

# SUSTAINABLE GLOBAL GARDENS ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

## INTRODUCTION

This is the sixteenth Annual Report of Sustainable Global Gardens [UK charity reg. no. 1116243]. The document has been prepared for the charity's AGM, which is to be held on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2022. The report covers the period of SGG's sixteenth financial year which ended on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

The customary approach when writing this report is to look at the objectives of Sustainable Global Gardens as given in the original Business Plan, and then to comment on how far such objectives have been achieved. In the initial Business Plan the five-year target to be achieved by March 2011 was '*the annual raising of £100,000, which is to be transferred through at least 10 & preferably 20 small-scale sustainable projects to poor communities in the Developing World*' so progress could be judged against that long-term goal. As recent SGG Annual Reports have indicated how that initial target has been achieved, a different approach is taken in this report where consideration is given only to changes since the last field visit in November 2019.

This report covers a period when Covid and associated travel restrictions meant that SGG was unable to undertake field monitoring. Thus, there are fewer details to be considered, although news from SGG partners indicated that they remained active during this time. Good quality photographs taken during this period are also few, so I have used some taken by myself during the April-June 2022 visit where they illustrate development before 31<sup>st</sup> March.

As SGG did not spend two months of this year on fieldwork, there was significantly more time available for fund-raising. An important consequence of this is that SGG has now has contact with several sympathetic trusts and businesses, so our funding sources have become more diverse. As reported in the last Annual Report the total income for SGG was £15,923 in 2020-21, whereas the income for the current financial year is £29,600.36p. Most of this increase has come from successful funding appeals to grant-making trusts. This has enabled former interests, such as improved water supply, to re-emerge as an important SGG activity, and also new locations found for our other long-established projects.

The other important development is that SGG has come to see climate change as the greatest current threat to humanity and civilization as we know it. This has encouraged us to review our policy concerning air travel to Africa. The new policy is that we shall try to limit our monitoring field visits to an average of one per year, and that we shall increasingly rely on partner NGOs to implement development work which SGG facilitates. Thus, SGG is shifting towards being a funding agency rather than one solely concerned with action in the field.

## CURRENT PROJECTS

The following are projects where SGG has invested support in this financial period.

- **Project 1, the implementation of water-harvesting in Tanzania.**

In the last Annual Report it was mentioned that SGG was seeking a funding grant to provide a water-harvesting system for Chaangaja Cleopas Msuya Secondary School in the Pare Mts. Tanzania. A funding appeal was made to 3 trusts, and before the end of May we received 3 funding grants of approximately £1,000 each. All 3 grants were forwarded to our Finnish partner NGO, Liana.org, who organised the construction of water-harvesting systems at Kwakoa Primary and Kingondi Primary as well as Chaangaja Cleopas Msuya Secondary School.



The work at Chaangaja Cleopas Msuya School was SGG's first attempt at a water-harvesting system at a school. Quite apart from the construction of a 30,000 litre storage tank, this scheme illustrates other side benefits of what is basically a water supply project.

This type of construction provides employment & skill training for a team of local builders. It is commonly the case in rural Tanzanian schools that pupils/students are asked to help *[see top left]*. Some in Europe might see this as child exploitation, but another way of viewing this is that these simple physical tasks, usually done by a whole class, foster a sense of togetherness, self-help & nationhood, qualities which are much needed in a young country such as Tanzania.



One school improvement can lead to another. Extra help can lead to small savings in the budget. Here Liana.org built a water tank visible in the background, but they were also able to comply with government instruction to improve handwashing facilities within the school *[see lower left]*. The school Head also discovered that the Liana builders had experience of building "rocket stoves", so the school somehow found money to construct such a stove. The benefit of such stoves is that they use 50-70% less fuelwood than traditional 'three-stone fires', so there is appreciable environmental benefit. A rocket stove also channels smoke out of the kitchen, so the cooking area becomes a much healthier environment for the cooks.

When SGG applied for a grant, the school educated some 456 students. However, after these school improvements were completed the school enrolment increased to 600 students. Thus, this project was not just a water scheme but also a project with definite health, environmental and educational benefits.



