

SPRING 2023

Walking **TOGETHER**

THE NEWSLETTER OF FOOD
FOR THE HUNGRY UK



New life in Spring

For Christians, Spring is a reminder that God is all about making things new. Jesus promised to make everything new one day (Revelation 21:5). In the meantime, through Spring, He gives us glimpses of the coming blessings and renewal.

Maybe you can relate to this. The darkness and deadness of winter giving way to the light and warmth of Spring. Bright colours after a season of drabness.

Spring is a time of hope and new life. No matter how harsh the winter, Spring will come.

In many ways, this is what our Food for the Hungry teams in Africa, Asia and Latin America are seeking to do. To bring new life and hope into families and communities worn down by poverty and neglect.

We, like all Christians, are called to participate in God's mission to bring new life.

I do hope the stories in this newsletter encourage you as you see sprouts of new life, even where there has been drought and famine.



Listen to Evelyne's pride in her achievements, Robert's excitement as he tells visitors about his farming group and Jorina's commitment to being a change agent in her community.

God bless you this Spring.

Ian Johnson

Hope for the future in Burundi

"My family has received honour in the community because I serve as a role model" proclaims Evelyne Tuyizere, with pride. Declarations of positivity and confidence like this give us great encouragement in our work with those who were beaten down by the belief that nothing could change and there was no hope.

The FH Burundi team continues to implement the programme in education, health, nutrition, livelihood, agro-ecology and gender on nine hills in Mwumba, Burundi. This serves 4,624 households; over 20,000 people. Leadership development is promoted with 45 community leaders, 20 church leaders (from 10 churches) and 45 farmers groups leaders. In seeking to transform the community, it's important to remember that Jesus is interested in each individual. He sought out all sorts of people, from a despised tax collector (Zaccheus) to a

respected Pharisee (Nicodemus) to the thief on the cross. Our call is to serve like He did. Transforming communities is more than simply providing seeds and goats. It's about changing hearts.

The following interview with Protais Ntahorwamiye is inspirational

What was life like before receiving support from FH?

"Before my integration in FH's programs, our house was in very bad state. During the rainy season, rain came through the roof and we couldn't afford a new one. In our family, work was not well organized. In church, we thought God did not bless us like others. Emotionally, I was always anxious. Physically, we were weak because we were not eating enough and our diet was not diversified. Socially, our relationship with neighbors was not good



HARVESTING VEGETABLES FOR THE PROTAIS FAMILY

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We are a Christian international development organisation that has been walking with the poor globally since 1971. We tackle the root causes in order to graduate communities out of poverty.

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A NEW LATRINE AND TIPPY TAP NOW INSTALLED

as my children used to steal fruits from their plots. I felt ashamed in the midst of others in our community”.

What FH activities have you participated in and what difference has it made?

“I am a disciple to a model farmer in our community. He cascades his training to me. Then I use this knowledge to increase the production of different crops. I learned agro-ecological best practices, like Farming God’s Way, preparation of heat compost, preparation of bio pesticides, plot protection, terracing of gentle slopes, and how to combat seasonal caterpillars that destroy crops. In education, I learned how to help prepare small children to enter primary school through early stimulation.

My family’s living conditions have improved. Revenue generated from farming also helps my family to trade on a small scale. I am now able afford necessary items, thanks to my saving

and credit group and other FH funded activities. I have repaired my house. I feel blessed by God, and have hope for the future. My family, community and I will continue to work hard in order to progress even more.”

What are your hopes for your family and the community?

“My hope is to see my last 2 children graduate from the university and to contribute to the development of our family, our community and our country. I regret that I have older children who dropped out of school due to our ignorance on the importance of education.

In teaching my neighbors the good practices taught by FH, I hope important messages and information in health and nutrition, agriculture and education practices will reach many people. I hope adopting these practices will drastically reduce poverty in many households.

In my church, I would like to see all our church leaders being role models or change-agents in all aspects.”



EVELYNE WITH HER CHILDREN

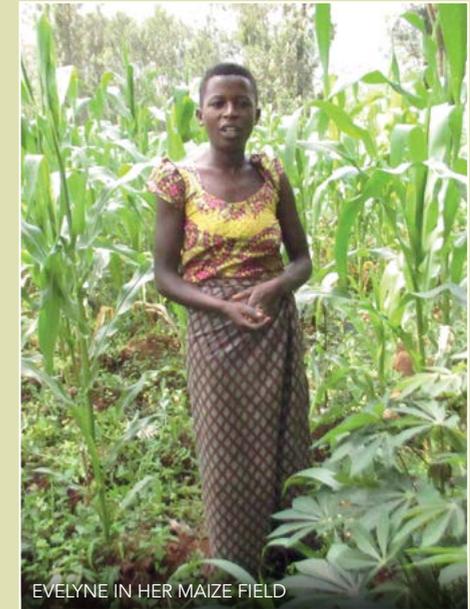
There are also many others keen to tell us their stories. Here are just a few.

