

FUTURE IN OUR HANDS THE GAMBIA

NEWSLETTER

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M&E BRIEF

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Education For All Through Community Development



83% OF FIOHTG'S CIVIC EDUCATION BENEFICIARIES SAY THEY ARE POLITICALLY TOLERANT NOW

In 2019, the Community Development Unit of FIOHTG targeted 19 communities for a civic education programme. The communities are Darsilami, Felenkoto, Senno Bajonki, Sareh Musa, Sumbundu (all in LRR); Keur Sidiki, Chamonding, Malick Nana, Kassewa, and Passy Chally in the North Bank Region; Changai Wollof, Changi Toro, Kallen Jawo, Kallen Sainey in CRR; and Sareh Musa, Mampatayel, Kulkulleh, Tinkinjo, Kisskiss in URR.

According to reports submitted by programme officers of the Community Development Unit, four main treks conducted in 2019 were meant for civic education on democracy and rule of law. It took in total 20 days for the four programme officers within CDU in collaboration with the National Council for Civic Education to cover the communities.

ABOUT 1000 BENEFICIARIES

The Monitoring and Evaluation Unit visited the communities to evaluate the programme. Approximately 1000 people have benefitted from the exer-

cise, most of them (69%) being first time beneficiaries of programmes on rule of law, human rights and democracy, thanks to FIOHTG. Furthermore, 87% of beneficiaries said they knew little about democracy. Only 6% said they don't know what democracy means.

Additionally, whereas 50% of respondents reported that they were intolerant to political opponents before the training, 83% of respondents showed that they are very tolerant now and the remaining 17% said it treats politically opponents better compared to before the training.

Here is what one respondent said: *"we used to fight and malice because of different party affiliations. But now we sit, brew attaya together. We know politics should not divide us"*. Another one had said *"here whosoever [political party or candidate] the head of compound supported, everyone must support the same...but that is a thing of the past now"*.

100% OF RESPONDENTS SAID DEMOCRACY IS THE IDEAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT BUT.....,

While all respondents asked what is the ideal form of government for the Gambia, when asked whether democracy is compatible with their culture, 25% said that they are completely incompatible and 17% of respondents said they are similar but not the same. Similarly 8% said they are partly compatible on some aspects. When pressed to explain how is democracy incompatible with their culture, one respondent said *"look, in my culture I have power over my children, I should discipline them and they should obey me. Now democracy is saying that they have rights, that I cannot beat my child. My girl child can disrespect me. How compatible is that? Also female circumcision is part my culture, but they said that is a violation of my daughter's right. This is why I said, yes I prefer a democratic government to any other form of government, but it is not compatible with my culture in some aspects, he concluded."*



15 COMMUNITIES, 335 PEOPLE TRAINED ON FIRST AID



15 communities had been trained within 15 days targeting 145 participants. The communities are Sareh Njobo, Sareh Demba Dardo, Sareh Ali, Suma Kunda, Sinchu Samba Jawo, Sumbundu, Sinchu Njengudi, Jababa, Bantang Nyima, Misera, Chamen, Saoma Kunda, Tabayel, Changai, Mbafafu.

The training was geared towards increasing awareness on basic health issues, such as sexually transmitted infections, dysentery, malaria and first aid treatment of fresh injuries/cuts/burns and snake bites. 8 of the 15 communities never had a basic health sensitization until FIOHTG went there last year, in 2019. Although 145 was the targeted number of beneficiaries, the cumulative number of persons reported to have attended by the communities is 353 people.

Respondents said that the main themes learnt at the training were treatment of water from wells, dysentery/

diarrheal diseases, treatment of injuries and STIs, food hygiene and personal hygiene amongst others. Majority of respondents mentioned food hygiene and personal hygiene as the main themes learnt, followed by first aid for injuries, open defecation, malaria and water treatment while burns, STIs, set-setal and diarrhea were the least mentioned as themes learnt from the training.

Although 6% of the respondents answered that they do not know what to do if someone has a fresh injury or wound, 94% of respondents provided an answer claiming that they know the answer. Notwithstanding, 32% of these were still using local herbs to administer first aid to fresh injuries. 50% of participants appropriately responded that they use either warm or cold water with or without salt to clean it. 16% of respondents said that they tie the place wounded. However 6% engages in a dangerous practice which is the administering of tomato paste on injuries.

Need for more training on 1st Aid

One common practice within the communities is the prevalence of local treatment methods as up to 43% cited local treatment methods including the use of tomato paste, onion, bitter cola and chlorine. Only 19% of respondents said one should tie the area bitten by the snake. Considering the misconceptions surrounding the treatment of snakebites, future trainings should be undertaken by clearing these misconceptions.

1665 Trees Planted in 15 communities by beneficiaries of climate change training



In 2019, 15 communities (12 of them for the first time) were trained on climate change. During the evaluation of the impact of the training,

participants mentioned the following as causes of climate change: burning tires, cutting down trees, charcoal burning, smoke emissions, fertilizers, cattle rearing, bush burning, burning plastics, methane gases, fossil fuel, deforestation, etc.

