

Outreach Abroad

OPERATION AGRI'S MAGAZINE

REGENERATIVE FARMING

Reaping the
benefits
of healthy soil

TANZANIA
Empowering
smallholder
farmers

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



1961-2025



**Operation
AGRI**
Christian love in action

SPRING 2025



Operation Agri

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Operation Agri works with
local Christian partners in
ten countries. Operation
Agri helps grow food,
increase incomes, teach
skills, empower women
and much more.

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Welcome
from the Editor

Mission to the marginalised

The English word *Operation* is derived from the Latin *Opus* which means *Need, Work, Accomplishment*. From the very start of Operation Agri those charged with its management have understood the great *need* in the world and have *worked* towards an *accomplishment* which is defined by the poorest in society being enabled to thrive with dignity. The establishment of food security, education, justice and healthcare for the marginalised remains the goal of everyone associated with Operation Agri. Our activities have changed since the first days but the ministry is the same.

NigelJones@operationagri.org.uk

Make a donation
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Donate

ANSWERS to p12: 1b West Africa 2b Freetown
3a 8.8 million 4a Green, White, Blue



Give as you Live
Online®



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What an amazing way to support Operation Agri without it costing you anything.

Giving this way costs you nothing but individuals, families and whole communities in Central America, Africa and Asia benefit. People are lifted out of poverty, their land is enriched, the sick are cared for and those with no education are given an opportunity to learn to read.

Go to giveasyoulive.com to register on your device and nominate Operation Agri as your sponsored charity.

Shop Whenever you shop on-line and have one or more items in your basket go to giveasyoulive.com, find the store where you are shopping and click on the store icon. You will then be returned automatically to the store to complete your purchase. Operation Agri will be credited once you have paid.

Our thanks go to Elizabeth and John Chittock, great supporters of Operation Agri, not just for reminding me about *Give as you Live* but for the much appreciated £30.46 which came to Operation Agri during 2024 because of their on-line

shopping – at no cost to them! That alone was enough funding for 20 young girls from the slums of Kampala, Uganda to have sufficient practice tailoring materials for three weeks of their course, which is their route out of poverty. What a difference that makes to their lives.

Go to giveasyoulive.com and see the range of stores which offer this service (and the ones who don't!) then put a note by your device to remind you to go there when shopping on-line.

Give as you Live will donate a bonus £5 to your chosen charity for every friend who signs up and raises £5!

If you are registered with *Give as you Live* recommend a friend or two or more! (giveasyoulive.com/refer)

If you are not registered ask someone who is registered to recommend you.

Please let me know how you get on.

Thank you, Nigel Jones.

NigelJones@operationagri.org.uk



Continuing Lloyd's work in Malawi

Geoff Holder, APF Projects Coordinator, meets the new team and celebrates the wonderful legacy of the Revd Lloyd Chizenga

The *Growing Greener* project in Malawi is a collaborative effort between Operation Agri, African Pastors Fellowship, (APF), and the local partner New Life Christian Church. Since 2016, a small team from the church, led by Revd Lloyd Chizenga, has been working to improve agricultural practices and promote sustainable livelihoods in rural communities across central and southern Malawi.

The *Growing Greener* project has had a significant impact on the lives of many smallholder farmers in Malawi. The training – which includes a range of conservation agriculture methods, compost-making and other essential farm management skills – has led to increased food production, improved livelihoods, and enhanced environmental sustainability. The project has also empowered women and young people to play a more active role in agricultural development.

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Lloyd was well-known as a very principled faith leader and so many farmers joined the programme because they trusted him.

Last July, Lloyd very sadly passed away following his daughter, Bridget's wedding. Lloyd was a beloved figure in the Blantyre community and the news came as a shock to everyone who knew him. Despite the region's frequent droughts, floods, and cyclones, Lloyd's unwavering commitment and strategic leadership ensured that the project reached thousands of farmers. Lloyd was well-known as a very principled faith leader and so many farmers joined the programme because they trusted him. As a result, countless families have been able to escape absolute poverty, afford their children's education, and break free from cycles of debt.

Honouring Lloyd

Following Lloyd's death, it was agreed that the project would be paused to allow New Life Church time to reorganise and agree a new leadership structure. Then, last November, Revd Dave Stedman and Geoff Holder, who both work for APF in the UK, travelled to Malawi to pay their respects on behalf of both APF and Operation Agri.

