Students completing their courses.

New students starting in January; for energy, excitement and perseverance.

Uganda

Project name: **Women's Adult Literacy**

Partner: **Baptist Union of Uganda**

Capacity building through literacy

PRAYER REQUEST:

Give thanks for women graduating in early January, and those joining and continuing English and Rutooro classes, as a new year begins.

Pray for husbands to allow and encourage their wives to attend regularly.

Uganda

Project name: **Sustainable Agriculture Farming Initiatives**

Partner: **Baptist Union of Uganda**

Building farm businesses in Uganda

Give thanks for new beneficial ideas.

Pray for divine guidance and wisdom choosing others to trial, to help communities develop.

Pray for farmers to find good markets and receive a fair price for their produce.

Zambia

Project name: **Nyampande Organic Farmers Project**

Partner: **African Pastors Fellowship**

Organic farming in Zambia

PRAYER REQUEST:

Pray that the new groups Lawson trained last November are blessed with good weather, so they benefit from the new methods learned, and receive a great harvest after last year's poor harvest due to drought.

Bangladeshi charity encourages parents to prioritise *educating girls*



Mery Nokrek explains how parents are supported so that they can keep their daughters in school longer

The Duaripara Family Development Project, (DFDP), aims to enhance primary-level education for girls in the Duaripara slums of Dhaka in Bangladesh. The settlement is congested with residents. During heavy rain, walkways and homes flood due to inadequate storm water drainage and, on average, 15 households share one toilet.

DFDP conducts surveys in every household to identify families in need, especially those unable to afford education and who often have to keep their daughters at home to care for younger siblings. Our project team engages with parents to emphasise the importance of educating girls, working to ensure that no girl drops out before completing primary school.

Many girls studying outside of formal schools are responsible for looking after younger siblings at home. We communicate with their parents to facilitate a supportive environment, encouraging them to find solutions regarding the younger children, so their daughters can attend school. Younger siblings are sometimes permitted to join the girls at our coaching centre in the afternoons, ensuring that girls can continue their studies.



Many girls studying outside of formal schools are responsible for looking after younger siblings at home.

Every month, we organise meetings with the parents to discuss their family's challenges and the importance of their daughters' education. We conduct weekly tests for the girls, reviewing their notebooks with parents to identify and address any weaknesses. For those unable to attend the meetings, we offer personal consultations to discuss ways to support their daughters' academic progress.

Our project team collaborates with Area Leaders and Emergency Savings



Coaching support for the girls' studies

Group Mothers to encourage families to continue their daughters' education up to Secondary School Certificate (SSC) level. We also empower mothers through income-generating activities to enhance family financial stability, enabling them to support their daughters' education.

Most DFDP girls attend local private schools, which are better than the government schools. At the private schools students have to pay tuition fees and are disciplined more strictly. At the end of each academic year, DFDP staff visit local schools to help parents to select a school.



Salma Begum

Salma Begum used to live in a village with her three daughters. Her husband worked in Dhaka, but he did not send any money to support the family, leaving Salma to struggle daily to make ends meet. In 2020 she quietly moved to Dhaka with her daughters and took shelter at her sister's house, without informing her husband. In the end he came and took the whole family to live with him in Dhaka.

In 2021, Salma's daughter, Roksana, was enrolled in Grade 1 through a school support coaching programme at the DFDP Centre. Today, Roksana is studying in Grade 4. However, in 2023, a neighbour threw hot ice foam on Roksana, causing

Currently, 76 girls are enrolled in formal primary schools, while the project supports 100 girls over-all, with a particular focus on those in catch-up classes to prepare them for the formal school enrolment. We have also initiated a preschool programme to provide a safe environment for the younger sisters of the girls at school who have parents who work.

Recognising that many girls come to our centres and schools without having eaten very much, we provide dry food once a day to help them concentrate and succeed in their studies.

◀ Salma and her husband at their vegetable shop

severe burns on her back. DFDP helped her treatment by providing BDT2000 (about £13).

Salma's husband works as a rickshaw puller, though his income is inconsistent. Salma was encouraged by DFDP to start a small business, and with their support, she decided to sell vegetables. Now, her husband helps her to run the shop in the mornings. After expenses, they manage to make a small profit.

