

EVALUATION OF SOCIAL ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN BUTITI SUB COUNTY, KYENJOJO DISTRICT PROJECT

Implemented By

ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN DEVELOPMENT ACTORS (AWODA)

Report

Financed By

SWISS LEAGUE OF CATHOLIC WOMEN

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AWODA	Association of Women Development Actors
GoU	Government of Uganda
LC	Local Council
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NAADS	National Agricultural Advisory Services
NDP	National Development Plan
ToT	Trainer of trainers

1. BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

With technical and financial support from Swiss league of catholic women, AWODA in the year 2013 and 2014 has implemented the Social economic empowerment of women in Butiti sub county, Kyenjojo District project whose goal was: To Contribute towards strengthening and improving the economic base of producer organizations for sustainable and improved livelihoods of Rural poor men and women of Kyenjojo (higher incomes, food security, sustainable use of natural resources) and ultimately achieve improved standard of living. Purpose: To sustainably promote easy access to financial services, entrepreneurship and skill development for women in Butiti sub county in Kyenjojo district through farmer field schools and self help group approach methodology. Project Objectives: To improve access to reliable rural financial services and credit management systems for 800 clients by 2013

To build capacity and support producer organizations with management, business and organizational skills for income generation through self help approach and, To strengthen women capacities in sustainable agricultural practices and technologies.

Project Planned Activities included

- ✓ Training in entrepreneurship and poultry farming for women leaders
- ✓ Skills development for women in sewing
- ✓ Mobilization, formation and training of farmer groups into savings and re investment
- ✓ Farmer exchange visit to successful self help groups and farmer agricultural models
- ✓ Setting and establishment of grain milling machine
- ✓ Procurement of bicycle for trainers

1.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

Now that the project has comes to an end, this external end-evaluation has been carried out with a general purpose of assessing the effects of the project on the livelihoods of the beneficiaries, both individuals and groups. The results of this evaluation will enable the management and partners of AWODA to 'learn from the successes and failures of the project in the past one year in order to have recommendations and suggestions for the future approaches and activities of AWODA. Specifically, the evaluation was supposed to address:

- i. **Relevance** of the project and ascertain to which extent the interventions were relevant to the priority needs of the rural populations in Kyenjojo district, national development plans and other non governmental actors and if these needs were met.
- ii. **Effectiveness** in terms of the extent to which the project strategies realized increased incomes and quality of life of the households in the target groups in line with the project plan.
- iii. **Efficiency** in utilization of available resources and capacity building initiatives to achieve the highest possible results.
- iv. **Impact** felt by project interventions including mind-set, attitudinal or behavior change among project beneficiaries and of a broader community or authorities in general.
- v. **Sustainability** of the project reflected by the level of confidence that the benefit and support created by the project will be maintained and reproduced for/by the beneficiaries after the project has ended.

- vi. **Transparency** in reference to the extent to which AWODA operated completely transparently and communicated openly to justify their choices, practices and use of resources with Swiss league of catholic women, the target groups and authorities; and
- vii. **If cross cutting issues** mainly Gender equality; changes in the community, HIV/AIDS and environmental conservation were integrated in the project implementation aspects.

This evaluation aimed at presenting lessons learned and factors for success as well as main obstacles that may hinder achievement of targeted outputs in successor projects with remedies that AWODA can work on in the short and medium term.

1.3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

1.3.1 Overall Design

The evaluation employed an inter-play of qualitative and quantitative methodology with a participatory dimension that allowed qualification of findings with reference to data and engagement with project management and beneficiaries. Butiti sub-counties where the project activities are being implemented was visited and purposively selected to suit the responses desired. The evaluation utilized information gathered from review of project reports to complement and certify data obtained through observations, interviews and discussions.

1.3.2 Field Study areas and respondents

The evaluation targeted key informants and project beneficiaries who were engaged in focus group discussions

1.3.3 Data collection Methods

Both primary and secondary data was collected; secondary data was obtained through review of project documents, local government development plan and national plans. The list of documents reviewed is attached in Appendix II. Primary data was obtained by conducting of interviews and discussions with project beneficiaries. A total of 134 beneficiaries participated in the evaluation, of which 60% were women and 40% were men. Farmers were met in their farmer groups (farmer field schools) or savings and loans groups and they shared their responses through focused group discussions. Old and new groups were interviewed with an aim to elicit information on the 'value' AWODA had added to their groups and the benefits that have accrued to participating members.

