



# QSA NEWSLETTER

**Issue one. January 2014**

**Welcome** to the new QSA Newsletter where you will meet new people, learn about our projects and join us in helping to change lives. We encourage you to let us know your thoughts and get involved. This month we visit the people and projects of Uganda, Africa. We hope you enjoy reading it. If however you would prefer not to receive this newsletter again, please contact us and we will arrange for your details to be removed from the mailing list.

## People

### Meet... Josephine Kizza

Josephine and John Kizza founded St Jude Family Services. Josephine is trained in Organic Agriculture and has a concern to assist her fellow Ugandans to improve subsistence agriculture using sustainable organic methods.

*Pictured left: Josephine Kizza (far left) & project participants.*



## Places

### Where we work...

**Masaka** is a town in Central Uganda, lying west of Lake Victoria. It is the chief town of Masaka District. Masaka District is situated about 37 kms away from the equator towards the south with an average altitude of 1150m above sea level. Masaka's estimated population in 2011 was 74,100.



## Projects

### About...

**St Jude Family Services** is a Ugandan NGO located just outside of Masaka in South West Uganda. It started out as a small farm with educational demonstration gardens and small-scale animal projects helpful for Uganda farmers to replicate, and was first linked to QSA in 1996. It has grown to become a highly regarded training centre that specialises in providing training courses to small holder farmers and disadvantaged groups and constantly strives to further empower, strengthen, develop and integrate organic farming techniques that are responsive to local conditions, resources and capacities. It is now recognised as a leading training centre in Uganda and regionally.

In 2012-2013 QSA supported St Jude Family Services to work with four new women's groups of 35 people each (140 women) in Rakai and Lwengo Districts. Women were invited to attend an intensive two week residential training course at St Jude. They worked on the development of the small gardens around their homes planting at least 100 cuttings of improved cassava, half an acre of maize, and potatoes and a variety of vegetables in addition to improving the quality of their banana crops – the staple crop. They also began to make compost and to use mulch and contour bands, and to improve their water harvesting systems, and slowly began to build up confidence in their ability to make these changes as they began to see the difference it was starting to make on their livelihoods.

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## St Jude Project contd/

Within six months of starting the program the women started to rapidly progress, making changes and developing ideas and actions. Individually and in groups the women started to sell produce at local markets and to plan for larger scale entrepreneurial activities. Within the year many of the women had become 'teachers', sharing their knowledge with neighbours and family and at times surprising the St Jude trainers with indigenous knowledge that was unknown to the trainers, or creatively building on techniques so as to make them even more appropriate to their environment. Family units were strengthened with husbands and wives working together to develop their livelihoods, and surplus income used to send children to school. While the recent prolonged drought has tested the group the combination of new practices that preserve water in the soil, use of water pits, and the introduction of drought resistant plant species amongst other practices is seeing this group through these difficult times. The St Jude program has helped integrate the most vulnerable into their communities, to have a voice, and enabled them to take a vibrant and active role building their resilience and livelihoods for themselves, their families and their communities.

## Events

### QSA Study Tour to Uganda

**When:** 6 - 21 September 2014

**Why:** This two week study tour is designed to provide participants with an introduction to the local communities QSA has engaged with for many years. It will give QSA's project partners the opportunity to show case their work and will provide tour participants the chance to learn about development issues in Uganda through the eyes of our project partners and the local communities they work with.

**Where:** Arrive Kampala. Two days in Kampala – city tour and sites and a day trip to the Uganda Wildlife Education Centre/Ngamba Island Chimpanzee Sanctuary. Visit St Jude Family Projects for four days. Attend one day training in integrated organic farming. Visit Lake Mburo National Park for two days of safari and activities. Visit with Wakiso District Union of Persons with Disability (WADUP), learn about their work and the challenges and issues people with disability face in their daily lives in rural Uganda. Final day in Kampala visiting Jinja, the source of the Nile River and craft market stop.

**Contact:** Kate Bandler at QSA on (02) 9698 9103 or [kate@qsa.org.au](mailto:kate@qsa.org.au) by the end of March, 2014.



## Fact File

What is...?

Integrated Organic Farming. (*short description of terminology used in a project related to the above.*)

### Donate

If you wish to **donate** towards a specific project or to our general fund to allow us to continue our work please see our website for details. [www.qsa.org.au](http://www.qsa.org.au)

**Living Gifts** support the work of QSA. By giving a **Living Gift** to a friend or colleague you are helping our partners in India, Cambodia, Uganda, Timor-Leste, Zimbabwe or Indigenous Australia to improve access to services and increase knowledge, skills and community expertise.



QSA is a member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID), and is a signatory to the ACFID Code of conduct. See [www.acfid.asn.au](http://www.acfid.asn.au) for details

119 Devonshire St Surry Hills, NSW 2010 Australia  
Email: [administration@qsa.org.au](mailto:administration@qsa.org.au) [www.qsa.org.au](http://www.qsa.org.au)  
Phone +61 2 9698 9103 Fax +61 2 9225 9241

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