Evelyne Tuyizere My maize production has increased from 47kg to 463 kg and I am now able to access credit from my savings group. My children’s health is much improved.

Dialo Nzisabira I am one of the 9 hill chiefs in the Mwumba area. I am responsible for the Ntembe hill and a volunteer in the cascade groups supervised by FH Burundi. The fruits of cascade training are visible here in areas such as agriculture, health and education. I learned that education begins at home with the initiatives of parents towards children. We hope there will be an increased understanding by parents of the importance of educating children. We are so happy for the interventions of FH on our hill.

Régine Ntimpirangeza (64 years) I am a volunteer of cascade groups on the Gakenke hill and I am also a community health worker. I worked with FH three years ago. I received training at FH and I pass it on to my followers. This year, I was trained in the nutrition of children and pregnant mothers. By helping me to provide better care to the sick in the community, many no longer needed to go to the health centre. The training has also helped me convey behavior-change messages to neighbors.

Nzisabiran Pétrone (37 years) I am one of 5 volunteer model farmers and also a member of cascade groups on Ntembe hill. With the support of FH Burundi, I was able to develop my farming profession in order to diversify the income in my family. Being a member of a group of model producers, I help



EVELYNE IN HER MAIZE FIELD

raise awareness about best agricultural practices. We have 9 agricultural associations with a total of 270 members. It is in these groups that I disseminate the knowledge I have gained to my neighbors. Now that I use the new agricultural techniques, my family is supplied daily with food (60% of the harvest) and generates income (40% of the harvest) in my household. This income makes it easier for me to afford agricultural supplies, the schooling of my children and health care. The desire to contribute to the development of my community has given me great honor in my family and in my community.

Our heartfelt thanks go to all our supporters for your part in bringing about transformed lives and hope for the future in all these people and in many, many others.

Battling continued drought in Kenya

Years of insufficient rainfall across Kenya have caused the worst drought in 40 years and conditions akin to famine in the hardest-hit areas. In the community in Buuri, many families are surviving on one meal a day. 20% of children are reported to have irregular school attendance due to hunger.

In the short rainy season at the end of 2022, there was some rain so farmers were able to implement farming techniques they have learnt from FH to improve productivity. Farmers were also encouraged to apply the good livestock husbandry



practices they have learned including harvesting storage of pasture. The drought has particularly affected pastoralists.

Despite the drought, community members are being encouraged to change their mindset towards what they can do, rather than looking for government or aid agency handouts. We have had some success here. For instance, Marurui farmers group purchased 64 improved local chickens from a local vendor in Meru with support from the government animal production officer. Farmers are motivated to raise poultry for meat and eggs. Mumui farmer group purchased 27 improved local chickens which had already begun laying eggs by the end of the reporting period.

Agro-ecology practices help increase crop production

Farmers were trained in selected agro-ecological practices including the adoption of growing pigeon-peas. Farmer



Even in difficult circumstances, transformation is happening.

groups and the schools were excited to receive the fast-maturing pigeon peas and promised to multiply the seeds and share them with their neighbors. A farm demonstration on pigeon peas propagation with the farmer group of Ntugi was completed. The demonstration involved planting pigeon peas combined with the practices of minimum tillage, composting, and mulching for increased yield, mitigation against climate change, and reduction in greenhouse gas effect.

School farms give children lunch and help attendance

FH Kenya supported 7 school farms in Buuri and they are thriving. The school farms help children get a meal at lunch time and can help stimulate school attendance. FH staff carried out 5 follow-up sessions to support and strengthen the school farms for the school feeding program and as a site for farmer demonstrations.

Strategic Community Water Resources Protected

Water Kiosks at Njuruta village in Rwarera community, were constructed. The community is already using the water distribution system and members have been sharing positive feedback on how the project has benefitted them. This includes ease of access for households since they do not have to struggle to obtain water for livestock. The water source so far documented 200 households obtaining water regularly and 1700 livestock being watered daily at the troughs.



SCHOOL LUNCH IN GAKANDO WITH FOOD PROVIDED BY FH IN RESPONSE TO THE DROUGHT

Support was also given to three further water sources to ensure community members protect and manage them well.

Early child education promoted

FH Kenya are particularly emphasizing early child education given the weight of evidence that this is a particularly important time in setting a foundation for future development and life-long learning.

Recent activities have included:

- Ensuring parents are aware of the importance of stimulation in the early years and in their play. Pre-primary school attendance can make a big difference in learning outcomes
- Training teachers in child focused education and the best techniques. A cadre of particularly gifted and motivated teachers have been identified as "Trainers of Teachers" to cascade messages and give refreshment session with others
- Showing teachers that they can create teaching aids out of simple easily accessible materials
- Where possible, providing food for children to help concentration levels and address hunger.



Jorina was once depressed and without hope but this young woman has become a leader and agent of change in her community.