The business is doing well, and Salma has even started saving some money. Her goal is to expand the business as her savings grow. She dreams of educating Roksana up to the SSC level and has expressed deep gratitude to DFDP for giving her the opportunity to improve her family's life through the vegetable trade. In the meantime two of her older daughters have got married.

Childeven
page

From Janet - a
good friend of OA

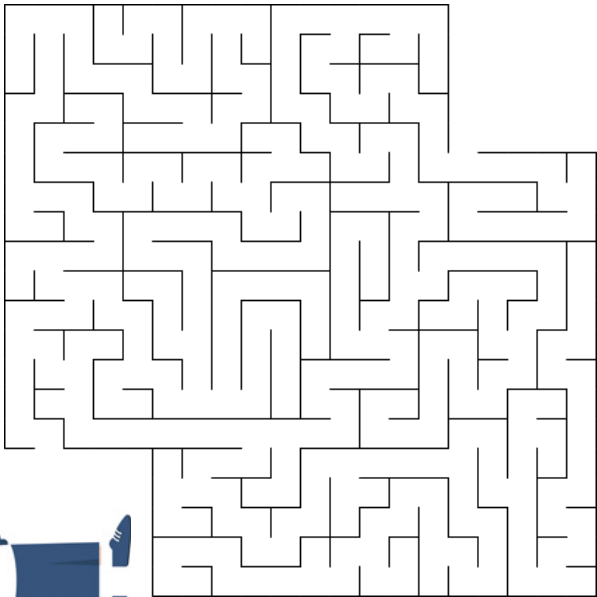
Complete these sentences by adding in the letters
A, E and O.

In N_p_l sch__l girls _r_ pl_nting tr__s _n
m__unt_in sl_pes t_ h_lp pr_v_nt l_ndslid_s in
h__vy r_in. Th_y pl_nt thr__ tr__s wh_n
th_y cut d_wn _n_ f_r fir_w__d.

Answer on page 20



Help this schoolgirl find
the young tree



Time ...



To act

A whole new year lies ahead of you but:

Easter is just a few weeks away

Exams may await you mid-year

2025 could slip by with your plans unfulfilled so

Plan now!



presents
with a
purpose!

operationagri.org.uk/presents-with-a-purpose/

Health leaders save *lives* in rural Nicaragua

Lydia Caldera shines a light on Rosa, a young mother living in a remote village

Rosa* is a young mother of two living in Fila Grande, a remote village nestling in the mountains of Matagalpa, Nicaragua. Here, homes are scattered across rugged terrain, often separated by hours of walking along steep, muddy paths and across rivers. Families in this area practice subsistence agriculture, growing beans and corn to feed their households. If they have a surplus, they sell it to purchase other necessities like rice, oil, and sugar.

Despite only being 23, Rosa's life has been at risk more than once due to serious health complications. Thanks to the partnership between Operation Agri and AMOS, she has had the support of a local health leader, Petronilo Gaitán, who helped guide her through difficult pregnancies and ultimately helped save her life and the lives of her children.



Petronilo counselling a pregnant mother

Pre-eclampsia

In 2020, when Rosa became pregnant with her first child, she suffered pre-eclampsia – a dangerous condition that can cause serious harm to both mother and baby if not treated promptly.

During her pregnancy, Petronilo Gaitán – the Health Promoter in Fila Grande, and trained by AMOS – was a vital support, making regular visits to check on her, ensuring she received prenatal care, multivitamins, and the health education she needed to recognise signs of alarm. His follow-up was critical in helping Rosa understand the importance of going to the waiting centre for pregnant mothers before her due date – a place where health professionals could monitor her closely. It was there that doctors identified the first signs of pre-eclampsia and took quick action.

A few days after delivering her baby girl via C-section, Rosa had to undergo surgery to remove her gallbladder. 'That was a very hard time,' remembers Petronilo. 'Rosa was in the hospital for a month, and we feared for her life.'

Second pregnancy

A second pregnancy was also difficult. 'Her glucose levels rose, and her blood pressure was abnormal,' Petronilo explains.

