

# FARMERS' DIALOGUE

## KENYA

### SERVING FARMING COMMUNITIES

Ruth Mukhwana Kidake was born in 1988 into a family of seven in Bungoma Western Kenya. In 1990 she was in primary school when her father died. Her schooling faced challenges as her mother who was a peasant farmer and small-scale business-woman, had difficulty catering for the families needs. Ruth completed her secondary education in 2006 with the help of friends and relatives.



Ruth Mukhwana

Her first job was in the catering department at Mabanga Farmers' Training Centre (FTC) in Bungoma, Kenya where she trained in Food and Nutrition. In 2008 Farmers' Dialogue Kenya



MHAC Awarded Ceremony

hired the Training Centre for an International Conference under the theme; 'Beyond Subsistence Farming'. Biointensive Agriculture (BIA) offered by Manor House Agricultural Centre (MHAC) The presentations consisted of sustainable agriculture farming systems enabling farmers to produce enough for consumption and surplus for sale. She learned how this system produces food and generates income from small pieces of land using cheap local inputs. Ruth wanted

training to help her mother and community members faced with food insecurity to improve food production in their homes. Raising the fees for BIA training was a challenge and she explained her interest in BIA course to a delegate, Jean-Pierre Emeriau from France. Jean-Pierre accepted to assist her by paying the fees.

She began a two-year Diploma course at MHAC in January 2009 and graduated as the best academic student in 2010. The proprietor of MHAC offered her a job on their farm in Kitale where she

worked until June 2013 as Assistant Farm Manager. She then joined Sustainable



A lesson in double digging

Mobilization of Agriculture Resource Technologies (SMART) Initiatives an organization based in West Pokot county inhabited by semi-pastoralist communities located in the Rift valley bordering Uganda, Transzoia (Kitale) and Turkana counties. SMART Initiatives was initiated by a MHAC graduate in 2003 to promote low cost biological based environmental friendly and appropriate technologies for smallholder families specifically grass root women by tackling deforestation, soil erosion, food insecurity, high pest prevalence, biodiversity, water shortage and health for social and economic sustainability. She served as an Extension Officer training Pokot community members on alleviating poverty and hunger through food production and income generation.



Biointensive beds at MHAC

In January, 2015, Ruth was employed at MHAC as a BIA trainer at certificate level instructing farmers and development agents in short courses namely; three months, one month one week and one day. She also serves as the acting Cateress. Her ambition is to change farming communities by training them in safe methods of food production, income generation and biodiversity conservation. Ruth is married.



Initiatives of Change

Farmers' Dialogue is a programme  
of Initiatives of Change

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