
The Impacts Of Bringing Hope To The Family On Small Scale Tomato Production In Butiiti Sub County

Kyenjojo District

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Abstract

The study was conducted to assess the Impacts of BHTF a non-government Organization on small scale tomato production in Kyenjojo district Butiiti Sub county. This is because in Uganda particularly Kyenjojo district Butiiti Sub county BHTF contributes to small scale tomato production which helps to provide house hold incomes, source of food, source of employment and besides little has been known about the Impacts of BHTF that supports small scale tomato production. The study was guided by the following objectives; To determine the agronomic practices used in small scale tomato production, to determine the tomato yields obtained by farmers due to involvement of BHTF in small scale tomato production and to determine the influence of small-scale tomato production on Peoples` income in Butiiti Sub county in selected Parishes of Bwenzi, Isandara and Kaihura. Seventy {70} respondents were selected randomly who included small hold farmers, traders of tomatoes, BHTF Administrators in Agriculture department. Open questionnaires, interviews, guided direct observations were used to collect data. Data was recorded, classified, coded and fed into SPSS & STATA and then presented in form of frequency tables, pie charts, graphs and percentages. From the findings, 8 respondents (11.4%) reported yields between 20 and 25 crates and this range indicated a higher level of tomato productivity compared to the previous categories. Additionally, 9 respondents (12.9%) reported obtaining yields above 25 crates, signifying the highest level of tomato production among the respondents. It is therefore recommended that the Butiiti Horticultural Trust Fund (BHTF) continue to emphasize and support the agronomic practices of irrigation, fertilization, and staking in their interventions related to tomato production. These practices have been acknowledged by the respondents and are essential for improving productivity, ensuring optimal plant health, and maximizing yields in small-scale tomato farming. By promoting the adoption of these agronomic practices, BHTF can provide training, resources, and guidance to farmers to enhance their knowledge and skills in implementing effective irrigation techniques, proper fertilization methods, and appropriate staking systems.

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Background to the Study

Globally; there is a high frequency with which new NGOs develop, and as incorporation statuses vary from country to country, it is difficult to determine the true number of NGOs worldwide. However, a solid rough estimate by UNDP and other agencies in 2007 stated that there were about 10 million NGOs worldwide, with Europe having the most active NGOs. According to the UNDP, the US is the leading country with the most and most effective NGOs in the world, with approximately 1.5 million NGOs, followed by India (Faith, Kalikola, Kazaara et al., 2023).

In Uganda, the growth of the NGO sector goes back to the 1970s and 1980s when many NGOs came to Uganda to fill the gap left by the fall of the government by then. The movement was first started by faith-based organizations, primarily large established churches. The movement was subsequently strengthened by international NGOs, bilateral donors, and more recently by the government itself (Faith, Kalikola, Ariyo et al., 2023). NGOs have been active in Uganda for many decades, previously primarily in the health and education sectors, until recently NGOs are also focusing on aid, environment, agriculture, water and sanitation, among other issues affecting Ugandan communities. From relatively modest numbers before 1986, the sector has since seen phenomenal growth and there are currently about 7,000 NGOs according to the Registration Board of Non-Governmental Organizations under the Ministry of Home Affairs. However, not all are functional and only 66% have been found to be active (Bar, Fafchamps and Owens 2003). Some NGOs are multi-sectoral, i.e. they work in different areas, while other NGOs are mono-sectoral, i.e. they work on a single theme or programme.