Bangladeshi woman becomes a leader

Her village was enmeshed in poverty. She felt she didn't have the right to speak up because of her poverty and lack of education. Jorina explained that, like other women in the community, she made many decisions based on harmful superstitions. For instance, she said, women were reluctant to give colostrum – or "first milk" – to their newborn babies, providing honey instead. They believed honey would make the child a sweeter person in the future.

Also, pregnant women were not given nutritious food, she said, because many in the community was afraid if the unborn child grew "too healthy," delivery could be difficult.

Transformed into a leader

But Jorina was transformed into a leader through the FH training she received. Most importantly, she now understands she is worthy of love and respect. And it all started one day in June a decade ago, when she first began participating in programmes offered in her community by Food for the Hungry.

Dramatic improvements in the community

But Jorina isn't resting after all her accomplishments. She has learned to "dream big" and has very ambitious future goals for her family and community.

Many things have improved in Jorina's community. Child malnutrition has decreased and school enrolment improved, particularly for girls.

"And I feel great when neighbours come to me for advice on health," Jorina added. That happens because she trained with FH to become a mother leader in her community.

"I am a health and education mother leader and am currently president of the group. I cascade health information to others in the community," she said. "I was trained for this when I became a member of FH's Rupali (silver) women's development group.

But Jorina isn't resting after all her accomplishments. She has learned to "dream big" and has very ambitious future goals for her family and community.



Fishing reduces malnutrition in Bangladesh

The end of 2022 saw the completion of Year 1 of the Faroe Islands funded Fisheries project in Tanor Upazila, Barinda region, north-western Bangladesh.

One tribal village that benefited from the project in 2022 is Amritpur – a small village in Kalma union – which is home to 68 families. All the families belong to the marginalised tribal community, and most earn a living from daily wage labour. Their income is extremely low, and not enough to feed their families a nutritious diet. Indeed, due to insufficient protein intake, many children in the community suffer malnutrition, with above average levels of stunting.

To supplement their diet, women in Amritpur engage in traditional fish farming next to their homes. However, without training and appropriate equipment, their efforts were not well rewarded and fish production has routinely been low. On a visit to Amritpur last year, FH Bangladesh noted the women's fish production efforts, and told them about the Faroe Island funded project. The women were interested

to participate, and FH Bangladesh gave them training in modern fish farming techniques as well as vegetable farming. Following the training and distribution of various project inputs such as fish fry and seeds, the women successfully harvested 1,500kg of carp and tilapia fish, and 200kg of vegetables in their first season. The women consumed 305kg of fish within their families, improving protein intake and nutritional status, and distributed 130kg of fish to neighbours and others in the village.

In addition to fish consumption, the women have successfully sold BDT225,000 (£1,705) worth of fish through their collective group consisting of 24 members. This is a huge success and a direct result of the FH UK Faroe Island Funded project. Their collective now has a bank account to store their savings, marking a key step towards the financial inclusion of these women and Amritpur community.

As of the end of 2022, the women had leased new ponds to grow their fish production and introduce more modern fish farming techniques.

Technology provides teaching materials for rural schools

After a challenging year of Covid-19 induced school closures in 2021, the Lamwo Girls' Education project in northern Uganda made good progress in 2022. Schools have been open, and attendance has resumed to pre-pandemic levels.

Five rural primary schools are part of the project. One of these, Beyogoya Primary is located inside Palabek Refugee Settlement – where FH UK supported the construction of a water distribution pipeline in 2019.

423 girls aged between 9 and 12 were supported during 2022.

Highlights in 2022 included one-to-one bi-termly parent / teacher meetings designed to involve caregivers in the girls' education, and discuss any areas of concern. These, together with inspirational talks from high performing girls from secondary schools, have served to increase the retention of girls, and have improved girls' overall educational output and attainment.

Following the establishing of an online hub in 2021, two further online 'hubs' were established in 2022. These



A HAIR DRESSING BUSINESS. TOOLS ACQUIRED WITH FUNDS FROM THE SCHOOL VEGETABLE GARDEN PLANTED BY THE GIRLS IN THE PROJECT

consisted of IT equipment to enable schools to access learning materials from the National Curriculum for Development Centre, connect with other teachers at high-performing schools - and enable teachers to connect with and continue teaching pupils during weekends and holidays. 369 textbooks were also distributed. Utilising these online hubs, a holiday teaching programme was conducted in each of the target schools during school holidays.

Life skills and vocational training was also conducted with beneficiary girls. Materials were provided to make re-usable sanitary pads, and advice was given to help girls better manage their menstrual health. Follow-up by teachers indicates that girls are more willing and able to attend school during their period.

Another part of the vocational training saw the distribution of 100 six-week old Sasso chickens to girls, with the aim of teaching them how to care and raise poultry. Income generated from egg production has supported girls in the costs associated with transitioning to secondary school.



VALUE FOR EDUCATION CAMPAIGN AT AYUJ ANAKA PRIMARY SCHOOL

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