

This leaflet shows how the provision of livestock and training in natural organic farming practices is helping farmers work their way out of poverty for good.



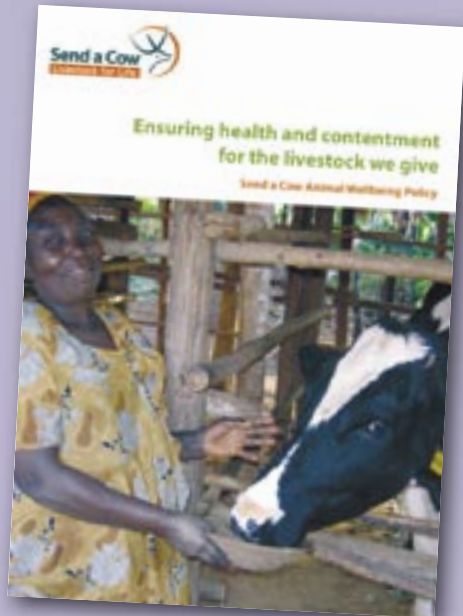
Animal wellbeing

Virtually all the animals Send a Cow gives are “zero grazed”: food is brought to them in their shelters, and they do not roam at will. This system should not be confused with western intensive, or “battery,” farming methods. Send a Cow animals live in roomy shelters, with plenty of space to move around. They are kept clean and comfortable and are fed a natural balanced diet of grass, vegetables and cereals.

Providing good care for livestock is integral to Send a Cow’s approach. We always emphasise the need to maintain the health and contentment of the livestock we give - carefully monitoring farmers to ensure that their animals remain well, and humanely cared for.

After all, their animal’s health directly affects the level of benefits that it can provide them.

For a copy of our animal wellbeing policy please contact us on 01225 874222.



7. Continuing the support

People who receive Send a Cow livestock are not left to cope alone with their gift. Their group is there, offering encouragement, and Send a Cow provides continuing support through a network of extension workers. In particular, we help to provide low-cost veterinary services.

The support we provide ensures that Send a Cow farmers truly benefit from their livestock – rather than the animal becoming a burden.



“So many other charities just give and then go. Send a Cow provides the continuing support it knows these children need.”

Eustache Rasagara is one of Send a Cow’s extension workers in Rwanda. He is a trained veterinarian, and former government animal husbandry officer, working with three self-help groups set up by genocide orphans with Send a Cow’s support, as well as with other livestock recipients.

8. A gift that goes on multiplying

As well as providing practical, effective help directly to hundreds of impoverished families, Send a Cow reaches even more families indirectly through our “pass-on” system.

Every recipient guarantees to pass on what they received to another impoverished family who has already received training. This may be their animal’s first female offspring, a beehive or some apple tree seedlings. Whatever the gift, the family receiving will do the same in their turn. So Send a Cow’s original gift goes on multiplying indefinitely. And people who could once only receive can enjoy satisfaction and pride in becoming givers.



Other gifts

In our efforts to find effective ways of matching our help to people’s personal circumstances and the environment in which they live, Send a Cow aims always to give the gifts that best meet the needs of a family trying to work its way out of poverty. In addition to cows, Send a Cow now provides oxen, goats, sheep, rabbits, beehives, fruit trees and even cane rats!

If you would like to find out more about Send a Cow or any other aspects of our work, contact us or visit our website (*see below*).

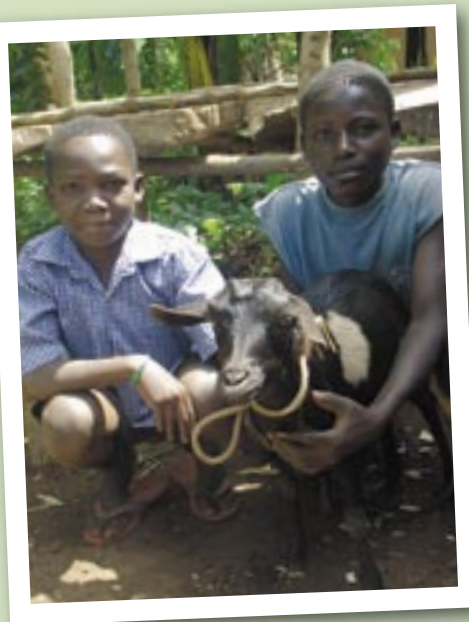


1. The challenge

Send a Cow currently works in ten of the poorest countries in Africa: Mozambique, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Lesotho, Zambia, Tanzania, Cameroon and Ghana.