Here is the finished water tank [see above left] at Kwakoa Primary School. The trees in the background indicate that this is a low rainfall area where water supply is a continuous problem. There are 375 pupils who will benefit from this development. The photo [see above right] is Kingondi Primary which provides education for 164 pupils. It is resource deficient schools such as these where Liana.org plan to promote additional benefits e.g. using wastewater from handwashing to water seedlings in a school tree nursery.

- Project 2, support for 450 orphans & vulnerable children [OVCs] in Busia.**

One of SGG's main problems since 2008 has been finding sufficient funding to support this programme with an annual cost of £6,000. In April 2021 it looked likely that this project would have to cease unless new sources of funding could be found. We remain very pleased that such funding was found, and particularly grateful to the Lady Leech Fund and the Ward family Charitable Trust, who together effectively saved this programme. We received several other grants in support of these orphans & vulnerable children, so we now have sufficient funds to maintain this feeding programme until the end of 2022.

This project now faces new problems. For fourteen years the project budget has been based on £1/month/OVC, but coronavirus & climate change problems have brought a marked inflation in local food prices. Perhaps now is the time to consider raising the cost to support this feeding programme to £1.2/month/child. Another issue is that, as awareness of this feeding programme spreads, SGG was asked in May 2022 by two new groups if they could join.



A child prepares to eat her special communal meal at Siguli Orphans Centre [see above left]. For years SGG has been trying to encourage more greens & fruit in these meals rather than just the traditional ugali. At last we seem to be having some success, largely as a result of SGG’s recent investment in “kitchen gardens” for every OVC group. Here [see above right] some of the Upendo children are enjoying their meal of rice, beans & sukumawiki – a far healthier diet than they would have received a decade ago.

Children still get served ugali at these weekly communal meals, as can be seen at Nyusa Farmers [see below left]. However, it was pleasing to see that these children also received a good portion of green vegetables and some fruit. Nyusa Farmers have a well-developed kitchen garden which promotes improved child nutrition.

One criticism which can be made about this feeding programme is that it is ‘a drop in the ocean’: only a small percentage of children in need of better nutrition are within the programme. Thus, it is not surprising that SGG receives applications from community organisations wishing to join. Here [see below right] is Tumaini Women’s Group Eskoma and their children. They are anxiously waiting to know if they can join the SGG programme.

**NB.** All of these photos were taken in April-May 2022 outside the financial year in question, but they reflect what has been happening in this financial year.



- **Project 4 –table-banking.** The core of this activity is SGG sitting around a table, or under a tree, discussing with a local group how to generate an additional income, using a small capital investment, but with initiative & a willingness to work provided by the beneficiaries. Coronavirus & travel restrictions meant that SGG made no field visit to Busia so this project came to a temporary halt in this financial year.

However, this is a very successful and popular project with Maendeleo Mashinani Organisation [MMO] farmers, so I am pleased to report that all 9 women’s groups were eager to continue this project when they were visited in April-June 2022.

- **Project 11 Tree Planting & Conservation in Africa.**

Tree-planting in its various aspects continues to be a major part of SGG's work schedule. Last year’s Annual Report mentioned a planting target of 100,000 trees to be planted by the end of 2021. As mentioned earlier, we were unable to monitor planting, so most of SGG’s efforts in this financial year involved arranging tree-planting with local partners and finding funding to support them.

SGG has reported previously the growing concern about climate change and the increased interest, both in Europe and among our African partners, to use tree-planting for carbon capture. This activity started during the previous financial year with carbon capture being an essential part of our investment in Kipsaina Crane & Wetland Conservation Group, but carbon capture planting is becoming much more widespread. Of particular note it was realised about the time of COP26 that mangroves capture between 2 and 5 times more carbon than terrestrial trees. Thus, new partnerships were established with ACES, who are a mangrove restoration NGO working with communities on the South Kenyan coast. Details of their activities can be found at <https://aces-org.co.uk>. We are impressed by the work achieved in their Mikoko Pamoja project, and we hope to continue supporting them in their new Vanga Forest project. We have also started a collaboration with the NGO African Malaika who are active in the coastal villages between Dar es Salaam and the Rufiji Delta. Here they are planting both mangroves and Moringa oleifera on a large scale. They are based at Amherst Rotary Club, USA.

