



# Garden@frica

## ANNUAL REPORT 2008/9

The past year has seen GardenAfrica investing time in research & development of new programming ideas, and protracted application processes bearing fruit. In project terms, we have tightened our focus to ensure that the projects to which we are dedicated are able to flourish with increased capacity to deliver training & support to the highest possible standard. We will continue to innovate, monitor & document our work in the field to ensure that these initiatives respond to ever shifting environments, providing the best possible opportunities for our partner organisations and beneficiaries.

## PROJECTS

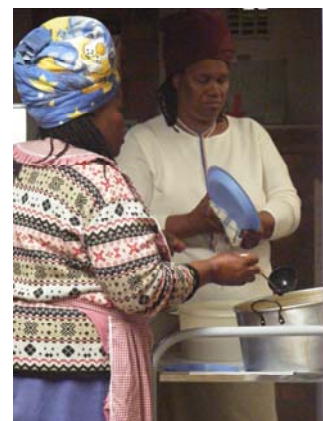
### **Africulture Project (Foundation Phase)**

2008/9 marks the final year of this project's foundation phase, delivered in collaboration with local partner Umthathi, and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. GardenAfrica has continued to receive funding from the Defra's Darwin Initiative. A six month extension was requested and agreed to in January by the Darwin Initiative, providing us with additional time, and a carry-over of funds, to finalise some of the contributing activities – which will be fully realised by September 2009. These will therefore be reported on during the 2009/10 report.



The Africulture Project was initiated to address the loss of biodiversity within the Eastern Cape Province (Eastern Half of the Albany Centre of Floristic Endemism), focussing on conserving indigenous medicinal plant species. Many species are currently harvested illegally from the wild and are threatened by over-exploitation. Land use patterns have changed over the past decade in the Eastern Cape, with increasing areas devoted to game farming or private nature reserves stocking dangerous animals. This trend reduces access to many wild plant populations, increasing pressure on those populations which remain accessible. Indigenous medicinal plants are vital to traditional health care, with more than 80% of South Africans relying primarily on the informal sector for health provision. Other species are also under threat due to horticultural demand or their value to the international market. By promoting alternative rural livelihoods based on the sustainable cultivation and utilisation of indigenous plant species, it is intended that biodiversity conservation will be positively effected. A core assumption hinges on the Project's successful facilitation of a shift from wild harvested to cultivated materials, and therefore forms part of planned outputs and related activities with traditional healthcare practitioners (THPs) and harvesters - often the poorest of women, forced to harvest over ever greater distances to source increasingly rare plant materials.

This year has seen the Makana THP Association being invited to establish its medicinal plant and vegetable garden at Settlers Day Hospital, where the THPs also provide a soup kitchen for vulnerable patients. This indicates a significant shift in position between allopathic and traditional health professionals, and recognition of the need to understand each others' practices in order to deliver a more holistic approach to health provision.





Despite the considerable time taken to apply for an EU grant, through the local implementing agency, and this having been agreed and signed in December 2007, it was not possible to take the process further, due to changing goal posts at local level. This has been disappointing for GA and Umthathi, given the cost to both organisations in pursuing this.

The remainder of Defra funds, and those raised by Umthathi from within South Africa, have contributed to the employment of project manager Michelle Griffith, with a renewed emphasis and drive towards restoration ecology. During this time, it has also been possible to undertake wild harvesting trips with THPs from Makana Association, increasing the projects collection of indigenous plants to be protected and made available to the trade. There are now 49 plants on this list, with many now being cultivated at the Africulture site.

Advocacy sessions continue with existing and some new, THP Associations in the target area. These include legislation aimed at conserving biodiversity in line with South Africa's national strategy, and THP's alignment with the Dept of Health under the THP Act (2004). Workshops on safe-use and HIV have proved extremely popular with THPs who have been keen to ensure the safety of their clients in the face of emerging information on the anti-retroviral treatments being prescribed.



This year has also seen the Africulture project extended to Umthathi's schools programme – increasing awareness about the importance of bio-cultural diversity conservation – beginning with 40 schools.

During this period, GardenAfrica has worked with Umthathi to develop other funding streams to take the Project beyond the foundation phase. Umthathi has since negotiated funding from the Ackerman Foundation to support this project, providing the project with an element of security for the coming 2 years. Over the six month extension, Kew will be in a position to transfer skills to Umthathi on making plant extracts. Once these are complete, they will be sent to the Kew for chemical fingerprinting to ensure that those plants being propagated on site are of comparable quality to those which have been wild harvested (quality control). This will confirm the validity of the project's approach – which aims to facilitate a behavioural shift away from the use of wild-harvested plant populations for wider impact on biodiversity conservation.

## Food Security in a Changing Environment. Hhohho – Swaziland EU funded roll-out



This year saw the successful completion of this project's pilot phase, with a new training methodology and extension system applied to 2 rural communities in Swaziland, facilitated by our local implementing partners, Vusumnotfo and the Moya Centre. During this time we worked to develop an application for EU funding to roll this project out to a further 6 communities (2009-12). We have been extremely grateful to a number of trusts and foundations for facilitating this foundation phase, including the Le Roux Trust, Erach & Roshan Sadri Foundation, the Allan & Nesta Ferguson Charitable Trust, the Rowan Charitable Trust, the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust and Jenny River. The success of this pilot, and the subsequent application to the EU means that this project will continue to support and enhance the sustainable management of natural resources to boost the cultivation of food, and enable the establishment of plant-based livelihoods to combat



extreme poverty and drought in Hhohho, northern Swaziland. We will select and train another 50 rural people to develop and manage local resource gardens across the district. From these gardens they will support and train others to build health and security in a rapidly changing environment.