70% of the population of Africa are subsistence farmers, dependent on what they can grow from their land for survival. For centuries they successfully farmed this land. However, factors such as war, disease, climate change and population growth are making this increasingly difficult.

Plots are getting smaller – most farmers owning just half an acre to three acres of land – and traditional techniques are no longer adequate in areas where soils have deteriorated. Furthermore, parents often die before they have passed on their age-old knowledge to their children. AIDs, in particular, is killing the economically active generation - adults who would also normally be bringing up children and caring for old people.



African farmers so often fight a losing battle with poverty. They have the will and the ability to build better lives for themselves and their children, but they lack the resources.

2. Getting to know each other

Send a Cow works through local community organisations: sometimes church groups, or more often simply groups of people (usually women) who have come together to find solutions to the problems they face. Usually they approach us for help, having heard of us through other similar organisations or their church.



Our first task is to assess the strength of the group. Is it united in its aims and democratic in the way it works? Do its members trust and care about each other? And does it need what we can offer?

Locally recruited staff members run our programmes in Africa, and we rely on their local know-how in deciding which new groups to work with. Send a Cow works with people of all faiths and none and this decision process is based primarily on need.

“Send a Cow’s work with groups has helped to build cohesion within the groups and within the communities where the groups are working. I believe this contributes a great deal to its success.”

Beatrice Mukaya Wabudeya,
Minister in charge of the Presidency, Uganda

3. Preparations

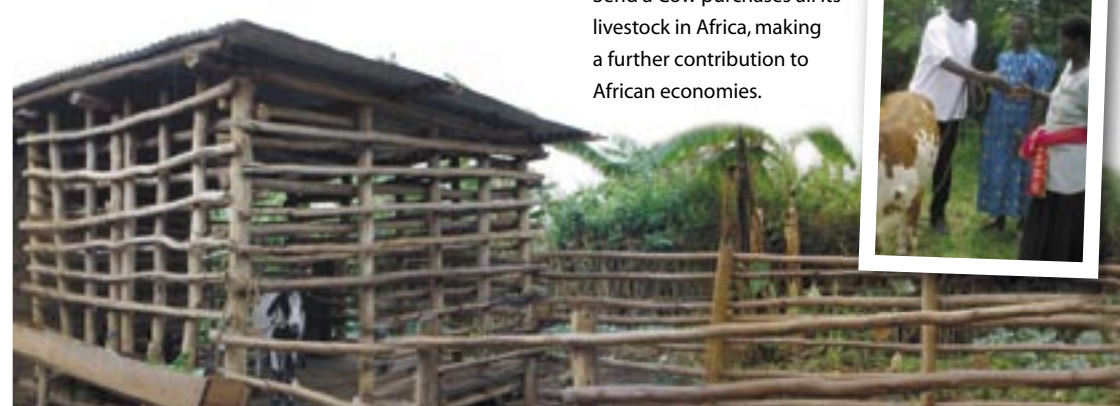
Once chosen to receive livestock, new recipients have a busy time ahead.

First of all, they receive training in animal care and natural organic farming practices. They also have to build a shelter and grow a crop of fodder grass for their animal.

To buy wood, cement and nails for their shelters, future recipients often draw on a loan fund run by their group from money supplied initially by Send a Cow.

The shelters are built to an approved pattern, which includes facilities for collecting the animals’ manure and urine – vital ingredients in sustainable farming.

The above preparations can take as long as 18 months before the farmers are assessed as being ready for their livestock.



Whose needs are greatest?

Once our staff has decided to start working with a new group, they support its members in deciding who amongst them most needs Send a Cow’s help.