Petronilo closely monitored Rosa's health, ensuring she attended all her pre-natal check-ups. He also provided pre-natal vitamins, nutrition advice, and, most importantly, educated her on the signs of alarm she should watch for during and after her pregnancy.

'I've learned during my training sessions with AMOS that time is critical in emergencies, especially when you live far from a hospital,' Petronilo says. Knowing how important it was to prevent complications, he encouraged Rosa to leave her community and go to the waiting centre for pregnant mothers at least a month before her due date.

Rosa heeded his advice and, just as in her first pregnancy, her health took a turn for the worse. While at the waiting centre her blood pressure spiked again, and doctors diagnosed her with pre-eclampsia. She had to undergo another emergency C-section. Thankfully, both she and her baby girl survived. Rosa and her baby stayed in the hospital for 15 days, receiving the urgent care they needed before returning home.

“I've learned during my training sessions with AMOS that time is critical in emergencies, especially when you live far from a hospital.”

Despite the challenges, Rosa feels blessed. She is grateful to have two healthy daughters, and she and her husband have decided that their family is complete. She's now focused on taking care of herself and her children, thankful for the support that helped her through two high-risk pregnancies.



▲ Rosa and her youngest baby girl

Critical role of local health leaders

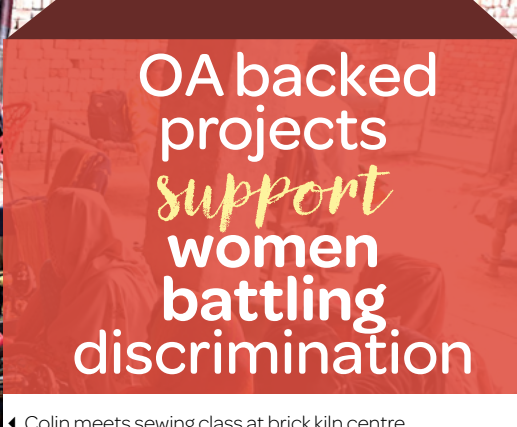
Rosa's story highlights the importance of having trained local health leaders like Petronilo in rural communities. In partnership with Operation Agri, AMOS provides these leaders with the training they need to recognise, prevent, and treat illnesses. They learn about health protocols, how to administer medicine for common illnesses, and when to refer patients to medical centres.

This community-based approach to healthcare is crucial for families like Rosa's, who live far from medical facilities. Health leaders like Petronilo ensure that even in the most isolated communities, families have access to healthcare and the education needed to prevent complications.

Lydia Caldera

**First name changed for privacy*





◀ Colin meets sewing class at brick kiln centre

Last summer Operation Agri asked **Colin Gibson** to visit projects based in Lahore, while on a business trip to Pakistan

Light for the Nation (LFTN) has several projects in towns and villages around Lahore, including garment making (sewing), beautician training, literacy, advocacy, business training, and food and gift distribution. Courses run by the projects, which are funded by Operation Agri (OA) target women in extremely poor circumstances, with little education. Many are in debt as 'bonded labourers' in brick kilns.

The courses empower them to gain opportunities for social advancement and decrease abuse, among other sustainable development goals. The aims for the courses are to enhance participants' self-worth, provide marketable skills for income generation, and reduce inequality.

Most participants and trainers have a Christian background, but not all.



Beautician group, applying henna

Bonded labour is a system of labour under which an employee borrows from their employer and works to pay off the debt.

The sewing course comprises learning to sew, (by hand and machine), embroider, and crochet. The groups provide a great time for the ladies to meet and share stories – and another Non-Governmental Organisation provides a sewing machine on completion of the course.



... Bonded labour is a system of labour under which an employee borrows from their employer and works to pay off the debt.

Short discussions with over twenty women in a town-based course, revealed that a number of opportunities for income are possible, with the most popular being work for family and contacts, or in a garment factory. Direct sales in markets or work for tailors is much more of a challenge – especially with limited business skills.

Two were earning a small amount each month undertaking work for contacts, and



three others had obtained work in garment factories.

Meeting with fifteen ladies on a course in a brick kiln setting revealed a much more complex situation. Over two thirds had debts with the kiln owner – loans taken for marriage or health reasons. The brick kiln is a long way from a town and so this constrains opportunities to relocate, find work in a factory, or market made garments. Of course, savings are made on clothing purchases by making their own, and most hope to be able to earn some income from making garments to order.

