



Rural
Development
Organization

Title:

Increase Resilience and Sustainable livelihood of Women and Youth

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1.0 Background

Rural Development Organization started as a village women and youth organization in early 2011 at Chamen Village Upper Baddibou District in the North Bank Region of the Gambia. The women and youth of the village discovered that annually their yield from the farms is dwindling and some of their youth are migrating illegally through the back way to Europe and some losing their lives. This prompted them to sit together and look for solutions as to how best they can have a meaning sustain and dignified lives in the community know and live in. They came up with an idea to have a garden and with a well to enable to them do whole year farming without depending on rained fed agriculture and also allowing them to earn income throughout the year. This idea was developed into a proposal and submitted to Stiftung Sabab Lou in Germany. The Foundation was interested and decides to conduct a feasibility studies which finally lead to the approval of the proposal for the construction of a four modules project. The modules are:

1. Two hecter garden, which is planted with 500 Mangoes and 250 Cashew tree all of which have successful survive,
2. Bee-Keeping modules - which successfully has been harvesting and selling honey
3. A Sheep fattening module
4. Supply of pipe-borne water to the village and the garden.

The garden since 2012 has been fully operational by the women and youth. Presently more than 60 women and youth are participating in the garden including older men. It has produce more than 6 tonnes of various vegetables this year which were all sold out in the Sunday weekend market commonly known as "Lumo". To enable the women earn better prices, the women have been trained on the making of Chutney and honey process.

After a successful implementation of the project, the surround villages of the area started coming and enquiring as to they can participate in the garden or also having a similar project in their village as they are also in the same situation as Chamen.

Unfortunately there was no space as the entire garden was demarcated and being utilized by the villagers in Chamen.

The foundation was approach again for support, they consented but thinking of sustainability, the foundation help the village to form the Rural Development Organization to manage itself locally and support the women in their endeavor to build their resilience, reduce poverty and have a dignified life in their own community.

Rural development Organization was established in August 2012 as a not for profit organization. Presently it is operating in Upper Baddibou District support 3 villages with gardens, and two of the villages are also provided with a borehole and pipe borne water for the villages, garden and the domestic animals. In one of the village which is predominantly Fulani, they have a drink trough for the cows and the women have been trained on cheese making. Production has already started.

2.0 Goal

To build the resilience of the communities to have sustainable development and dignified lives in the Gambia

3.0 Project Object

1. Have whole year round agricultural crop production in 5 women and youth community gardens in North bank Region by December 2014.
2. Improve in the marketing and add value to the products produce in the 5 community garden

4.0 Problem statement

Millennium Development Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

North Bank Region of the Gambia is third most populous region in the Gambia¹ and one of the poorest² regions of the Gambia. The region is bordering with Senegal in the north which is annually encroached by the desertification and rapid rural urban and illegal migration.

¹. North Bank Region has a population of 187,794 peoples; this is according to the *Republic of The Gambia Population Estimates and Projections (2003 - 2013) At National, LGA and District Levels, December 2011.*

². According to the Government of the Gambia, 1998, 2003 and Integrated household Survey and Multi-Cluster Indicator Survey 2010, North Bank Region is third poorest and about 60% of the population live under \$1.25 per day. The region is also marred with deforestation and depleting soil fertility.

Erratic rainfalls and depletion of soil fertility have led to increase poverty in the communities, lost of hope, increase poverty, which has led to increase migration and also drifting of their youth to Europe through the back way. Hence this project has started and wants to continue to enhance the income generating activities of the youth and women in the village. With this, jobs will be created for them in their villages to enable them work throughout the year earn a dignified living, reduce poverty and protect the environment.

5.0 Strategies s and Sustainability Measures

The project plans to achieve a sustainable source of income through year round agricultural production. Part of the income generated in the garden will be saved for wear and tear and also for the repair in the garden and also with the solar pumping system. The villages will set up water communities which will be supervised and monitored by the officials from the Rural Development Organization and collect fees minimum fees for water usage. It will economically empower the youth and women in the village and give them a dignified means of sustenance in their own community.

- **Capacity Building:** The project intents to train the women and youth on sustainable agricultural production and marketing of their goods for better and stable price. Secondly, the Organization has started partnering with the Agricultural Extension Officer in the area for support to the gardens.
- **Adding-value:** The good produce in the community gardens will be cleaned process and package for better prices and also to last for a longer period. The will enhance marketability and also a stable market for the communities.
- **Afforestation:** Each community will annual plant 1000 fruit and other tree to keep their environment.
- **Partnership:** Strong partnership will be developed and contacts have also been made with Gambia is Good project to help in the marketing of the agricultural products. Thirdly, the women have been trained on making of Chutney to add value to the vegetables they produces.

6.0 Outputs

- 5 community garden fenced- chain link fence materials
- Construction of troughs and reservoirs in the gardens Adequate and appropriate seed provided
- Improved water supply network in the garden and village
- Construction of 3 storage facilities
- Procure of simple tomato canning machine
- Provision of garden inputs and implements
- Adequate and appropriate seed provided

7.0 Activities

- Construction of 3 boreholes for both domestic and agricultural use
- Training of the women and youth on modern farming techniques
- Capacity building on management, marketing and basic book keeping. All participants will be given a 3 days training on the above mentioned courses. This will also be done in collaboration with the agricultural department and also other stakeholders in the region.
- Procure of simple tomato canning machine
- Provision of garden inputs and implements
- Five community gardens will be provided with chain link fence
- Provide adequate and appropriate seed provided

- Despite the commitment and determination of those working in the Garden, they are using the traditional ways of cultivation and seeds, which seriously affect the output of their work. If high and market value vegetable seeds are provided for the gardeners, their production levels will be increased and thus more income will be acquired.
- Improve water supply network in the garden and village
- Contracting of a qualified and experience company for digging boreholes and laying pipes
- Procuring of solar panels

8.0 Long Term Impact

At the end of the project the following long term impact will be achieved:

8.1 Increase agricultural productive:

The women and youth will have employment whole year round. This will reduce illegal migration to Europe and increase income generation in the village. This is hoped to reduce poverty.

8.2 Build Resilience in the community:

The community will no longer depend on rain feed erratic agriculture. It will have enough water supplies the whole year round and enable them to have income and food to support themselves and their families.

8.3 Healthy Community:

The supply of clear drinkable water to the peoples and the domestic animals will increase their health status and thus reduce many childhood illnesses such as diarrhoea

8.4 Sustainable Development:

The introduction of savings for wear and tear will enable the villages in the long term to maintain the system by themselves and also to change their behavior of waiting for God to help them.