

PROJECT N° 54

Rollback malaria and absenteeism in Ugandan schools using *Artemisia annua*, *Cymbopogon citratus* and fruit tree growing.

Country: Uganda

Beneficiaries: 24 720 pupils and 720 teachers

Budget: 99 302 €

Outside financing: 80 333 €

Outside financing received: 0

Years of implementation: 2

Description: Creation of gardens with highly nutritious plants and herbal medicines in 24 schools.

Project: Malaria, Aids and Rights Organisation (MATO) together with a well-known specialist in *Artemisia annua* and member of the Ministry of Health will select 2 schools in each of the 12 test districts of Uganda to plant demonstration school gardens with fruit trees, annual plants rich in vitamin and protein together with *Artemisia annua* and, in drier areas *Cymbopogon citratus*. *Artemisia annua* is a plant of Chinese origin that is known for its effective treatment of malaria, the first single cause of teachers' absenteeism in Uganda (one of the highest in Africa). It has been shown in several projects in Uganda (including a first trial school garden project supported by IDAY) and a large (50 schools +) school garden project in Kenya to be effective against malaria and other tropical infectious diseases. Like *Cymbopogon*, it is a repellent against the malaria-carrying mosquito, and it helps prevent and cure malaria, intestine infections and reduces girls' menstrual pains that tend to keep girls out of school for prolonged periods. During its growth period, *Artemisia annua* requires a lot of water and is therefore less suitable for the drier parts of the country where it will be replaced as a repellent by *Cymbopogon citratus*, better adapted to these areas.

The project has 4 components: Training project participants in the cultivation of new crops; Generation of seed, seedlings and stalks of the plants for the cultivation in additional schools, Measurement of the health and education impact of the plants, advocacy at national and international scales to encourage the multiplication of the project on a broader scale and administrative support.

The Ministries of Health and Education support the project.

Expected Results

- A significant improvement of students' health as measured before and after the project period by the local health services.
- Teachers' and students' absenteeism should have practically disappeared and school results spectacularly improved.
- Health cost should drop by 30% at least if the Kenyan indicators are applied. Savings are used to school poor children who cannot afford the cost.
- Teams of youngsters will know how to cultivate *Artemisia annua* and will spread the plant in their surrounding and future school garden programmes.
- Through local advocacy campaigns based on the results obtained by the project and with international support, the government should be convinced to help spread the project approach to all rural schools in the country.

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