



FUTURE IN OUR HANDS THE GAMBIA

NEWSLETTER

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Education For All Through Community Development

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SELECT COMMITTEE ON ENV'T, NGO AFFAIRS AND SDGs IMPRESSED WITH FIOHTG



The National Assembly Select Committee on Environment, NGOs and Sustainable Development Goals visited Future In Our Hands The Gambia on 25th July 2019. The Select Committee which comprises honourables Kebba K. Barrow, Madi Ceesay, Suwaibou Touray, Muhammed Ndow, Bakary Njie, Omar Ceesay, Alagie S. Darboe and Demba Sowe selected FIOHTG from over 2000 charities registered in The Gambia. The visit is meant to familiarize the Committee members with the work of NGOs, challenges, impacts and the means towards effective intervention.

The Director of FIOHTG, Mr. Buba MS. Faburay welcomed the delegation and introduced them to the work of FIOHTG. In his presentation, he told the Committee that FIOHTG has 16 Village Development Projects which comprises over 100 villages where the organisation supports women and youth groups, village development committees, schools etc. The main areas of intervention include human rights, capacity building, education, climate change adaptation, entrepreneurship, etc. In addition to these VDPs, the Construction Unit of the organisation builds schools all over the country through partnership with Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education and other stakeholders.

Hon. Bakary Njie thanked FIOHTG for the good work saying “I wonder where will our education sector be without you because all over the country there are schools built by FIOHTG”. Hon. Omar Ceesay remarked that “I will grade the organisation ‘A’. I was a teacher and I am aware of your work”. Hon. Alagie S. Darboe similarly hailed the organisation and pleaded that the organisation goes nationwide on its Village Development Committee training as it is needed nationwide. The Clerk of the Committee, Madam Fatou Keita, said she is also very impressed with FIOHTG. Hon. Madi Ceesay asked the organisation to consider the Select Committee as a partner. He promised that FIOHTG will be invited when the report is tabled before the National Assembly for adoption. Hon. K. Barrow extolled FIOHTG for its transition to a local NGO and the good work it continues to provide to vulnerable communities. In his closing remarks he stated that “I am happy that the Director and the organisation are doing well. They are all Gambians and there is no expatriate here unlike the 1980s to the 2000s”. The event was attended by members of the Select Committee, FIOHTG staff and the Press.



FIOHTG STARTS WEEKLY QUOTES

FIOHTG has started its weekly quotes. The ‘opening quote’ came from the Director whose quote sums the work and impact of the organisation. Follow our social media platforms every week for quotes from our staff. Here is the quote from our director:

“Our conviction as an organisation is that no development can take place if the people are not educated particularly on issues that affect their lives and livelihoods which translates into our vision of empowered communities that make informed decisions to improve their lives and livelihoods”

BUBA M.S FABURAY



FIOHTG STAFF TRAINED ON CHANGE MANAGEMENT & CUSTOMER SERVICES



FIOHTG has organized a 2 day training on Customer Service and Communication for its staff during the 3rd week of July. In his opening remarks, Mr. Faburay, FIOHTG Director emphasized the essence of the training while recalling the benefits of the previous training on Change Management. He welcomed Dr. Margaret again to FIOHTG and assured her that the training will be as effective as the previous one. The training geared towards capacity building for the employees to better interact with beneficiaries and stakeholders; saw the staff trained on customer relations, branding, communication etc. At the end of the training, certificates were

awarded to the staff of FIOHTG. This training came barely two weeks after a training on *Change Management* which was also led by Dr. Margaret Ellis of Classik Consulting. The trainings under the leadership of the Human Resources Unit are geared towards staff capacity building as contained in the FIOHTG Country Strategic Paper. Mr. Ebrima Drammeh of the Community Development Unit thanked the management and Madam Sarr, HR officer for bringing these important trainings. He also hailed Dr. Margaret Ellis for the relevant training she has offered. It is hoped that the training will prepare staff for the internal changes in the organisation and to help them maintain the FIOHTG brand in their work.

FIOHTG TRAINS GIRLS AND TEACHERS ON THE PRODUCTION OF AFFORDABLE & SUSTAINABLE SANITARY PADS

Staff from the Community Development, School Development and the Service units in collaboration with Maimuna Camara a midwife from the Serekunda Hospital conducted trainings on the production and use of sustainable sanitary pads as part of the 'Keep Our Girls in School' Project. The activity is in fulfillment of the main goal of the project to ensure that menstruation and its accompanying problems do not prevent girls from attending school when they menstruate. FIOHTG has produced a model reusable pad made from clothing. The material has two detachable components making it easy to clean and dry outside without any stigma. In recognition of the role of teachers and parents, the training conducted in Chaa Kunda and Kerr Ardo Basic Cycle schools targeted both female teachers and students as well as parents from the Mothers' Clubs of the schools. During the training, participants were trained on how to turn locally available clothes into menstrual pad that are reusable. The participants were also taught the best hygiene measures to observe during and after menstruation. The training team cleansed the Chaa Kunda female toilets and encouraged the students to always keep the place clean. Participants expressed delight for the opportunity and the benefits of the training. Kebba Jobe from the School Development Unit said that everyone was delighted to participate in the exercise. He added that those trained are expected to replicate the training with their colleagues and spread the knowledge gained. Kristina Lundahl of the Gambia Groups commenting from Sweden expressed happiness about the activity and the collaboration between the different units of FIOHTG to see the project succeeds.