A key part of Dave and Geoff's visit involved meeting New Life Christian Church's regional overseers to affirm APF and Operation Agri's commitment to the partnership and the *Growing Greener* project. New Life Christian Church is

an indigenous African church network with approximately 150 congregations. Regional overseers travelled from across central and southern Malawi and northern Mozambique to Blantyre to be part of the conversation.

Most New Life Christian Church pastors have had no formal training, making in-service training a crucial priority. During the conversation, Pastor Souza, from Mozambique, highlighted the need for Chichewa language Bibles, bicycles, and income-generating projects to support his ministry. His area was one of those that has not yet been reached by the *Growing Greener* project. Pastor Souza explained how news of the project had reached his village and said his community was waiting for the team to cross the border into Mozambique and share the training with them.

Visiting Bishop Lloyd's grave required a long journey down a very rough washed-out road deep into rural Chikwawa District. As Dave and Geoff were outsiders, they had to obtain permission from the village headman before they were allowed to visit the cemetery where Lloyd was buried.

▼ Lloyd's family



- ▲ Growing Greener team
- ◆ Pastor Souza and Geoff Holder
- ◆ Meeting with NLCC leaders in Blantyre

Growing Greener

A crucial part of the trip was meeting the new team who will lead the *Growing Greener* project from now on. Hunta Fata, who has been helping Lloyd since the beginning of the project, was asked to take over the training programme. Hunta knows the communities and the training programme intimately. Lloyd's daughters Bridget and Johanna were also keen to be involved to continue their father's work. Hunta, Bridget and Johanna will be ably supported by Lonjezo Daniel and Alex Muwawa, completing the new project team. They all work on the project on a voluntary basis. The demand for sustainable agriculture training across Malawi, and beyond, remains overwhelming and so plans were made to resume the programme later this year.

Despite the tragic loss of Lloyd Chizenga, the *Growing Greener* project will continue to serve the rural communities of Malawi. With the appointment of a new leadership team and renewed commitment from Operation Agri and the African Pastors Fellowship, the project is poised to expand its reach and support even more farmers with the knowledge and skills needed to improve their livelihoods and build a more sustainable future. Lloyd's wonderful legacy will live on through the continued success of this vital initiative.



Caring for God's earth through *Regenerative Farming*

Stan Crees and **Alexandra Lear** dig into why improving soil health is so important

Soil Dependency

It is well-known that the soil on which we depend for 95% of our food is becoming exhausted and therefore losing its ability to grow good and abundant crops. This dates to the mid-19th century, when the UK saw an increase in the widespread use of synthetic fertilisers, driven by the agricultural demands of the Industrial Revolution. This period saw a shift from traditional fertilisers, like composts and manures, to chemically synthesised ones. These chemicals provided more consistent and concentrated nutrients for crops, significantly boosting yields. However, over-reliance ultimately led to soil acidification and nutrient depletion, making it harder for plants to grow without these additional inputs.

Soil, – also commonly referred to as earth, is a mixture of organic matter, minerals, gases, liquids and organisms that together support the life of plants and micro-organisms. It is claimed that one teaspoonful of good soil contains more

micro-organisms than there are people on earth.

Beyond the fertility issue, depleted soils are less able to absorb carbon from the atmosphere, thereby adding to the problem of climate change. It is said that whilst it might take some hundreds of years to build an inch or so of healthy soil, this can be lost in a few years of bad farming practice.

Regenerative Farming

What is being done to remedy this decline? This is where Regenerative Farming, not a new practice, comes into the picture. The fundamental principles have been practised for many years, long before we called it 'Regenerative'. It's a system of farming practices that help to improve the environment whilst maintaining crop yields. These practices have a strong focus on soil health, controlling water content and improving biodiversity.

To achieve this, five principles of farming practice are proposed. Briefly stated these are: minimise soil disturbance, keep the

soil covered, keep living roots in the soil, grow a diverse range of crops, and bring grazing animals back to the land.

Perhaps the most important outcome of these practices is enrichment of the soil with living organisms. In addition to improving soil health, regenerative farming, which employs techniques such as agroforestry, no-till farming and cover cropping, can enhance the soil's ability to capture and store carbon, thereby mitigating climate change.