New developments have not been confined to coastal zones. SGG has a request for large-scale planting on village land adjacent to the Serengeti. This is not a locality with which we are familiar, but Fairtree have recently expressed an interest in this project. See <https://fairtree.org> for details. We are also a stakeholder in a Rotary project to promote Sesbania sesban as a multipurpose crop in various parts of Kenya. Our biggest financial investment, however, has been the £2,000 donated by Harrogate Rotary Club to plant 10,000-plus trees around Kitale. For the future, it is likely that SGG investment in forest restoration in Zomba, Malawi could become our major concern.



Most of the tree-planting undertaken in this project is agroforestry, where trees are planted in rows between crops or along the perimeter of the plot. Here [see above left] there are scores of *Grevillea robusta* planted at Manor House Training Centre, near Kitale. Some parts of this farm are being used for rewilding [see above right] to extend small patches of forest. The main activity here has been the removal of eucalyptus to allow space for indigenous species. Such a restored forest offers excellent opportunities for carbon capture. Note the person in the photo: he provides some sense of scale amongst this mass of greenery. Manor House Centre is far larger than most farms in West Kenya. It is not the type of farm which SGG usually tries to support. However, it is an institution with which SGG hopes to maintain contact. They are a source of many innovations needed by small-scale farmers in Kenya. One particular interest is their research concerning *Tephrosia vogellii*, a species which has the potential to provide a cheap natural pesticide for small-scale farmers.

Carbon capture is often associated with large-scale farms, but this does not have to be the case. Here [see below left] a Nyusa Farmer shows his 'food forest'. In this small plot there are not only trees suitable for climate change mitigation, but also patches of cassava, millet, and several varieties of fruit tree.

In the photo [see below right] Bungoma Rotary Club illustrate how Kenyan farming is being changed. In this former maize field an estimated 100 avocado trees have been planted. Also a line of *Grevillea robusta* now divides the field and provides forage for the neighbouring bee hives. To the right of the *Grevillea* is a banana orchard. These 4 new developments will provide the farmer with a far greater profit for much less effort than the former maize field.



- Project 15 - the promotion of organic gardening & permaculture.** Until 2021 SGG was largely dependent on one individual donation for the development of a demonstration plot near Matayos, Busia. However, just before the start of this financial year we received a grant of £1,000 from Sherwood Sunrisers Rotary Club to establish kitchen gardens at each of the 9 OVC groups in Busia and also at St Denis Libolina School for the Physically Challenged.



The initial idea of the kitchen gardens was to provide more vegetables for the communal OVC meals, but in their second year of development some of the kitchen gardens not only made a significant improvement in child nutrition but also brought the OVC guardians very satisfactory income from sales. On 23/12/21 it was reported that the Upendo kitchen garden had produced a harvest of amaranthus, cowpeas, sukumawiki, spider plant, and pumpkins. An estimated £25 [i.e. Ksh 3,600/-] of amaranth was used in the OVC feeding programme, but commercial sales for all the vegetables generated an additional Ksh 11,100/- [about £80]. This income was used to buy blankets for 16 OVCs. There was a similar report from the Mukwano guardians. They used an estimated Ksh 6,000/- for feeding the OVCs and gained an additional Ksh 13,000/- from commercial sales. This income was then used to purchase 2 hens each for the 18 members of the group at a cost of Ksh 350/- per hen. The CIF group made startling progress. They reported on 18/1/22 that they had started with a balance of Ksh 14,300/- in August, which by December had produced a harvest of sukumawiki [sales of Ksh 14,000/-], cowpeas [see above left] with sales of Ksh 12,000/-, and amaranth with an estimated value of Ksh 4,200/- entirely consumed by the OVCs. The income from sales was largely used to pay school levies for 50 OVCs at a total cost of Ksh 17,500/-. In September CIF started to collaborate with a local farmer who had a large plot on an area subject to occasional flooding but with very fertile soil. Here [see above right] is the sukumawiki crop photographed in May 2022. CIF reckoned that they had gained an income of Ksh 15,000/- just from the sukumawiki sales since the previous September.

- **SGG-ZombTreez collaboration.** For the last 5 years I have hoped to increase SGG’s activities in Malawi. One reason for this is that there has been a significant increase in prosperity in Western Kenya, SGG’s main investment area. When SGG started working there 16 years ago, many of the community groups we met were subsistence farmers not always able to feed themselves and often with insufficient spare money to pay the costs of primary education. Now we have partners trying to get their children through university! As a poverty & hunger development group SGG should consider having a presence in Malawi, one of the economically poorest peaceful countries in the world.