Small-scale agriculture (SSA) is a type of agriculture that is practiced on a relatively small plot of land. In SSA, land does not exceed four hectares (Eastwood et al, 2010 appendix table 1). SSA is practiced for material and commercial purposes, but the commercial benefit is secondary to consumption unless the crops grown are typically cash crops (Grace et al., 2023). Small-scale farming is mainly characterized by family and manual work, the use of very simple tools or sometimes even a plough, the use of organic manure, the cultivation of various crops on the plot, the harvest for consumption can only be sold in surplus, the yields per unit of land are generally less, farm animals such as goats, little or no product processing among other characteristics (Gerald et al., 2023). Globally, sub-Saharan African households are dependent on SSA for their livelihoods, and most African agriculture is done on a small scale. As of 2010, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) reported that 5.8% of the total labor force in sub-Saharan Africa is in agriculture, and almost all of the agricultural labor force is employed in SSA production systems compared to large farms (Turyatemba & Turyasingura, 2024). Small-scale tomato production is a type of tomato production that operates on a relatively small plot of land.

According to Dr. Faith Philo Kunihiro the ED (2021) is a BHTF NGO based in Kaihura Mall. It has been in existence for 20 years and works with orphans and vulnerable children in the communities of Kyenjojo district and surrounding districts (Turyatamba & Turyasingura, 2024). The organization has its headquarters in Kyenjojo District at Kaihura Business Centre. BHTF was founded in September 2000 by Faith Philo Kunihiro. Its mission is to provide care and support, restore hope and improve the quality of life of families and communities affected by HIV/AIDS, poverty and disaster with a vision of changing families from dependency to self-sufficiency through a holistic approach (Inuwa et al. ., 2017). The arrival of BHTF in tomato production has led to an increase in tomato production as BHTF has introduced new and improved tomato varieties, beefsteak tomatoes weighing around 500g, cherry tomatoes among others, which has helped to increase tomato production among small scale tomato farmers. in the area (Turyatamba et al., 2022). BHTF has also equipped farmers with proper agronomic practices such as drought irrigation through the New Hope Vocational Centre, which has encouraged smallholder tomato farmers to grow tomatoes throughout the year.

Problem Statement

According to the African Journal of food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development Volume 21 No. 2 (March 2021) tomato (*Solanum esculentum*.L) is among the most widely grown vegetables worldwide with an estimated annual production of 182 million tons from 4.8 million hectares. The crop ranks sixth among the most consumed crops worldwide (Emmanuel et al., 2023). Africa alone produces 21 million tons from 1.3 million hectares. In East Africa, 1.9 million tons of tomatoes are produced annually, with Tanzania and Kenya as the main producers, followed by Uganda. In Uganda, 6,671 hectares produce 40,124 tons of tomatoes (Allan et al., 2023). The crop is mainly grown by small farmers who sell the fresh fruit at regional and domestic markets in their localities to generate income. It is also a reliable source of food security and employment for on and off farms. As such, it is considered a cash crop for rural and suburban farmers (Grace et al., 2023). In Uganda, tomatoes are consumed by about 3 million households in most meals due to their nutritional value. It can be processed and combined in many different dishes and consumed in different ways such as canned paste, fresh vegetables, tomato juice, sauce or soup (Grace et al., 2023). Tomato is known for its nutritional value; it is rich in vitamin C and contains lycopene, a very important antioxidant that prevents cancer. More than 70% of the population in Kyenjojo District, Butiiti District use tomatoes as a spice in the food they cook and eat. Crop cultivation is the main income generating activity in the district and in Butiiti district, BHTF helps individuals, groups and smallholder farmers by providing improved tomato yields, inputs such as fertilizers, tools and equipment, product marketing, herbicides and many others (Sophie & Crispus, 2024). However, with the above efforts, the people of Butiiti Sub county Kyenjojo today have not been able to achieve a medium income through tomato production and besides, little was known about the impacts of BHTF that supports small scale tomato production in Butiiti. Kyenjojo Subdistrict District. The study was therefore aimed at assessing the impacts of BHTF on small-scale tomato production in Butiiti Sub County Kyenjojo (Musimenta et al., 2017).

Specific Objectives of the study

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1. To determine the agronomic practices used in small scale tomato production in Butiiti Sub county Kyenjojo district.
2. To determine the tomato yields got by small scale tomato farmers due to the intervention of BHTF in small scale tomato production in Butiiti Sub county Kyenjojo district.
3. To determine the influence of small scale tomato production on peoples' income in Butiiti Sub county Kyenjojo district.