“Lack of support for menstrual health can keep girls out of school and the workplace and out of leadership roles, with devastating consequences that can last lifetimes and across generations. It contributes to discrimination and to the marginalization of women and girls. Educating both girls and boys about menstruation as a normal biological process is the first step towards addressing these issues”.

UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammend



FIOHTG ORGANISES INTERFACE DIALOGUE BETWEEN NAM AND CONSTITUENTS



In this nascent democracy, FIOHTG is aware of the importance of promoting civil dialogue between duty bearers and duty holders. In this regard, FIOHTG has been conducting interface dialogues to bring together duty bearers such as National Assembly Members, Councilors and Council Chairmen etc. and their ward/constituency residents.



In July, FIOHTG organized an interface dialogue between the National Assembly Member (NAM) of Niani Constituency, Hon. Alagie Silalah and his constituent residents. The day long interface dialogue brought together women, youth, 2 NAMS, Kuntaur Area Council Chairman, the CEO, Councilors, Chief and other civil servants in Niani. While the NAM expounded on his role and initiatives taken,

he was challenged to do more for women and youth in his constituency.

A representative of the Directorate of Education in the region also made an emotional plea to parents to send their kids to school. He lamented that many girls are still married off whilst in school. The Interface Dialogue was hailed by the participants as a success in the democratic dispensation of The Gambia. .

FIOHTG CONDUCTS GENDER TRAINING WITH REAL ANALYSIS FOR PARTICIPANTS



Gender sensitization trainings have been conducted in Kerr Ardo and Kabakoto and the satellite villages. The training started with discussions on the gender concept, differences between sex and gender, equity and equality. Later on, the participants were guided to discuss the daily activity calendar, the seasonal calendar for both women and men amongst others. Misconception of 50,50, access and control over resources etc. were also dealt with. The training involved practical exercises and reflections which made it very relevant to the experience of the trainings. The seasonal calendar for instance, brought to light the daily struggles of women while exposing the naked inequality between men and women.

At the end of the training, the sex and gender roles and the misconception of “50-50” were clarified and the concept of equality was also demystified. An action plan has been developed and a ten member *Gender Committee* has been formed. The Committee will extend the discussion to the committee by talking about gender issues with people at ceremonies, water collection point etc. Alimatou Marong who facilitated the training reported that “the men, after realizing that they have more leisure time than women, have unanimously agreed to free women from water collection, fuel wood collection, payment of school fee, giving lunch, fish money. They will also participate in child care, as well as”.

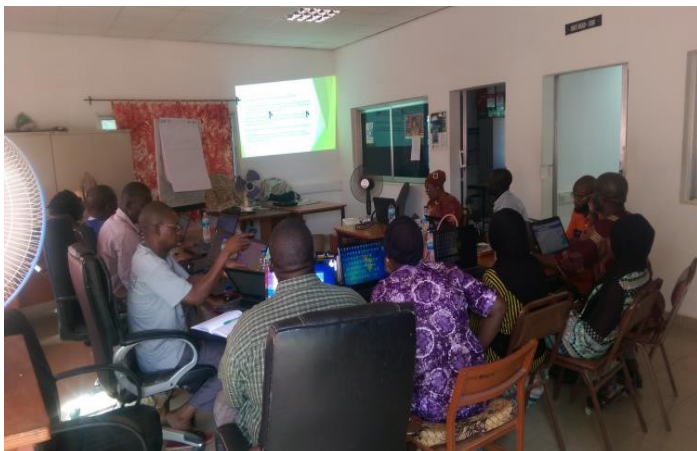


“Gender equality has a transformative effect that is essential to fully functioning communities, societies, and economies.”

UN SG, ANTONIO GUTERRES



TRAINING ON FIOHTGMIS COMPLETED, TRAINING HELD



On June 16th, FIOHTG started a three day training at the FIOHTG complex which brought FIOHTG programme and administrative officers together. The training is part of activities geared towards the strengthening the organisation's monitoring and evaluation system through the building of a web based databank.

The FIOHTGMIS will enable staff to report activities online while they are on the field, provide real time analysis for knowledge sharing and provide lessons for the improvement of programme implementation. During the training, Mr. Lamin Jawara taught the staff how to login to the system, enter, analyse and share data. He also taught them how to interact with the different features of the system. The training was a practical one as trainees directly interacted with the system.

At the end of the programme, staff applauded management for going digital. Mr. Manneh of the Fundraising Unit expressed his delight and optimism of the potential benefits of the programme. Mr. Jawara, the trainer applauded FIOHTG for taking the bold step in going digital. He promised to keep helping and training staff.

FIOHTG Director, Mr. Faburay thank the participants for attending the training and advised them to make best use of the system while promising them that Management will give them all the needed support. He also thanked Mr. Jawara for the excellent work done.

CIVIC EDUCATION FORUMS HELD IN KEUR SIDIKI & CHAMONDING

In partnership with the National Council for Civic Education, FIOHTG held civic education forums on democracy and rule of law in Keur Sidiki and Chamonding in Kabakoto cluster. The forums facilitated by Mr. Junkung Saidu of NCCE was coordinated by Mr. Ebrima Drammeh of the Community Development Unit of FIOHTG. development unit of FIOHTG.



“Democracy transformed from thin paper to thick action is the greatest form of government on earth.”

MLK JUNIOR



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Do you have a story or an event for the next newsletter?

If so, we would like to hear from YOU!

Thank you for your support!