

SUSTAINABILITY NEWS

Community Empowerment:



KITCHEN GARDENS ARE NOW SEEN IN MANY HOMES IN MTUTUMA VILLAGE, MALAWI

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MTUTUMA VILLAGE**

By Medson Salim

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In the heart of Mtutuma village in Dedza, something remarkable is happening. Since receiving training from FARM STEW Project, local residents have begun to transform their lives by using simple practical steps of having one garden bed at a time. From compost-making to vegetable gardening, these practical lessons have become game-changers for many families.

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Take Ellen Lawrent, for example—a smallholder farmer whose journey is a shining example of success. She proudly shares how using compost has significantly improved her harvests. “Thanks to Farm Stew, my farming practices have changed, and so has my life,” she says.



FIGURE 2 MEDSON SALIM (PARTICIPANT, SMALLHOLDER FARMER), TOMATO FARMING

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While women form the majority of participants, men have also caught the wave. Inspired by the training, many have joined their wives in the gardens. One proud father, Medson Salimu now thrives in tomato farming, a skill he never imagined mastering. The practice of having kitchen gardens looked very difficult to adopt. The area experiences scarcity of vegetables in most parts of the year. This is now a story of the past as people from other areas come to Mtutuma Village to buy vegetables of different types.



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The adoption of this practice has started to roll over to other households that are not participants of FARM STEW Project in the area. The local leadership in the area has become the ambassador of change because it encourages everyone to learn more from FS Participants. This has created demand on FARM STEW planter for area (Mr. Robert Themuka) as many communities want him to train their communities as well. FARM STEW Project is indeed a game changer.



FARMSTEW BRINGS PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL CHANGES TO NDONGWE 1 COMMUNITY, NTCHEU, MALAWI:

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Ndongwe 1, is a community in T/A Chakhumbira of Ntcheu District of Central Region of Malawi. People in this community depend much on farming as their main source of livelihood. They used to have many challenges in their families and also these challenges affected their lifestyles as most men in this community are much addicted alcohol and smoking. People also got used to harvest their crops and selling them just to have money for the enjoyment and this resulted in high levels of poverty. Even food insecurity surfaced as they could not preserve some food enough to meet household food demands. This made their relationship with their God to be very poor.

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FARMSTEW project came to the area and opened a new chapter in their lives in the year of 2024. Activities in this community started in October after having FARMSTEW Planters Training at Malawi Adventist University. As part of community entry, Mr. Gift Kaselema, the FS planter for the area made the village leaders understand this project and they accepted FARMSTEW project in their area. 56 households volunteered to be part of Project and by November 2024, lessons started in this community.



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Compost manure making was the first lesson because prices of fertilizer had gone very high and many households could not afford to buy. Other lessons included good agricultural practices, making of fixed wood saving cooking stoves, Kitchen local stove, Sanitation topics like importance of tippy taps and rubbish pits. There was great change in their homes as people were busy making their Compost manure piles and applied them to their crops since it was growing season. The Journey of transforming the community started immediately and very much faster as lightning.

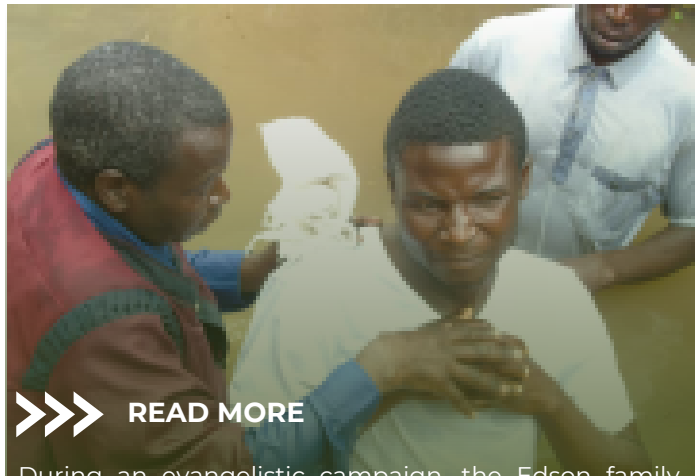
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In April 2025 local leadership requested for an evangelistic campaign for the area whereby the FARMSTEW lessons were to be combined with biblical doctrines. Then a public evangelistic campaign was pegged to run from 20th April to 3rd May 2025. In the midst of the campaign, there were door to door visitations and one of the households visited was that of Mr and Mrs Edson (Nkhoma).

EDSON'S LIFE THROUGH FARMSTEW TRAININGS.

Edson's family happened to be a member of FARMSTEW team for this community. Mr Edson was addicted to smoking habit and to take care of his own family was very difficult. His wife did not allow only her husband to attend the FARMSTEW lessons alone. The lessons done during FARM STEW lessons helped Edson to change and started caring for his family.



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During an evangelistic campaign, the Edson family chose to be baptized and joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Mr. Edson shared that the transformative lessons from FARMSTEW, combined with biblical teachings, inspired their decision to become Adventist members for continued spiritual growth. He emphasized the significance of personal choices, stating, "We have a big responsibility for our choices, and now I understand that God cares about them." Mrs. Edson expressed her joy in their newfound faith, highlighting the importance of rest, particularly in relation to the Sabbath. She noted that her husband now supports her need for rest, fostering peace within their family.



FARMSTEW INTERNATIONAL EMPOWERS COMMUNITIES THROUGH "TRAINING OF TRAINERS" INITIATIVE

The program included interactive workshops

Farmstew International has successfully conducted its latest "Training of Trainers" program, designed to cultivate sustainable agricultural leadership across communities. This comprehensive capacity-building initiative equipped local leaders and educators with practical expertise in sustainable farming methodologies to create lasting impact at the grassroots level.

Sustainability starts from within!

By developing this network of skilled trainers, Farmstew International establishes a multiplier effect that will disseminate sustainable practices throughout entire communities. The initiative directly addresses critical challenges of food security while promoting environmental stewardship and economic resilience.

This investment in human capital represents Farmstew International's commitment to creating self-sustaining communities through knowledge transfer and skill development. The newly certified trainers will now serve as change agents, implementing and teaching sustainable solutions tailored to their local contexts.

THE INTENSIVE PROGRAM FEATURED:

- Hands-on workshops in composite farming systems
- Best practices in hygiene and sanitation
- Innovative water treatment solutions
- Field demonstrations of sustainable agricultural methods



www.edunite2serve.org



info@edunite2serve.org



+265989158325