Having undertaken training with the two local implementing partners during the foundation phase, during the coming EU phase, GA takes on the partnership role of monitoring technical capacity development of the local team – identifying and supporting components which build on the technical training capacity of both organisations to better enable them to undertake their commitments under the stated project objectives. The aim of technical support in this context covers four primary areas – these being:



- Site development – in line with low external input principals and sustainable resource-use practices
- Refined foundation training modules
- Appropriate in-service training for implementing team
- Database development to capture & monitor progress

At the time of writing, this phase has only just commenced, and is to be managed by Vusumnotfo. The EU funding (€250,922) represents funding in-kind to GardenAfrica, and will continue to provide support to the local team. Under this agreement, GardenAfrica is tasked with raising 10% as fund matching (totalling €27,880) for expenditure over the coming 3 years. A funding appeal has been launched, and will be reported on in the next annual report.

## Kalahari Garden Project, Namibia



This year GardenAfrica has forged a relationship with the Global Diversity Foundation (and the Eden Project) to support the latter stages of the Kalahari Garden Project. This initiative aims to provide support for displaced San communities, providing them with skills and equipment to support their nutritional needs, while documenting and conserving vital information on bio-cultural diversity for future generations.

The project was designed by GDF to support the San people in the Aminuis Corridor, who had previously hunted and gathered over thousands of years, before being forced to settle. Without any knowledge of cultivation, extreme poverty and poor health amongst the indigenous population represented a very real challenge to the future of this people. The project is working with schools and communities to assist them in the task of feeding themselves and their children, and will, in the coming year, pilot indigenous vegetation gardens - researching and putting into cultivation species which are more culturally and ecologically appropriate. These 'gardens' will therefore require less energy and water (ideal for OVCs and PLWHIV), with the intention of sustaining the impoverished population. As a result of training, there are currently 24 vegetable gardens spread across 5 villages.



GardenAfrica was extremely grateful to the Rufford Maurice Laing Foundation for their funding of this project towards which GardenAfrica is supporting:

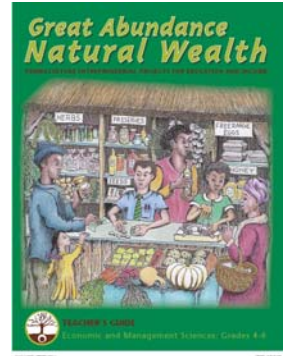
- the establishment of 20 further nutritional gardens,
- the completion of ethno-botanical research & documentation of San plant-lore, and
- the capacity development of the local partner (Komeho) and project staff to promote the wider integration of sustainable land and resource-use principles to develop adaptation strategies.

We look forward to reporting on the outcome of these activities in the next annual report.

## Developing Practical Training Resources

### SEED – Cape Town

GardenAfrica has supported the development of new schools materials by SEED (Schools Environmental Education & Development) which has extended its schools programmes from its base in the Cape Flats, to Gauteng and KwaZulu Natal. Entitled 'Great Abundance, Natural Wealth' the resource is intended to build on existing work with schools to teach intermediate phase *Economic & Management Sciences* – taking teachers through the research, development and implementation of a garden-based entrepreneurial project. SEED is also using this resource as the basis of its successful 'Green Business Programme' towards its goal of supporting the establishment of sustainable schools.



## Research & Development

### Zimbabwe

GardenAfrica is committed to enhancing the existing capacity of local organisations which struggle to provide vital services in health, education and agricultural extension, in the absence of any coherent formal state provision.

October 2008 saw GardenAfrica pay its first visit to Zimbabwe to discuss possible partnerships with both Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre and SCOPE (Schools & Colleges Permaculture). In consultation with these organisations, GardenAfrica has identified the need to promote improved smallholder productivity and trade, education and nutritional health.

This was followed by another visit in March 09 to plan a joint implementation strategy (with ZOPPA – Zimbabwe Organic Producers & Promoters Assoc) to develop a programme to promote organic conservation farming with smallholders to extend adaptive smallholder farming practices to enhance resource and food security through the establishment of organic producer and trading networks in Zimbabwe.

This project is being designed to work with producers and partners to:

- Adopt natural, high-yielding practices for local food & resource security
- Support the establishment of a network of organic producer associations
- Facilitate entry to organic markets
- Inform agricultural and trade policy

The development of applications is now underway, with a detailed strategic planning and staff consultation visit planned for October 2009.

## Administration

We are extremely grateful to the Talacre Beach Group, whose staff fundraising activities have supported our core costs. GardenAfrica continues to operate with a small staff, and a dedicated team of volunteers and expert advisors in order to commit the vast majority of funds raised to generating and supporting innovative projects in the field. In 2008/9 our management & admin costs totalled 3% of expenditure.

GardenAfrica remains committed to its goal of achieving best practice in its work, and continues to review its internal practices in line with growth. Independent project reviews continue to involve our in-country partners, and evaluations are closely analysed with a view to disseminating research material generated by our training models.

On behalf of all at GardenAfrica, our partners, and beneficiaries we would like to extend our grateful thanks to all those who have supported us over the past year.

Georgina McAllister  
Chair of Trustees  
March 2009