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It is said that whilst it might take some hundreds of years to build an inch or so of healthy soil, this can be lost in a few years of bad farming practice.

Practical solution?

Research has shown that Regenerative Farming can be as productive as conventional farming, especially when considering long-term soil health and ecosystem services. However, it requires a combination of sustainable practices, technological advancements, and supportive policies to ensure global food security.

Regenerative Farming runs the risk of being 'another fad', particularly when you consider that many of these practices were already being widely implemented by farmers pre the industrial revolution! We must be careful not to hold Regenerative Farming as the gold standard, by which every other farming practice falls short.

Each farm should be considered on an individual basis, an approach that

Operation Agri encourages our project partners to practice. Whilst none of our partners are specifically practising Regenerative Farming, they each prioritise soil health, biodiversity and sustainable resource use.

Regenerative Farming and Operation Agri

Operation Agri currently supports several agricultural projects, mainly in Africa. In each of these the emphasis is on training local farmers to promote sustainability, whether it be in producing food for the family or for sale at local markets. One example was covered in an article in the previous issue of our magazine (Winter 2024) entitled 'Path to a greener future in Uganda'. Under the project title 'Sustainable Agriculture Farming Initiative' our project manager, Alinda Joseph, has introduced production and cost-saving systems that are environmentally friendly, economically viable and socially responsible. Foremost among these has been encouraging small scale farmers to make and use organic manures such as home-produced compost.

Looking after the soil is a core part of our Christian calling, first and foremost because, 'The earth is the Lord's and everything in it' (Psalm 24:1) and secondly because the health of our soils and the health of humans are intricately interconnected.*

Stan Crees, Operation Agri Trustee



*Alexandra Lear,
Charity Development Manager*



*Footnote: The final paragraph is quoted, with permission, from *Root & Branch*, the twice-yearly magazine of A Rocha UK arocha.org.uk

Goat rearing, and natural disaster training, promotes – *Community transformation*

Jhaggu Prasad Gahatraj looks at how better planning for natural disasters can save lives in Nepal

The Bagmati Rural Municipality has a low Human Development Index of 0.532. The communities are underprivileged and deprived of basic facilities. The geographical structure, with dangers of flood and landslide, unproductive land, poor health and hygiene, under-resourced education, deforestation, caste discrimination, poor living standards and the lack of female empowerment, has created many challenges.

MCDS has been consistently working in Bagmati Rural Municipality, Ghusel Lalitpur for the transformation of the lives of marginalised people and communities. It is implementing The Community Health and Engineering for Social Transformation (CHEST) Project of Bagmati Province of Nepal. It is a four-year BMS and Operation

Agri-funded project, which started on 16 July 2021 and is due to complete by 30 June 2025.

The CHEST project focuses on identifying individual and collective capacity and the use of local resources.

MCDS trains communities on disaster preparedness and emergency search and rescue. A two day workshop, conducted last summer, looked at the role and responsibility of the Local Disaster Risk Management Committee and at Disaster Risk Reduction. It is hoped this training will enhance the understanding of the roles and responsibilities of local structures and response in developing local management policies and procedures.

The DRR Basic Search and Rescue Training for Local Disaster Risk Management Committee and local community leaders and Self-Help Groups (SHGs) was also conducted towards the end of last year. Hands-on SAR exercises provided practical experience in rescuing victims, and the committee was supported with search and rescue basic tools and equipment. Now the school, ward and community are prepared for disaster risk reduction.

Child Clubs are taking the initiative in encouraging extra-curricular activities





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We have 26 goats now and it has inspired us to commercialise goat farming and become self-sustaining.

▲ Mrs Thuli Kanchhi Bhulun with her seed goat

and social awareness. CHEST project has organised training for the Child club networks of Srijansil and Chetna on management, leadership development, and report writing. Thirty one Child club members gained valuable insights into child rights, leadership, organisational skills, and sustainable practices. It has improved basic leadership skills and communication skills. They were also provided with two days of leadership training. This training helped 25 students develop essential skills such as decision-making, communication, teamwork, and problem-solving. SHG members and school students also participated in a health and sanitation campaign last year, which helped raise awareness and increase individual responsibility.

