



7th ANNUAL SCHOOL FARM CAMP (1st – 5TH NOV. 2021)

THEME: ***AGRI-PRENEURSHIP OUR FUTURE: Skilling the youth in school for the world of work***

AIM:

To skill youth in school, in-service and pre-service teachers and teacher trainers for gainful employment through agriculture

Background:

The concept of the Annual Farm Camp was initiated by Gayaza High School in 2014 and its inaugural event was supported by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization in Uganda (FAO UG), AVSI Foundation, National Animal Genetic Resources Center & Data Bank of MAAIF, Enterprise Uganda and many other sponsors. The aim was to increase on the skilling of in-school youth and teachers such that they participate fully with their families in agribusiness starting from the production end. Our strategy was to improve on the school farms and encourage the teachers of Agriculture to teach practically from the farm as well as provide a context for teaching all the other subjects. We believe that teaching must start from the known to the unknown and the agriculture context provides immense opportunities for this from the pre-primary level to the tertiary institutions. Since that time, we have held six (6) Farm Camps up to 2019 but missed out the 2020 year due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Many schools and parents have always supported their children to attend these Farm Camps and by 2019 the average participant number had reached 700 and we thank Gayaza High School and our sponsors for this vision. We thank the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) who provided us with an exposure of the American Agriculture education model offered by the Future Farmers of America (FFA) who in turn have given us innumerable planning support to frame our future work in Uganda. We have initiated school student clubs, the Youth Future Farmers Africa (YoFFA), and the Teachers & Educators for the Future Farmers Africa (TEFFA) organization that now drive our activities going forward. We have been able to find some good friends who have provided support for schools to better their farms such that they can provide better skilling for the in-school youth and the surrounding communities. We thank AVSI that has constructed several farm units in schools including cattle barns and green houses. FAOUG has supported schools in setting up school forests and all these units are now active spaces for conducting lessons in all subjects. We now must turn our energy into training teachers in using project-based learning (PBL) methods in order to use these farm units for learning. This year 2021, due to the covid-19 pandemic we propose to have a blended Farm Camp that will have most of the activities online and a few practically in the field with a few participants. Our main target participants include students in schools, teachers both in-service and pre-service and teacher trainers in tertiary institutions.

We shall make use of pre-recorded videos of farmers provided by the players within the agribusiness sector and integrate these with a live telecast from the farms through zoom. Our experienced adult and

youth farmers plus farmer teachers will lead the training sessions right from their farms and value addition places. Our programme will have several training workshops and the participants will select which workshop to follow. We are working with the Gayaza High School Old Girls Association (GOGA) and other contact schools who are profiling their alumni in the agribusiness sector to select those ready to conduct training workshops during the Farm Camp. Our international friends from FFA and others will be presenting on several topics within the plenary sessions. We hope to have the Government of Uganda Ministries, Departments and Agencies represented so that they share with the participants the policies that guide skilling of youth in Uganda.

In preparation for the Farm Camp, we have launched the **“My Garden”** campaign throughout the month of October that will encourage all students and teachers in Uganda to start a garden at home or improve on the existing family garden. In this regard, a garden can be that one tomato plant, that one goat/cow/chicken and even following the value chain up to that bakery unit. We would like to see enhanced planning, increased individual work in this garden and daily journaling of activities to be uploaded on a blog with pictures and videos. We hope to find interested parties that will offer prizes or support to the best **“My Garden”** farmer in various categories. From the 27th-29th October 2021, we shall join our friends from FFA and participate virtually in the **National Future Farmers of America (FFA)** convention that will provide us and all agriculture and education policy makers with greater insight on how agriculture education has been organized by other countries.

All these activities arranged within the Farm Camp 2021 framework should ready the participants for the new lower secondary curriculum that emphasizes activity and project-based learning in order to skill the youth for the world of work right from schools.

Rationale:

The teachers in our schools need to use activities within the agricultural context as learning aids for effective delivery of the curriculum concepts. This is supported by the fact that one's background, the specific mental state and processes followed with effective instruction which starts from the known to unknown will enhance learning and acquisition of skills. Teaching using the agricultural context in Ugandan schools presents immense opportunities for growth in other sectors like manufacturing, tourism, construction, and trade especially agro-processing as indicated in Uganda Vision 2040.

However, many teachers in the Ugandan schools do not relate what they teach to the home environment or child community background and the children miss out the practical engagements that would make the curriculum more relevant to them. The teaching in our schools today focusses on passing examinations and misses out on development of life skills and individual interests. The problem can probably be traced from teachers in schools lacking or not being well grounded on the necessary skills and competences.

Practical agribusiness engagements while at school either within or without the school boundaries aid the learners to develop production skills and development of critical thinking or problem-solving competencies. This would be enhanced through learner-centred projects involving supervised agricultural experiences (SAEs) within the various class activities. Such activities would be motivational to the students and make learning more meaningful but also become training grounds for entrepreneurship of the teachers. Statistics show that many of the children who enroll at the primary and later to the secondary level do not complete the cycle of education and hence drop-out without any skills that would otherwise support them to earn a living. This could be an indicator that the teaching and learning processes within our schools are not engaging and do not relate to the needs of the children's communities.

It is in this regard that Gayaza High School and the Holistic eLearning Platform(HeLP) in collaboration with other partners are organizing a blended farm camp from the **1st - 5th, November, 2021** that will

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bring together students in schools, teachers both in-service and pre-service, teacher trainers and school leaders, officials from- Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), Ministry of Agriculture, Animal husbandry, Industry and Fisheries(MAAIF),Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development(MGLSD), farmers and Agribusiness sector players. The participants will show case the different initiatives that they have been engaged in, share learning and adopt / replicate models of proven approaches on agribusiness skilling and education within their organisation / institutions.

The participants will have an opportunity to live a life of an entrepreneurial farmer who wakes up and milks the cows, makes yoghurt from their backyard, feeds the chicken, transplants vegetables from the green house to the open gardens and applies slurry from the biogas plant as organic manure, mulches the banana garden, harvests maize to make silage for the animals and collects grass slashed from the compound to make hay which provides an enhanced nutrition programme for the animals on the farm among other activities.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To train the students in schools, teachers both in-service and pre-service and teacher trainers, in scientific approaches to improved Crop and Livestock production and to follow the value chain processes involved.
2. To enhance food security and nutrition in schools and deepen the participation of students and teachers within small holder farms in their communities.
3. To propose recommendations and develop action plans for integrating agribusiness activities within the education curriculum as a strategy towards introducing the teachers and Youth to entrepreneurship.

Budget

In order to implement the summarized activities successfully, we need to raise ***Eighty-One Million four hundred thirty nine thousand shillings only*** (UGX 81,439,000). This money will be raised through sponsorships by Parents, organizations and companies either in cash or kind.

For more Information please contact;

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