All have various family situations, some are married, some with children and many with debts.

Training as a beautician involves learning about make-up, arm and head hair control, and the application of henna. Two centres were visited, both village and town based, with about 40 participants – from a range of situations.

Some are illiterate and live at a brick kiln, but can travel and access the course. Others have some literacy and live in a town.

All hope to either start their own salon, work in one, or undertake work for marriages and special parties (these are not regular opportunities, but are much more remunerative).

The literacy course is aimed at adults but, with the country having a very low school attendance rate, there were children and teenagers present at the visit. Of the 16 participants half are adults, and some of

those are attending in order to bring a child. As might be expected the children and young adults were progressing much better than the older adults. The course material comprises reading, writing, and numeracy, and uses material provided free by the Bible Society.

There are young participants who are doing well on the course. Two have husbands working in brick kilns and attend with their daughters. Two others are older and have brick kiln related debts, with husbands who have passed away or are in poor health – and struggle with the course.

Whilst it is a challenge to support those experiencing discrimination LFTN, with Operation Agri funding, is seeking to bring a measure of hope and joy in a very challenging environment.



▲ Colin with translator and LFTN field team

Colin Gibson is a chartered civil and structural engineer who worked for a consultant in the UK for many years. For over 13 years he and his family were in Pakistan, where he served as Technical Manager, then Technical Director, for Zor Engineers. Colin is also a member of Christian Engineers in Development.

Path to a *greener* future in Uganda

In recent years, the importance of sustainable agriculture has become increasingly evident. As the global population continues to grow, the demand for food rises, putting immense pressure on our natural resources.

The Sustainable Agriculture Farmers Initiative, (SAFI), addresses these challenges by promoting practices that are environmentally friendly, economically viable, and socially responsible.

Azolla

Azolla is a small aquatic fern known for its rapid growth and high nutritional value. It is particularly important for small scale farmers, because it serves as a low-cost nutritious feed for livestock and a natural bio-fertiliser. By incorporating Azolla into their farming practices, small scale farmers have reduced the expense of commercial feeds and chemical fertiliser.

Organic

Organic farming continues to be the cornerstone of SAFI's efforts to promote sustainable agriculture. Small scale farmers started making and using organic manures,

“**Donkeys provide a low-cost, sustainable, transport option and ploughing in place of high-cost tractors for small scale farmers.**

Alinda Joseph, SAFI Project Manager, examines the impact of sustainable agriculture



▲ Alinda Joseph harvesting Azolla

such as compost and liquid manure, which play a crucial role in organic farming. By using organic manures, farmers can now maintain the soil health and productivity, without relying on synthetic fertilisers.

Intensive

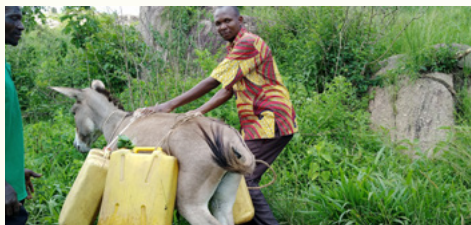
Intensive farming gets a bad rap, but SAFI has worked to make it more sustainable. Small scale farmers have been taught to keep livestock like poultry in enclosed structures, in relatively large numbers, to ensure a high output income. Since this is likely to require a big input, SAFI has helped farmers to cut the costs of commercial feeds for livestock, and synthetic chemicals for crops, thus making intensive farming sustainable.

Donkeys

SAFI has promoted the use of donkeys for agricultural transport and tillage. Donkeys provide a low-cost, sustainable, transport option and ploughing in place of high-cost tractors for small scale farmers.

Protein feed

SAFI has promoted the production of Black Soldier Fly Larvae, (BSFL) as a high protein



feed for livestock and poultry. This practice not only provides a sustainable feed, but also helps in managing organic waste.

Isingoma, a small-scale farmer, faced challenges such as the high costs of commercial feeds and fertilisers, which affected his profitability. He learned about Azolla farming through SAFI training and set up a simple Azolla pond on his farm. As a result his cow has increased its milk production, and he is able to provide bio-fertilisers to his pineapple garden, which is his main source of income.