CHEST project also organised three days of Goat Rearing Training last year. The training was organised as part of a livelihood and income-generating activity for members

of SHGs. Participants were encouraged to learn different technical and practical skills with regard to livestock raising and proper management.

Mrs Thuli Kanchhi Bhulun lives in Bagmati RM, Ghusel, Lalitpur with her husband and three sons. They used to gain their income from agriculture, but now they meet their financial needs by selling

agricultural products and goats.

She says, 'As a housewife, I have fewer opportunities for outer exposure and learning new skills and training to support my work. But when MCDS came to our village, I participated in the training as it was relevant to my current profession. Sometimes when goats get sick, their weight does not increase according to their age and because there is less income to buy food. We both used to be disappointed when the goats got sick and did not put on weight, and so we thought that we should take training in goat rearing.

'I was able to acquire new knowledge about goat rearing and they also provided us with an advanced breed of seed goat in the group. Now, the goats born from that seed goat have become good, which has increased our income. We have 26 goats now and it has inspired us to commercialise goat farming and become self-sustaining.'

*Jhaggu Prasad Gahatraj,
Executive Director of MCDS*



PRAYER we invite you to pray

The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of God's people, went up before God from the angel's hand. REVELATION 8:4

Bangladesh

Project name: **Duaripara Family Development Project**

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

Empowering girls through education

PRAYER REQUEST:

For the safety and security of the girls who attend the project education centre. May they be protected from all kinds of abuse, especially as they walk between home and school.

India

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

Partner: **Oasis India**

Empowering the urban poor

PRAYER REQUEST:

Give thanks for the after-school programmes where children can enjoy a safe, nurturing, and supportive environment for growth. Pray for a larger and improved space for this activity so that more children may benefit.

Malawi

Project name: **Growing Greener in Malawi**

Partner: **African Pastors Fellowship**

Sustainable farming in Malawi

PRAYER REQUEST:

Those still coming to terms with the sudden death of Pastor Lloyd, the project leader. Plans being made to restart the project in June. Huntla as he trains the new leadership team.

Nepal

Project name: **CHEST Ghusel**

Partner: **Multipurpose Community Development Service**

Handing over for sustainability

PRAYER REQUEST:

For this project nearing completion in July; for the final capacity building of local community self-help groups

to go well. For all involved completing the activities and leaving well.

Nepal

Project name: **CHEP Mahatgaun**

Partner: **Multipurpose Community Development Service**

Improving health and education in a rural village

PRAYER REQUEST:

Give thanks that project activities are now back on schedule following changes of staff. Pray particularly for the schools involved, that both teachers and students will see the benefits of new methods.

Nicaragua

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

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

Expanding the work

PRAYER REQUEST:

Pray for Nicaraguan families without access to healthcare and clean water. May the AMOS team and partners bring hope to our brothers and sisters, reaching even more communities and individuals in need of compassionate care.

Pakistan

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

Partner: **Light for the Nations**

Literacy and skills training

PRAYER REQUEST:

Pray for the recent Graduation and success of ongoing training centres. May God's guidance and protection ensure safety, participants' growth, motivation, and resources. Also pray for peace, protection, economic growth, and wise leadership in Pakistan.

Sierra Leone

Project name: **Joy Agricultural Project**

Partner: **BMS World Mission and New Harvest Development Office (NEHADO)**

Building the capacity of subsistence farmers

PRAYER REQUEST:

Give thanks for success in identifying opportunities to improve subsistence farming.
Pray for NEHADO project leaders as they introduce new activities and for the community representatives who will receive training.

Sri Lanka

Project name: **Helping vulnerable communities and protecting children**

Partner: **LEADS**

Building resilient communities

PRAYER REQUEST:

For the women in the self-help groups, especially that they may find regular markets for their produce which in turn will enable them to secure a regular income.

Tanzania

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

Partner: **Farming Partnership Initiative**

Health, training and rain

PRAYER REQUEST:

Pray for a strong relationship with our new Phase 8 farmers group, applying what they learn, becoming good development contributors in their community.
Pray for the National Election in October to be held in peace without violence.

Tanzania

Project name: **IMARIKA**

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

Community development in Tanzania

PRAYER REQUEST:

Establishing the project in three new villages.
Starting a programme on environmental conservation and conservative agriculture in three secondary schools.
Planned meetings with Group Leaders.
Training taking place in the various groups.