Methodology

The research methods used in this study aimed to collect comprehensive data on Butiiti Horticultural Trust Fund (BHTF) activities in Butiiti Sub County, focusing on parishes (Jallow et al., 2021). The study focused on three main groups: smallholder farmers, staff working with the BHTF agriculture department and traders involved in transactions with smallholder farmers (Olanrewaju & Abiodun, 2021). The research used a variety of data collection methods, including questionnaires, interviews, direct observation, and recorded information. For data collection through questionnaires, the research team designed objective and structured questions, printed them in English and distributed them to the target respondents. The questionnaires were completed by the respondents in the absence of the researcher and later delivered to the researcher for analysis. The aim of this method was to collect quantitative data and allow comparison and analysis of responses (Jallow et al., 2022). In addition to questionnaires, interviews were conducted with individual farmers or groups of farmers to obtain qualitative data. Responses from these interviews were recorded for further analysis. The research team also conducted interviews with administrators from the BHTF agriculture department to gain insight into their perspectives and experiences. In some cases, enumerators were present during the interviews to facilitate translation into the respondents' mother tongue (Nafiu, 2012).

Direct observation was used as a method to obtain first-hand information. The researcher, accompanied by stakeholders involved in tomato production, made physical visits to various locations. Armed with a laptop or camera, the researcher documented existing conditions related to small-scale tomato production, such as warehouses and processing plants. Some of these facilities had inscriptions or labels indicating the sources of funds (Nafiu & Ph, 2012). The goal of this method was to provide visual evidence and a better understanding of the real situation on the ground. Recorded information played a vital role in the research. The research team collected data from existing written records, including textbooks, journals, reports, presentations, journals, and newspapers (Nafiu et al., 2012). Relevant information on tomato production was obtained from the records of the relevant departments. This method enabled a comprehensive overview of historical data and previous research findings. To ensure the validity of the research methods, questionnaires were carefully designed to address the research topic. Questions were tailored to specific groups of respondents, allowing the researcher to gather targeted information (Anwar et al., 2022). The use of questionnaires also made it easier to compare responses, resulting in more reliable data. The interviews served as

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a means of obtaining first-hand information from individual and farmer groups, allowing the researcher to explore different perspectives and mutual responses.

In terms of reliability, the researcher used a consistent set of questions across different categories of respondents. The aim of this approach was to ensure that similar data could be obtained consistently, allowing reliable comparisons and analysis (Olanrewaju et al., 2021). Data analysis procedures included summarizing the collected data using tables and simple reports. The use of statistical software such as SPSS and Stata can enhance data analysis capabilities and provide more advanced statistical techniques and visualizations (Nelson et al., 2022). These software tools allow researchers to perform descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and generate graphical representations of data. The use of SPSS and Stata can facilitate a more comprehensive and detailed analysis of the collected data, allowing deeper insight into research findings.

Ethical considerations were a fundamental aspect of the research. Confidentiality was maintained to ensure that the information provided by the respondents remained confidential and accessible only to the researcher. Prior informed consent was obtained from respondents before their data was collected. The researcher also acknowledged and mentioned all individuals or organizations involved in the research process to promote transparency and avoid plagiarism. Precautions were taken to ensure that the questions asked did not cause any harm to the respondents (Nafiu et al., 2013). However, it is important to note certain limitations of the study. Some small-scale tomato growers may have been hesitant to disclose accurate information about their income from tomato production, which may have affected the reliability of the data. In addition, the presence of gardens in hard-to-reach areas due to the poor road network presented challenges for data collection, potentially limiting the study's comprehensive coverage.

RESULTS

What are the agronomic practices used in tomato production

Respondents dealing in small scale tomato production gave the following information about the agronomic practice they use due to the intervention of BHTF as simplified in the table below.