4. Receiving the gift

After all the hard work preparing, there is much celebration when the farmers receive their animal. Send a Cow aims always to give the livestock most suited to both local conditions and the recipient’s circumstances. This may be a cow, but for those living on particularly small plots of land or on land that is unsuitable for cultivation - or for young orphan families – goats or beehives may be more suitable.

We are also increasingly giving cross-bred cows and goats, the offspring of local animals crossed with the sort of “improved”, European-type animals we have always given. Cross-breeds are cheaper than improved livestock, enabling us to help more people, and they are also much more productive than local ones in terms of milk and calves.

In the more remote areas of Uganda, where artificial insemination is not available, we also run a village bull scheme, giving a good quality breeding bull to a local farmer.

Send a Cow purchases all its livestock in Africa, making a further contribution to African economies.



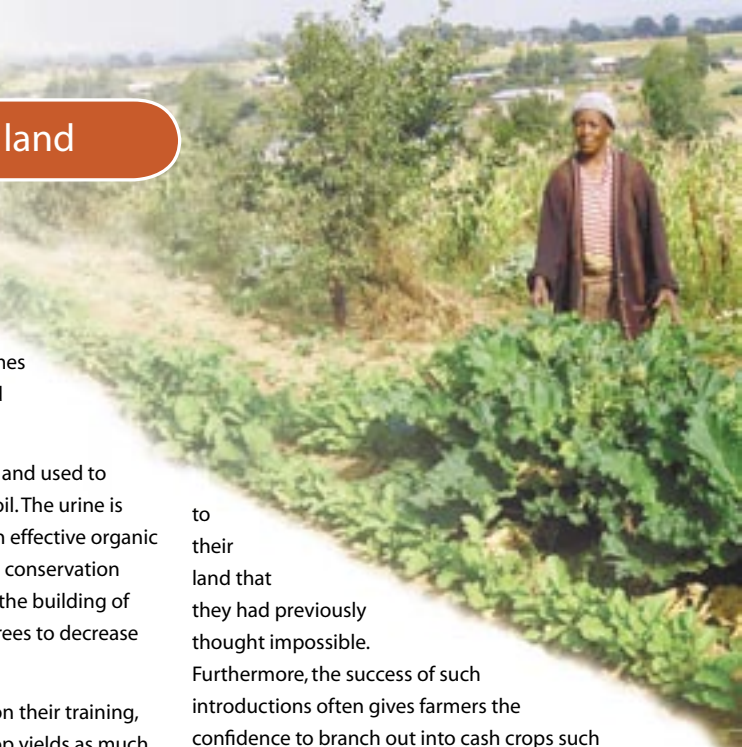
5. Transforming the land

The training Send a Cow provides in natural organic farming practices is geared to the needs of people with very small pieces of land, and it really comes into its own once they have received their livestock.

Their animals’ manure is composted and used to restore exhausted, over-cultivated soil. The urine is mixed with ash or chillies to make an effective organic pesticide. Farmers are also trained in conservation initiatives, such as water harvesting, the building of fuel-efficient stoves and the use of trees to decrease soil erosion and deforestation.

Using all the techniques they learn on their training, farmers are able to increase their crop yields as much as four or five-fold - and introduce fruit and vegetables

to their land that they had previously thought impossible. Furthermore, the success of such introductions often gives farmers the confidence to branch out into cash crops such as coffee.



6. Building a new future

Whatever we give, we know that it will almost certainly enable the people receiving it to transform their lives.

They will be able to improve their families’ diets with vegetables, milk, meat, honey or fish – unaffordable luxuries hitherto – and watch their children growing stronger and healthier.

They can sell the surplus to bring in a desperately needed income and pay for healthcare, clothes and better housing – and to invest in money making ventures, such as buying more land or livestock, or the stock for a small shop.

Above all, they can send their children to school: even where primary schooling is free, parents have to supply books, paper and pencils, and secondary schooling usually has to be paid for. Many parents have sent their children right on through university, solely with their milk money!