Alex used to struggle with water supply both on his farm, and home-stead, due to the distance of a well from his home.

He decided to utilise donkeys for transporting water from the well. Through these efforts, Alex has improved his own farm's productivity and sustainability, and also inspired other farmers in the community to adopt similar practices.

Jancita and her mother struggled with low crop yields. The soil on their farm was depleted of essential nutrients, and they could not afford the high costs of chemical fertilisers. This situation left them in a

cycle of poverty and food insecurity. Their fortunes changed when they attended a workshop on organic farming organised by SAFI.

After implementing the training, they noticed significant improvements in their soil's fertility and structure. Their crops became healthier and more productive, leading to better yields.



Key programmes and activities

- Farmer training and education sessions are organised on sustainable practices.
- Research and innovation; SAFI continuously explores new methods and technologies.
- Demonstration farms to showcase sustainable agricultural practices.
- On-farm trials to ensure that research is relevant to small scale farmers' specific conditions and challenges.

SAFI's Plans for 2025

- Additional workshops which aim to equip farmers with the latest knowledge and skills.
- Supplying small animals such as pigs, goats and rabbits with the purpose of increasing manure which can be used as organic fertiliser to improve soil health. These animals will also aid household income.
- Distributing plant seedlings, including fruit trees, vegetables and cover crops. This initiative aims to diversify crops, improve food security and promote sustainable farming practices.

Language skills *rescue* women

Joy Ahurra, explains how the Women's Adult Literacy Project in Uganda lifts women out of poverty

Many women and girls face challenges in their daily lives such as poverty, gender-based violence and low self-esteem. Literacy helps to strengthen women's participation in making decisions about themselves and their families. It also reduces women's vulnerability to abuse and violence. Many women have got their families out of poverty because they can work. New found literacy has greatly improved their lives and those of the people they live with. Most of the women wanted to learn how to read the Bible and follow the service whenever they were in church. They have achieved that because they can read on their own.

The Women's Adult Literacy Project (WALP) in Kyenjojo, Western Uganda, has enabled women to gain literacy skills. Our trainers instruct these women in writing, reading and numeracy in their local language and English. The trainers move to the villages where these women live and conduct classes from their communities. They also visit women in their homes to encourage them to attend classes and not to give up until they graduate. At the end of the course, women graduate and are given a certificate. The trainers plan to get more women to join classes and, this

is helped, when women see the success of their fellow women.

Sewing success

Lucy Kebisembo is married with seven children and is a WALP member from Nyarugongo village. She didn't know how to read and write before joining WALP. Currently, she can read her local language and she joined the English classes which she attends 'minus missing' – meaning that she doesn't skip classes, but attends regularly.

Lucy says, 'I didn't know how to read because my parents didn't know the goodness in educating their children, since they didn't attend school themselves. Once I heard about WALP in our village I joined immediately because my dream was to learn tailoring, but I needed to read and write. I started learning tailoring with ease

“ I started learning tailoring with ease once I knew how to write and read. With my savings I bought a sewing machine ...



Lucy showing the dresses she made from home

from abuse and violence

once I knew how to write and read. With my savings I bought a sewing machine and stationed it in my home. Now I sew ladies' and children's dresses which I sell in the village market. I can help my husband with household items and send our children to school. We have managed to construct a new house. Even if it is not complete at least the rain doesn't hit us like in our old house. I also started a piggery project in my home with the savings from tailoring.'

Confidence boost

Dinnah Namugerwa is 38 years old and has six children. She says, 'Literacy has helped me change my worldview. I now believe in



myself. I think that I can achieve anything. I am full of confidence. I no longer fear standing in front of people to provide my opinion on an issue.'

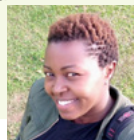
Valuable vegetables



Mbabazi Katusiimme is married with three children and lives in the town of Kyenjojo. WALP has equipped her with literacy skills, which she has effectively utilised in selling vegetables and fresh food in the market. Every profit she gains from the sales, she saves for paying school fees for her children. She says, 'Living in town has a lot of challenges,

especially finding what to eat. Due to this problem, I decided to start a food stall in the town market, but I didn't know how to speak English and I lost a lot of customers. One time a customer could not buy from me because I could not speak English. I knew she wasn't going to be the last and that's when a woman in the market introduced me to WALP. She told me that there was studying for old people, and it would greatly help us in communicating with the customers.