Agronomic Practice	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Irrigation	15	21.4	21.4	21.4
Fertilization	30	42.9	42.9	64.3
Staking	25	35.7	35.7	100.0
Total	70	100.0	100.0	

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Fertilization	30	42.9	42.9	64.3
Staking	25	35.7	35.7	100.0
Total	70	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data 2023

The table presents data on the agronomic practices used in small-scale tomato production as reported by respondents who have benefited from the intervention of the Butiiti Horticultural Trust Fund (BHTF). The data was collected from a total of 70 respondents, and the table provides information on the frequency and percentage of each agronomic practice mentioned.

According to the table, the respondents identified three main agronomic practices used in tomato production: irrigation, fertilization, and staking. Among the respondents, 15 individuals (21.4%) reported using irrigation as a practice in their tomato production. This indicates that a significant portion of the respondents recognized the importance of providing water to their tomato plants through irrigation methods.

Regarding fertilization, 30 respondents (42.9%) mentioned this agronomic practice in their tomato production. Fertilization plays a vital role in providing essential nutrients to the tomato plants, thereby enhancing their growth, development, and overall yield. The high percentage of respondents practicing fertilization highlights the recognition of the importance of soil fertility management in small-scale tomato production.

Staking was another common agronomic practice reported by the respondents, with 25 individuals (35.7%) mentioning it. Staking involves providing support structures, such as stakes or trellises, to the tomato plants to promote upright growth and prevent them from sprawling on the ground. This practice aids in optimizing sunlight exposure, airflow, and disease management. The significant percentage of respondents employing staking indicates its widespread adoption and recognition of its benefits in small-scale tomato production. It is therefore recommended that the Butiiti Horticultural Trust Fund (BHTF) continue to emphasize and support the agronomic practices of irrigation, fertilization, and staking in their interventions related to tomato production. These practices

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have been acknowledged by the respondents and are essential for improving productivity, ensuring optimal plant health, and maximizing yields in small-scale tomato farming.

By promoting the adoption of these agronomic practices, BHTF can provide training, resources, and guidance to farmers to enhance their knowledge and skills in implementing effective irrigation techniques, proper fertilization methods, and appropriate staking systems. This support can contribute to sustainable and profitable tomato production, benefiting the smallholder farmers in the Butiiti Sub County.

Tomato yields got by tomato farmers

The study involved a number of people who were engaged in farming but with specific period of time spent in there. The table 2 below explains it clearly

Number of crates	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative frequency
Less than 10 crates	38	54.3	54.3	54.3
10-15	9	12.9	12.9	67.1
15-20	6	8.6	8.6	75.7
20-25	8	11.4	11.4	87.1
Above 25	9	12.9	12.9	100
Total	70	100	100	

Source: Field Data 2023

The table provides information on the tomato yields obtained by tomato farmers who participated in the study. The respondents were individuals involved in farming, and the table presents data on the frequency and percentage of tomato yield ranges reported by these farmers.

According to the table, the respondents reported varying levels of tomato yields, which were categorized into different ranges. The majority of the farmers, 38 individuals (54.3%), reported obtaining less than 10 crates of tomatoes. This indicates that a significant portion of the farmers had relatively low tomato yields, potentially indicating challenges or limitations in their farming practices or external factors affecting productivity.

In the next yield range, 9 respondents (12.9%) reported obtaining yields between 10 and 15 crates. This suggests that a smaller proportion of farmers achieved slightly higher tomato yields within this range. Similarly, 6 respondents (8.6%) reported yields ranging from 15 to 20 crates, indicating a further increase in tomato production for a select group of farmers.