Uganda

Project name: **SDKF vocational training**

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

Imparting vocational skills

PRAYER REQUEST:

Pray that God will: bless our students with a love of learning, sharp minds, and the ability to grasp new concepts.
Guide our teachers with wisdom and patience as they impart knowledge and nurture each student.

Uganda

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

Partner: **Baptist Union of Uganda**

Capacity building in Uganda through literacy

PRAYER REQUEST:

Give thanks for the new women who joined WALP groups in January. Pray they have enjoyed and benefitted from this new activity. Pray they don't find any difficulty in attending classes, and continue to learn.

Uganda

Project name: **Sustainable Agriculture Farming Initiatives**

Partner: **Baptist Union of Uganda**

Building farm businesses in Uganda

PRAYER REQUEST:

For field Advisors as they provide advice and support to farmers, inter-farm visits to promote learning from one another and that workshops will be well attended and provide actionable knowledge that leads to abundant harvests on the farms.

Zambia

Project name: **Nyampande Organic Farmers Project**

Partner: **African Pastors Fellowship**

Organic farming in Zambia

PRAYER REQUEST:

Pray that: Farmers trained in both years will put into practice what they learnt and be rewarded with good rains and harvest.
These good practices will be adopted by neighbours.
Teaching can be given in other districts.

From Janet –
a good friend of OA

Operation Agri (OA) is joining with BMS World Mission on a project in a country which is new for OA – SIERRA LEONE

How much do you know about Sierra Leone? Check page 2 for the correct answers.

1. In which area of Africa is Sierra Leone?

- a. East Africa
- b. West Africa

2. What is the capital city?

- a. Hometown
- b. Freetown

3. What is the population?

- a. 8.8 million
- b. 7.8 million

4. From the top, what are the colours of their flag?

- a. Green, White, Blue
- b. Blue, Green, White

Colour the Sierra Leone flag

SIERRA
LEONE

Operation Agri is helping farmers in Sierra Leone to use good farming practices in their dry climate. They will get better yields and will have food to eat and some to sell in the market.

SUMMER 25

★ Explore ★

new horizons with

Operation Agri

SUMMER VOLUNTEERING

If you are still considering what to do in the summer months talk to us at Operation Agri.

Your skills, gifts and ideas may be just what we need for short-term Summer Support.

You could use volunteering with Operation Agri for such awards as the Duke of Edinburgh's.

SUMMER SCRIPT

Check out our previous magazines and choose one of the projects which appeals to you.

Research the project and the country then put pen to paper, or electronic equivalent.

In just 700 words produce an article for possible publication explaining why the project work is so necessary.

Email your responses to me:
nigeljones@operationagri.org.uk

Lives changed in *Tanzania*

Pastor Heavenlight Luoga explains how training farmers to prepare rice for sale in shops increases their share of the profits

The vision of Farming Partnership Initiatives is to empower smallholder farmers to become small-scale investors in their areas and make a lasting impact in their rural communities.

FPI train them to know that the first place to invest is at the family level, by paying school bills for their own children, building or improving their homes, reinvesting in their farming community and contributing to local community development.

Kilimo ni Maisha Group (Agriculture is Life), have three group activities, they're growing maize, rice and fruits like watermelons and tomatoes.

▼ Pastor Heavenlight (far left) with three of his trainee farmers



“

FPI trains smallholder farmers to add value to their products, such as rice, instead of selling the raw rice at a lower price.

Increased income

Farming Partnership Initiatives (FPI) works with small-scale farming communities, providing sustainable agriculture training, financial resources and tools to equip them to produce their own crops, so they can feed their families and make a significant contribution in their locality.

FPI empowers small and rural farmers to increase their incomes, so they can invest in their family and reinvest in their farming. FPI helps smallholder farmers to build strong farmers' groups, so they can sell together in bulk.

FPI work with farmers to increase the quality and therefore the value of their produce by training them in good agricultural practices and by providing them with access to high quality seeds.