'I am happy now because I can speak English and my profits have increased, and I can write my daily sales and expenditures, which has helped me to save more money, which I use to take my children to school.'



Joy Ahurra



Exciting new opportunity in Sierra Leone

Martin Butterworth introduces an innovative agricultural project

Grateful

We hear a lot about increasing costs and difficult decisions but at Operation Agri (OA) we've been spared the worst by your continued generosity. Thank you for your trust and loyalty, and welcome to the start of something new.

Over recent months we've been in conversation with BMS World Mission, (BMS), about new opportunities to work together. One request stood out from the others: Sierra Leone. A new project proposed by a local church group, in (for us) a new country. Not only that, but it's all about agriculture and started in January.

Can subsistence farming be improved?

Improving the lives of today's subsistence farmers involves more than better arable crops or animal husbandry, though that's obviously important. The need for food and the demanding conditions of subsistence agriculture means families withdraw their children from school to work on the land. To benefit from increased crop yields these farmers will need more literacy and numeracy skills.

CCMP

BMS is already involved in Sierra Leone, training church leaders to use the Church

and Community Mobilisation Process (CCMP). This process seeks to empower people by using what they have in new ways. It facilitates church leaders to rethink 'mission' and reach out to the needs in their communities using local resources with much reduced outside resourcing.

New Harvest

BMS is facilitating CCMP in Sierra Leone in partnership with a denomination called New Harvest Ministries, an appropriate name in lots of ways.

The dominant opportunity identified by CCMP is agriculture and its related issues, a situation similar to existing OA projects in East Africa. OA will partner with the New Harvest Ministries Development Office (NEHADO), building the capacity of local subsistence farmers to use 'modern' farming practices already successful in other parts of Africa. Practices which combat the increasingly dry and unpredictable climate and yet lead to increasing yields: food to eat and income from selling any surplus. BMS will continue supporting expansion of CCMP while we, OA, support the training and implementation of new farming processes.

What next?

The proposal is for a two-year project cycle. Year one will focus on 14 communities across northern Sierra Leone. An initial group of 28 'resource people' (two from each community) will be trained in selected innovations already demonstrated

in other African countries with similar climate and soils.

Year two will support the 28-resource people to provide mentoring and practical support to a group of around 20 farmers in each of their communities. Groups will implement improved agricultural practices and also be encouraged to establish village

savings groups with their increased income. Money saved can then create further income generating activities.

It sounds ambitious and perhaps it is, but OA has been involved in this type

of project for many years. We're confident that the grant of £13,554 for year one will make a real difference, and we're ready to support more communities when it does.

So, let's go for it!

Pray with us that God will guide and enable the project activities and that farmers will see God's hand in very practical and real, edible answers to prayer. CCMP will continue to identify opportunities and, if funding is available, we'll be considering support for further expansion.

Thank you for continuing to support OA and please join us in looking forward to prayers being answered for this new project.

Martin Butterworth, Overseas Secretary for Operation Agri, and Esther McMillan, CCMP Team Leader at BMS World Mission (technical input).



Pray with us that God will guide and enable the project activities and that farmers will see God's hand in very practical and real, edible answers to prayer.

OA Promotional events for 2025

If you live near to one of these events or are planning to attend and can offer an hour or two, (or more!) to assist in the event in any way please let Jo know: admin@operationagri.org.uk who will keep you posted on the arrangements. The first one, OA Day, could be in your own home. Thank you.

Dates for your diary

APRIL
TUES
22

OA Day
An opportunity for you to introduce someone to Operation Agri. Morning coffee, afternoon tea, games evening; be creative!