In April 2021 SGG was introduced to the development charity ZombaTreez [see [www.zombatreez.com](http://www.zombatreez.com) for details] and within a few months a 5 year community development & environmental restoration plan was agreed. This programme has three main components i.e. restoration of part of Zomba Forest through rewilding & spot planting of indigenous species, the establishment of kitchen gardens, and improving agricultural production. This last component requires soil improvement training undertaken by Tiyeni [see [www.tiyeni.org](http://www.tiyeni.org) for details] which SGG is sponsoring.



ZombaTreez regular activity has been collaboration with local community groups [see above left] to restore parts of Zomba Forest [see above right] through a combination of fire suppression, spot planting of indigenous species from their own tree nursery & rewilding. SGG is a sponsor of these activities. In October 2021 Tiyeni began training local farmers on soil improvement methods, which should facilitate much greater yields [see left]. Unfortunately, Malawi is affected by climate change. This year it suffered drought during the early part of the rainy season and then cyclones & floods later on so harvests have been disappointing. Work on kitchen gardens starts next year when SGG make their first visit. Our main task now is making funding appeals to support this project.



- **ESRAG GBI website.** The priority for SGG is the implementation of small-scale African projects which contribute to the eradication of poverty and hunger. The past Annual Reports have all focused on the progress made by such projects. However, it is worth recalling that education on matters related to global poverty is a secondary but significant objective of SGG. Such educational activity has usually been in the form of presentations to potential sponsors or advisory discussions with community groups in East Africa, but this year it took a different form. With no African field visits and very limited opportunities for presentations, SGG played a major role in the establishment of a new website for the Environmental Sustainability Rotary Action Group [GBI Chapter]. For details see [www.esraggbi.org](http://www.esraggbi.org). This work largely undertaken in preparation for COP26 in November 2021 provided an excellent opportunity to publicise many of SGG's core activities to a much wider audience. It has also greatly broadened SGG's network of potential partners, and includes some who are justifiably considered to be global experts in their specialist fields.

## **FUTURE PROSPECTS & RELATED ISSUES**

This year has seen a significant increase in funding, largely because of greater attention to funding appeals during lockdown. That increase in income has encouraged greater collaboration with likeminded NGOs and a broader spread of projects. The challenge for the next few financial years will be whether or not such fundraising can be maintained in the foreseeable future. New projects also raise the issue of whether SGG can find new, and preferably some younger, volunteers who can implement projects.

With reference to particular projects Directors should note:

- our water supply projects are entirely dependent on finding donors and funding trusts who can afford the cost of construction. It is likely that Liana.org will continue to provide our best opportunity for such water projects;
- support for OVCs in Busia has also been based on funding trust support throughout this year. At the end of this financial year there was sufficient financial sponsorship to continue this programme until the end of 2022;
- tropical tree-planting and conservation is expected to continue with financial support largely coming from SGG's many Rotary contacts;
- kitchen gardens and improved child nutrition has made great progress this year. However, we would judge that at least one more year of investment is needed to make that progress sustainable in Busia. For our partners in Malawi this work has yet to begin, so this is another area where SGG needs to find more funding;
- in summary SGG now faces a future with exciting possibilities but the constant need to at least maintain present levels of funding.

Since the Victoria Falls conference in 2017 at the end of the OPTIONS project, Carole has acted as the Treasurer of the new International Society for Pesticidal Plants [ISPP] while I have been the Interim Administrative Officer. These have not been onerous tasks: they have generally required so little attention that they have remained unmentioned in SGG's Annual Reports. However, in January 2022 the Ivory Coast member indicated that there would be a major conference for ISPP members in July 2022, and for the last few months of this financial year SGG played a significant role within ISPP. It was our intention to step back from ISPP work after the Ivory Coast conference, but it remains to be seen whether or not this will be the case.

Thus, I wish to thank all of you, our supporters, for whatever contribution you have been able to make to our many successes this year. All supporters of Sustainable Global Gardens have a vital part to play in the development and progress of the charity, so I look forward to working with you in the coming year on Sustainable Development Goals No 1 and 2, the eradication of extreme global poverty and hunger. My best wishes to all of you.

Paul Keeley  
6<sup>th</sup> September 2022