Everything is used

FPI trains smallholder farmers to add value to their products, such as rice, instead of selling the raw rice at a lower price. These farmers know that, after harvesting their raw rice, they need to process, package and store the rice before selling it to wholesalers and retailers. This is such good news because for many years, Karagwe and Kyerwa have been importing rice from neighbouring regions, but today people are getting and eating Karagwe and Kyerwa rice. The demand is huge compared to the production, because rice is consumed

in such vast quantities in homes and restaurants.

Kilimo ni Maisha Farmers Group have paddy fields for rice in order to increase their income. FPI therefore focus on training these farmers on how to utilise straw for organic fertiliser, husk for biochar, and rice bran for functional food. The aim is to help the farmers understand that these by-products and waste from rice plants, in the form of straw, husks, and rice bran, have the potential to be processed and utilised to produce added value and increase the farmers' income, and support sustainable development, and provide healthy and functional food.

Mr. Klodatus Lazarus, 44, is married with six children. He is part of the sustainable agriculture horticulture farming initiative. This venture has provided income for his children. He says, 'Through this project I have succeeded to get my own incomes to support my children's education as well as buying a motorcycle, sheep, and improving my house. I have also been able to buy another piece of land in order to expand my farming activities.'

'Thank you to this project and thank you for the financial support you provide in our group. I would like to ask for more loan, so we are able to expand our farming enterprises, this project has changed our lives.'

Farming Partnership Initiatives gives Klodatus Lazarus and other farmers like him training and tools, in terms of a loan, to support their farming activities. This programme provides their family with food and a way to receive income. Klodatus Lazarus concludes, 'I have a cow, so now I can get milk, and my family's dishes always include the nutrition from the



▲ Watering the growing crop

▼ A training session, Tanzanian style



cow I keep. Currently, in our group, we have three farming enterprises, we have a corn project, a paddy field project and a horticulture project. These enterprises have changed our lives, some have a house, cows, goats etc. my life has been changed.'

Pastor Heavenlight Luoga



SDKF *extends its reach* to one of

Dennis Ssettaala explains how recruiting students from a new district, and adding carpentry skills, is creating more opportunities for SDKF students

SDKF Vocational Skills Training Project is located in one of the biggest slums of Kampala.

Ten per cent of the total area of Uganda's capital, Kampala, is made up of slums, and 27% of the city's population live in slums. This sprawling community of huts and shacks, partly built on reclaimed swampland, is home to many of Kampala's most impoverished families.

Started in 2006, with computer training, the project has expanded to include Tailoring, Hairdressing, Motorcycle Repair and Maintenance, and our newly introduced Carpentry and Joinery course.

Carpentry skills are highly marketable in Uganda. Once a youth has done a carpentry course, he can get into any number of specialisations in different areas of the construction industry. As you can see, the opportunities for carpentry careers are varied. We're excited to join this journey of producing qualified carpenters into the Ugandan labour market.

“**Once a youth has done a carpentry course, he can get into any number of specialisations ...**

So far, we have trained over 2,000 young people in different skills. Among the young people trained, are those who come from Buyende district.

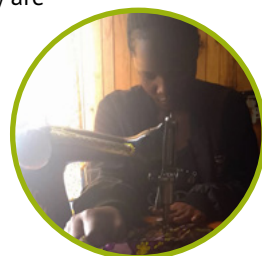
SDKF has extended its reach to the poorest district of Buyende. Buyende District is in Eastern Uganda.

Most young people in the Buyende district live below the poverty line, which makes them drop out of school at an early stage and resort to life on the street.

While on the streets, many of these young people are at risk of joining gangs, early pregnancy, rape, abuse and prostitution, leading to the increased risk of contracting HIV/AIDS and accelerating the poverty cycle. This is the very reason why SDKF came in to alleviate the suffering of the young people in Buyende district and started offering them vocational skills. So far, we have trained over 120 young people from Buyende and many are now in employment.

Sewing success

Angella Naigaga is 18-years-old and dropped out of school in primary six because her parents couldn't afford to educate her beyond this level. After dropping out, Angella had to find a means of survival. Unfortunately,



the poorest districts of Eastern Uganda

she didn't have a skill, so the best Angella could be offered was casual labour.

'I was paid very meagre wages yet I did a lot of work', says Angella. 'This made me lose hope for a better future.' One day a neighbour told Angella about an opportunity to be trained in vocational skills at the SDKF Vocational Skills Training Project and Angella applied for a course in Tailoring. She successfully completed the training eight months later.