MAY
FRI-SAT
16-17

Baptist Assembly
Bethel Conference Centre, West Bromwich B70 7JW



MAY
SAT
24

Heathfield Agricultural Show
Tottingworth Farm, Broad Oak, Heathfield, East Sussex TN21 8UE



MAY
THU
29

OA Annual Public Meeting
Online afternoon meeting to elect Trustees



JULY
WED-THU
2-3

Groundswell
Regenerative Agriculture Festival, Lannock Farm, Herts SG4 7EE



Your event

Is there an event in your church or locality that could host an Operation Agri stall, table, or stand?

Please let Jo know: admin@operationagri.org.uk

Answer to page 8: In Nepal schoolgirls are planting trees on mountain slopes to help prevent landslides in heavy rain. They plant three trees when they cut down one for firewood.

Marathon challenge



TCS London Marathon Runners

We are delighted, encouraged and privileged to have Joel Morgan in this year's London Marathon taking place on Sunday 27 April. We are anticipating having another marathon runner. Watch for updates in our email newsletter. Please sponsor Joel generously:

2025tcslondonmarathon.enthuse.com/pf/joel-morgan

I'd like to make a regular gift

to support the work of Operation Agri
by standing order

Jancita and her mother
with flourishing crops
grown using organic
compost manures
in Uganda



Standing Order

Please complete the details below, in BLOCK CAPITALS

Name and full postal address of your Bank

To the Manager:

Bank name

Bank address

Postcode

Sort Code - -

Account No

Account name

Please pay to Operation Agri at: Bank of Scotland PLC, Edinburgh, PO Box 1000, BX2 1LB

Sort Code: 80-22-60 Account No: 20935768

The sum of £

Starting date

and every Month / Quarter / Year until further notice from me in writing (Please delete those not applicable)

This order is in addition to / replaces my previous instructions to the charity

(Please cross out words that do not apply)

Signature

Date

Please detach this Standing Order and Response Form from the magazine and send to:

The Administrator, (within the UK use) FREEPOST, OPERATION AGRI

A photocopy of this form is acceptable. Scanned copies or other images may be emailed to:

admin@operationagri.org.uk

● Please fill in your name, address and email overleaf, and whether you would like our magazine.

● Please tick below as appropriate:

- ☐ I have left a gift to Operation Agri in my Will
- ☐ I am considering leaving a gift to Operation Agri in my Will
- ☐ I would like guidance on setting this up

Other ways to give

Gifts to Operation Agri may be made online:

www.operationagri.org.uk/product/make-a-donation

Legacies

Please remember Operation Agri in your Will. Many projects have been funded from legacies.

For guidance please ask the Administrator.

GDPR We have procedures to keep your personal information secure. We comply with the General Data Protection Regulation 2018. We never sell your data and we will never share it with another company or charity for marketing purposes. We only share data where we are required to do so by law.

Operation Agri is registered in England and Wales as a charity, No. 1189098



operationagri.org.uk

Yes, I want to support the work of Operation Agri

- ☐ I enclose a personal gift towards the work of Operation Agri £
- ☐ I enclose a cheque / postal order / CAF charity voucher to the value above made payable to Operation Agri *(Please cross out words that do not apply)*
- ☐ I enclose a gift from our church / organisation towards the work of Operation Agri £
- ☐ I enclose a cheque / postal order / CAF charity voucher to the value above made payable to Operation Agri *(Please cross out words that do not apply)*
- ☐ **Please send me the free Outreach Abroad magazine by post every 3 months**
- ☐ **Please send me the Operation Agri email newsletter**

Please complete the details below, in BLOCK CAPITALS

Full Name: Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms / Rev / Dr

Church or Organisation and Position (If applicable)

Address

Town/City

County

Post Code

Email address

GIFT AID DECLARATION

Boost your donation by 25p for every £1 you donate to Operation Agri.

Gift Aid can be reclaimed by Operation Agri from the tax you pay for the current tax year.

Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer.

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In order to Gift Aid your donation you must complete the information below:

I want to Gift Aid my donation of £_____ and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to:

Name of Charity: **Operation Agri**

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Title First name or initial(s) Surname

Full Home address:

Postcode

Signature:

Date

Please notify Operation Agri if you:

- want to cancel this declaration,
- change your name or home address,
- no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

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The Administrator, *(within the UK use)* **FREEPOST, OPERATION AGRI**

A photocopy of this form is acceptable. Scanned copies or other images may be emailed to:

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