Notes: “Urban Agriculture Forum”
SITE VISIT AND DISCUSSION #4 AT
EDEN KIDS FOUNDATION TRUST & YOUTH FOR CHRIST, THE GARDEN OF EDEN

Date: Wednesday 9th April 2014 at 09:00 – 11:00, venue: Masukwana (Jika Joe) Informal Settlement

1. Welcome – Rutendo Zendah

2. Update-Pietermaritzburg Child Welfare Soup/Garden Project

- Mr. Stembiso Khumalo reported that the 100 bags of compost and 2 trays of cabbage and spinach seedlings donated by Farmyard Organics and Sunshine Seedlings during site visit # 3 have been utilized in the garden.

- PMB Child Welfare has drawn up a project proposal which involves community and child participation. The children who come for the soup kitchen can join the garden project voluntarily and permission will be sought from their parents.

- The garden is doing well with the gardener working onsite three days a week.

- On the 23rd of June 2014, Mr. Mabhida from the Department of Agriculture will be facilitating a training session on Agriculture and Community gardening for the children at Mayibuye Centre and Urban Agric Forum members are all invited to attend.
3. Eden Kids’ Trust Foundation and Youth for Christ-Background and Garden of Eden Project

Pastor Joel Ruttenberg giving a background presentation on The Garden of Eden

- Pastor Joel Ruttenberg formed Eden Kids foundation in 2012 with a goal of reducing dependency in the community.

- In partnership with Youth for Christ, other donors and volunteers, the Garden of Eden was firstly established working with adults in the community but after showing little commitment and interest the project was extended to young children in the community. The children in the project range from 5 to 16 years of age with the youngest member in Grade R.

- With a Christian foundation, Pastor Joel has used parables such as the “Parable of the Sower”, to teach the children about farming and growing their own food.

- Nhlakanipho Gazu from YFC keeps the garden going; working as Project Facilitator he has established relationships with the children ensuring that there is child participation in all activities.

- The project is more than a feeding scheme, but a learning stage where children from the community find purpose and are offered skills (life-skills centre). From Monday to Thursday the center offers Life Skills and Homework sessions in the afternoon.

- Adults in the community have seen what the children are achieving and are impressed by the project, and with minimal security around the garden there has been no theft.

- With no formal permission to be on a site they share with a community crèche and limited resources such as electricity and running water the project has faced many challenges and Eden Kids Foundation still strives to buy a building to develop in future.
4. Garden Tour

The project runs on 5 Commandments clearly painted and put up by the children on the Garden fence:

1. No to Smoking
2. Yes to School
3. No to Alcohol
4. Yes to Reading
5. No to Drugs

The garden is made up of 94 door sized gardens, an Outreach garden, Play center and a Compost Quantum where all excess material is thrown in to make compost.

The concept of the Compost Quantum is to teach children not to throw out litter in moving taxis but to keep the environment clean and learn to recycle. The children were involved in designing and painting the majestic Quantum.
• The children choose their own garden space which is clearly marked out and the Play center is situated at the back of the garden where the children can play after working in their gardens, rewarding hard work and also making the project fun and interesting for them.

• Other agricultural activities in the project include recycling and Vermicomposting.

![Forum members in The Garden of Eden](image)

• The children identify households in need in the community and harvest vegetables from the Outreach garden and present them to the families.

• The children get to take home the vegetables grown in their individual gardens.

5. **Celebration and Group Discussion**

• Don and Pasty Blacklaw of Wizzard Worms celebrated their 50\textsuperscript{th} Wedding Anniversary. The Forum wishes them more years of love.

![Mr. Zane Mchunu presenting Don Blacklaw a card for their 50\textsuperscript{th} Wedding anniversary](image)
Group discussions on ideas for the next Urban Agriculture Workshop

- After 3 site visits, the Forum agrees that the next meeting be a workshop.

- The Forum needs to create partnerships with academic institutions such as, The School of Agriculture, Earth and Environmental Sciences and The African Centre for Food Security-UKZN in promoting research and training of youth in Urban Agriculture.

- Links with commercial farmers should be developed in order to establish urban agriculture as business entity with structured business models.

- Promote food sovereignty and local food production, food security and family farming

- Defining Urban Agriculture in the face on infrastructure development- Outline differences in Urban, Peri-urban and Rural Farming

- The workshop should be used as a platform to network, promote businesses, trade, and marketing of produce, case studies as well as exploring success and challenges in urban agriculture.

- Use more visual aids and demonstrations to showcase the different models of Urban Agriculture

6. Upcoming Events

- 13th April 2014 - Garden of Eden Open Day. 09:00hrs to 11:00hrs at Masukwana (Jika-Joe) Informal Settlement

- 23rd May 2014 - Child Training for Soup Kitchen Garden Project at Mayibuye Center, Dambuza

7. Date and venue of next meeting

- Workshop Venue and date will be advised by MIDI (Possible dates 17th, 18th, 19th or 20th June)