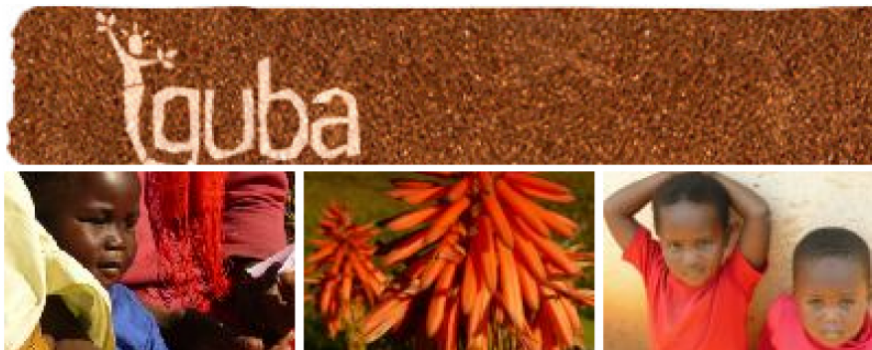


GUBA: GROWING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

We are a registered not-for-profit organisation working to reduce inequality & improve quality of life in Swaziland



Guba, meaning 'to dig' in SiSwati, was founded in May 2009 in an effort to make a positive contribution to the AIDS pandemic devastating Swaziland by alleviating poverty through training in sustainable agriculture, building & natural resource management strategies. Swaziland is a small, landlocked country where: 70% of the population live in rural areas 40% are estimated to be unemployed 26% of the population aged between 15 & 49 years are HIV+ 69% live on less than \$1 per day 70% of adult females living in rural areas are illiterate 47% of the population are under the age of 15 while 24% rely on food aid to survive. These statistics represent thousands of individual stories of survival against adversity. Believing that sustainable difference can be achieved using simple solutions to solve complex issues, our small team of dedicated professionals research & develop innovative & appropriate responses to design & plan a brighter future with the people of Swaziland. Guba began as 2.2 hectares of invasive bush & pineapple stumps. The soil was a mix of sandy clay & silty loam but had been depleted by aggressive, non-indigenous plants & decades of conventional pineapple farming that stripped away the topsoil & beneficial nutrients with each rain storm. Although almost three quarters of the land was bush, it added little diversity to the area. The year was 2009. Here we could practice the Permaculture theory we wanted to explore. Our enthusiasm was greatly influenced by Masanobu Fukuoka's observational approach to farming combined with an urgent need to appropriately respond to the HIV/AIDS crisis gripping the Swazi nation. Fukuoka reckoned that one-&a-quarter acres of arable land, farmed naturally, was enough to feed a family in Japan & to leave plenty of time for leisure & social activities within the village community. Thus inspired, we began our preparations to become part of the solution as Permaculture gardeners & trainers growing with our communities toward a more resilient future. As Darrell Frey eloquently stated in his book, 'Bioshelter Market Garden: A Permaculture Farm', to the student of Permaculture, "problems are signposts pointing to solutions... Thoughtful application of ecological design for problem solving can set in motion regeneration of soil, watersheds & local ecosystems that in turn help heal regional & global environments." All the tools & information we need to design & plan sustainable communities are available here, now. We believe that a sustainable future is rooted to the land. Our farm has been designed to be a valuable, interactive educational resource that offers many different types of training, from diet & nutrition, nutrient cycling & diverse agricultural enterprises to our interconnection to the natural world & the social dynamics that perpetuate poor quality of life. Guba is intended to be a tool for those who want to participate in the continuing evolution of a sustainable society.

Project author or developer:
GUBA: GROWING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

Where:
SZ / Swaziland / MR9

Website:
www.gubaswaziland.org