She continues, 'After graduation SDKF gave me a sewing machine loan to help me establish my business. I market my business by doing excellent work to ensure customers return and refer new clients.'

She is able to cater for her needs, pays her siblings' school fees and she is planning to save money and buy a piece of land.

Dennis Ssettaala



Flourishing salon



Born 20 years ago, into a family of six children in Buyende district, Jane Nakato lost her father when she was six-years-old. Jane's mother struggled

to educate her daughter up to primary seven, then the school fees problem worsened, and Jane had to drop out of school.

To provide for her needs, she looked for a job. Jane was hired as a maid in Buyende Town Council, a job she did for two years. It was during this time that she heard of vocational skills training at SDKF. She wasted no time in applying to be trained in hairdressing.

Jane trained for eight months. Upon completion of her training, she got together with a friend from the course to jointly establish a salon with the help of an SDKF start-up capital loan. She says, 'From this salon, I saved enough money to start up on my own. I am now self-reliant and even support my mother and siblings when they get a problem.'

Diary dates 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.

APRIL
TUES 22

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



MAY
16-17
FRI-SAT

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



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

Thank you

The Trustees are very grateful to the late Ruby Cooper, who has left a legacy of £46,625.00 in favour of Operation Agri. Ruby attended North Evington Free Church for many years. Families across Africa, Asia and Central America will be lifted out of poverty and receive urgent medical care because of her generosity.

Could you volunteer?

Volunteer – a person who freely offers to take part in an enterprise or undertake a task. Is that person you? Volunteers may provide their services for lengthy periods of time such as the Trustees of Operation Agri, others on a one-off basis. We are always delighted to receive offers of help from supporters of Operation Agri. If you have a skill to offer us for a day or two or can volunteer for longer, please let us know. NigelJones@operationagri.org.uk

Easter

A time of sacrificial giving. What could you give up to support Operation Agri? Perhaps you could give Easter eggs a miss this year or a coffee and cake. Instead of these lovely luxuries please go to operationagri.org.uk/presents-with-a-purpose and make a difference.

Apology

We apologise to our Charity Development Manager Alexandra Lear, for a misspelling of her name in our last issue of *Outreach Abroad*. Her name is Alexandra not Alexander.



It all began with a *bridge*

Nigel Jones reflects on 12 years of bringing the heart-warming and heart-rending tales from OA's frontline to your attention

In 2014 *Outreach Abroad* carried an article about a

bridge in Nepal. Here is an extract.

Remote, mountainous terrain in Rukum District, Nepal, makes travel difficult and time-consuming: it

can take 30 hours to walk to the district centre. The lack of easy access means fresh food and medicines are in short supply for villagers, hampering local economies and impacting on peoples' health. After an inspiring training session for church leaders in summer 2012, a number of churches decided to take action. A team from the churches started by constructing a shortcut trail between two of the villages, halving the journey time. However, the route includes a river crossing, consisting of a basic wooden structure which can be treacherous or impossible in monsoon season. In partnership with United Mission to Nepal, (UMN), a grant from Operation Agri is enabling a new, improved bridge to be constructed, providing a safe crossing all year round. As a church-led initiative, the bridge will serve as a witness that the Church is interested in the welfare of the whole community. As the churches start working in the community, people are becoming more open to listen to and network with Christians. (Kat Wagner).



This article was commissioned in late 2013 for publication early in 2014. Since that great story, there have been dozens of articles which I have had the privilege of reading and editing. Some have been truly heart-

warming, as individuals, families and whole communities have testified to being lifted out of subsistence farming into surplus farming, lives saved by local medically trained first responders, and girls given an education which would otherwise have been denied to them.

There have also been heart-rending articles which have brought news of floods and hurricanes washing away vital crops, and of the extreme difficulties faced by partners, and those they served, during the Covid pandemic. Most distressing of all have been the emails bringing articles about the death of partners.

However, despite the problems and tragedies, crops have been grown, new partners have taken up the baton and the gospel has been proclaimed. I continue to be encouraged by these accounts and by the countless supporters who have funded the activities of Operation Agri and our in-country partners.

Thank you for caring.

Nigel Jones, Editor



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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



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