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The data also shows that 8 respondents (11.4%) reported yields between 20 and 25 crates. This range indicates a higher level of tomato productivity compared to the previous categories. Additionally, 9 respondents (12.9%) reported obtaining yields above 25 crates, signifying the highest level of tomato production among the respondents. It is therefore recommended that interventions and support systems be put in place to improve tomato yields for the majority of farmers who reported obtaining less than 10 crates. These farmers may benefit from training programs and technical assistance provided by agricultural extension services or organizations like the Butiiti Horticultural Trust Fund (BHTF). Such interventions can focus on enhancing farming practices, including improved soil fertility management, pest and disease control, irrigation techniques, and post-harvest handling methods.

For the farmers who achieved relatively higher yields within the 10-15, 15-20, 20-25, and above 25 crate ranges, it is recommended to identify the factors contributing to their success. These farmers can serve as examples and sources of inspiration for others, and their experiences and practices can be shared through knowledge-sharing platforms, farmer-to-farmer exchanges, or demonstration plots.

Table 3: Influence of tomato production on farmers' incomes

Improvement in income attained		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	54	77.1	77.1	77.1
	No	16	22.9	22.9	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data 2023

The table provides insights into the influence of tomato production on farmers' incomes, based on data collected from the study. It presents information on the frequency and percentage of respondents who reported an improvement in their income as a result of tomato production.

According to the table, out of the total 70 respondents, 54 individuals (77.1%) reported experiencing an improvement in their income due to tomato production. This indicates that a significant majority of the farmers observed a positive impact on their financial situation through their involvement in tomato farming. These farmers

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have likely benefited from increased sales and profits generated from their tomato produce, contributing to their overall income growth.

On the other hand, 16 respondents (22.9%) reported no improvement in their income resulting from tomato production. This suggests that a smaller proportion of farmers did not experience a significant positive change in their financial situation despite their involvement in tomato farming. The reasons behind this lack of improvement could vary and may be influenced by factors such as market challenges, production constraints, or inefficiencies in their farming practices. Based on the data presented in the table, it is recommended to further investigate the reasons behind the lack of income improvement for the respondents who reported "No." Understanding the specific challenges they faced can help identify targeted interventions to address these issues and support their income growth. This can involve providing additional training and capacity-building programs to enhance their farming skills, market access, or financial management practices. For the significant majority of respondents who reported an improvement in their income, it is crucial to sustain and build upon this positive trend. Organizations like the Butiiti Horticultural Trust Fund (BHTF) can play a vital role in supporting these farmers by providing continued assistance and resources. This can include access to market information, training on value addition and post-harvest handling techniques, financial literacy programs, and support for diversification and market linkages.

Additionally, it is essential to promote knowledge-sharing platforms and networks among the farmers who have experienced income improvement. Through farmer-to-farmer exchanges, mentoring programs, or cooperative initiatives, successful farmers can share their experiences, best practices, and lessons learned with their peers. This can create a supportive community that fosters innovation, collaboration, and continuous improvement in tomato production and income generation.

Furthermore, monitoring and evaluation systems should be put in place to track the long-term impact of tomato production on farmers' incomes. Regular assessments can help measure the sustainability and scalability of income improvement initiatives and guide future interventions. By analyzing the data and feedback from the farmers, organizations like BHTF can refine their strategies and adapt their support programs to maximize the positive influence of tomato production on farmers' incomes.

Conclusions

In conclusion therefore, majority of the respondents were producing tomatoes on a small scale and BHTF has had a great impact in the production levels of these farmers.

It can therefore be concluded that BHTF has led to the improvement in tomato production in Butiiti Sub county Kyenjojo district.

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Recommendations

I recommend that further research should be carried out to about the market sources for the tomatoes produced in the Sub county. This will enable to reduces loss incurred by the farmers as a result of tomatoes going bad due to inadequate market.

I recommend that BHTF should provide more extension services to the farmers so as to increase the yields attained by the farmers.

I recommend that BHTF should intervene and ensure accessibility to irrigation water by most farmers through facilitating piped water to the tomato farmers.

Stake holders from different corners across the world including the government and non-governmental organizations should intervene to help farmers improve on their agricultural productivity through providing better breeds of seeds to Farmers

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