All the respondents stated that they have learnt mitigation measures from the training. Most of them (57%) saying that tree planting is the measure they have learnt. Of significance is the understanding among 29% of respondents that bush burning should be avoided. Asked what have they done with the knowledge gained, beneficiaries said tree planting. In total, 1665 trees were counted as newly planted trees after the training. This is the biggest impact of the training. However, communities are constraint by the lack of water and proper fencing materials to plant more trees. In fact, all communities requested for more seedlings



FOOD PROCESSING TRAINING LEADS TO SELF-EMPLOYMENT

Everyone knows that food is life, right? But food can be both life and income. That is what the food processing and preservation programme is doing. Communities are trained to preserve and process their food for a healthy diet, prevent food wastage, post-harvest loss and to sell and earn income. Here is Fatou's story from Njolfen.

"The tomato is easy to process; it is just the cleaning, milling and boiling. Those days, when we harvest tomato, it easily got spoilt. Now we can store it for a longer period. The unprocessed or raw tomato pan sells at 500-600 dalasi. However, a small tin of processed tomato of 125grammes sells at 50 dalasis. And one can get 25tins from a pan of tomato. All I buy is a cup of salt for 10 dalasis, vegetable cooking oil for 12 dalasi and the empty tins cost 15 dalasi."

At most Fatou spends 997 dalasi to buy the tomato and all other ingredients including the tins she uses for packaging. However, after selling 25 tins, she earns 1,250; hence her profit is 253 dalasi. Fatou and many of her community members have learnt that the profit from tomato paste is not much. However, one of the other food items they have

been trained to process is pepper. The pepper sauce sells faster and at a higher price. Fatou continues to explain:

"For the pepper, we add little jumbo and salt. Usually, I buy 10 jumbos. I also buy 20 empty tins which cost 15 dalasi each. And a kilo of pepper cost around 1000 dalasi. When we process the pepper sauce, a tin is sold at either 75 dalasi to natives of the community or 150 dalasi to nonnatives of the community...usually it takes me a day or at most a week to sell 20 tins...this is more profitable for me".

Fatou spends 200 dalasi on jumbo and 300 dalasi on empty tins. She also buys the pepper at 1000 dalasi. Based on this, Fatou gets 1500 dalasi if she sells all 20 tins to community members and 3000 dalasi if she sells all 20 tins to nonnatives of the community. Fatou gets a profit of 1500 dalasi if she sells all the tins at 150 to nonnatives. Therefore, it is more profitable to sell to nonnatives. However, Fatou lamented it takes time to sell it outside. But whether she sells to the community or outsiders, she said she has a new source of income and of course she can preserve her produce. Besides she serves her community.

INCREASING SAVINGS THROUGH BUSINESS MANAGEMENT TRAINING

Maria Samba Nyado is one of the communities which benefitted from the BMED training. Asked to reflect on their business practice before the training, a woman had this to say:

"We didn't know much about business, we used to give out our profit to the kids. We were not saving. Now we know how to make profit and save".

Below a story by one of the woman beneficiaries is produced:

"I used to buy a gallon of palm oil for 1200 and I will not even know how much I have sold and how much did I get in return. Now, even after giving a portion for my family consumption, I put my own money back there for accounting purposes. After the training, now I know I am gaining 400 as profit. I can sell 20 liters a day. It takes about 21 days to sell the gallon. I am aware of all of these thanks to the training. I even have a bank account."

Another beneficiary community is Kabakoto

According to the VDC chairperson, 40 people from the community have been trained on how to start and manage businesses. A woman who was present during the focused group discussion gave the following remarks about the relevance of the training echoing its practice:

"We were asked to develop a business and we all did. The following day; some came with roasted peanuts. Some even won prizes. Although many people were shy before the training, they got inspired at the training. They knew with quality they will make good sales".

Asking those present about their business,

"I sell a loaf of bread for 20 dalasi. If I sell 140 loaves, I end up getting 350 dalasi. And I also give out breakfast to the family. I make a cash profit of 110 dalasi". became evident that she was not gaining from the trade.

It is conclusive that the trainings have brought changes in the lives of the women.



90 OF 95 ACTION PLANS DEVELOPED HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED BY BENEFICIARY COMMUNITIES

Although FIOHTG had targeted 20 communities for waste management training, only 16 became beneficiaries. The villages are found in all the four regions of operations, namely LRR, CRR, URR and NBR. 10 of these communities had never had any training on waste management before FIOHTG's.

About 300 households have benefitted from the training attended by over 400 people according to estimates given by communities. FIOHTG's waste management training equips communities with skills to separate waste and proper disposal methods to reduce environmental pollution.

While 6 communities responded that they had a previous training, only 4 of them could tell who was the previous trainer and the main themes learnt. Still, 2 of these communities said FIOHTG's was the best as it was more extensive. In percentage terms, 63% of respondents said they had never attended any waste management training while 37% said they have attended waste management training.

While 24% of the communities were either burning (12%) or burying (12%) their waste, 76% were either dumping (38%) or using multiple means (12%) to dispose their waste. These multiple means refer to waste separation, burying, reusing and burning wastes. Therefore half of the communities are using proper disposal means. This is a significant achievement as communities did not know proper waste disposal and separation techniques before the training.

7 of 16 communities had a community dumpsite

7 out of 16 communities visited had at least a community dumpsite, each of them with a committee on waste management. Since 2019, 95 action plans have been developed, all of them on set-setal (community cleansing exercises) and 90 of these have been implemented reported the communities. Communities had lamented the lack of enough tools for communal cleansing exercises.

CONSTRUCTION WORKS IN PROGRESS

We leave you with these 2 pictures showing the levels of construction work in various sites around the country.



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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!