Our GEP students are taking GROW BIOINTENSIVE gardens to children’s homes

According to Professor Elizabeth Mwaniki in the Journal of Nutrition and Food Sciences (2013), at that time 69.6% of the children in the children’s homes in Kenya were malnourished. Currently there are over 2.4 million orphans and vulnerable children in Sub Saharan Africa, 47% of these being as a result of HIV/AIDS. In Kenya, the ever-increasing number of orphans and vulnerable children has resulted in the mushrooming of children’s homes and few of them are able to provide proper diets for the children. Having come from extremely impoverished situations, the children are already undernourished when they arrive at the homes, so the provision of nutritious food is critical.

The GROW BIOINTENSIVE Agriculture Centre of Kenya (G-BIACK) has started a program to assist children’s homes to alleviate the problem of malnutrition. GROW BIOINTENSIVE gardens at these homes will help to supplement the diet with healthy and nutritious food. 21 students from our programme “The Girls Empowerment Program” (GEP) were sent to 21 different children’s homes with the aim of starting the gardens. These girls have undergone training in GROW BIOINTENSIVE and thus are highly knowledgeable. Their mandate is to help set up the gardens and to teach the children, as well as train the caregivers of the homes for sustainability purposes.

As a result, more than one thousand orphaned and vulnerable children have started eating healthy food from the gardens. The homes have appreciated the collaboration with G-BIACK because now they can produce food self reliantly at low cost and with reliably good yields. The children and staff are learning lifelong skills, and our GEP students are gaining practical experience in planning nutrition-based food production and teaching.