The evaluation was guided by the AWODA project plan. Using this plan the evaluation sought to assess the extent to which the targets set out before the project had been achieved. Questionnaires were developed to guide interviews with respondents in 1.3.2 above. Responses from interviews were matched and supplemented with information documented in project reports during desk reviews. Further information was obtained from model farmers and members of the AWODA management board.

1.3.4 De-brief to AWODA Management Board

After the field mission, consultants briefed AWODA on the preliminary findings along the themes laid out in 1.2 and the Board discussed, appreciated and endorsed the findings.

2. PROJECT RELEVANCE AND PERFORMANCE

2.1 RELEVANCE OF THE PROJECT

2.1.1 Relevance to National priorities and International Dispersations

The project which aims to improve the livelihoods of rural farmers in Kyenjojo was found to be highly relevant to the priorities of the Government of Uganda elaborated in the National Development Plan (NDP 2010/11- 2014/15). The project is in line with NDP priorities especially in addressing the identified critical constraints on Inadequate supply and limited access to critical production inputs; low application of Science, technology and Innovation and Gender issues, negative attitudes, mindset, cultural practices and perceptions. The project further contributes to attainment of the Millennium Development Goal One (1) on halving poverty and hunger in Uganda by 2015.

2.1.2 Relevance to Kyenjojo District Development priorities

The project is also in line with Kyenjojo District Local Government development plan. The plan indicates that people in the district are predominantly agriculturalists involved in crop production and animal rearing. Agriculture employs the majority of the people (over 80%). Most farmers are small-holders. By helping farmers increase their household incomes and their livelihoods AWODA's project contributed to poverty reduction and supported the attainment of objectives of the district plans.

The project has also been particularly relevant in contributing towards addressing the gender and environmental problems which the district is facing currently facing including soil erosion, loss of soil fertility, and reduced vegetation cover. Women's participation in decision-making is still low. Although women are responsible for over 80% of the agricultural production in the district, they own less than 7% of all productive land on which this production takes place. AWODA is implementing the project in Butiti Sub County with highest poverty levels in the district; at 58%, compared to average district of 48%.

2.1.3 Relevance to Kyenjojo Community and household level needs

At the community level the projects' interventions were very relevant to the people's needs. Most households in communities produced both food and cash for domestic consumption and for sale respectively. The most prominent concern at the household level is ability for a household to purchase non-food items and services notably children school fees. By increasing household incomes, the project has been very relevant to the community and household level needs in project areas among beneficiaries. On top of school fees households reported to be able to afford most of the household items they urgently need from income acquired through loans and savings.

2.2 PROJECT PERFORMANCE- ACTUAL OUTPUTS Vs PLANNED TARGETS

2.2.1 Improve access to reliable rural financial services and credit management systems for 800 clients by 2013

At the start of the project People were too poor to access financial services from the banks and local financial leading arrangements (SACCOs and saving and credit associations).

As a project intervention AWODA Mobilized, formed and trained farmer groups into savings and reinvestment. As a result ten (10) new were formed and rearranged fourteen (14) existing farmer groups. Trained all groups in entrepreneurship, business management, saving and credit. The total of 24 farmer groups were introduced to the farmer field schools approach and were trained in crop bulking/savings, credit management and marketing.

A minimum amount of 2000/=or 5kg we agreed upon as the cost of a share in the savings and credit arrangement among the farmers groups. A welfare fund was also agreed upon to address emergencies such as personal and financial crisis, medical and funeral expenses.

Asset Accumulation: as a result of savings and credit, women have accumulated assets and other income generating enterprises that include goats, chickens, cattle and household items. In times of need, livestock is sold to generate income and deal with an emergency.

Child Education: the savings and credit arrangement has help provide parents with money to meet school fees dues, thus reducing the number of children dropping out of school in the community.

2.2.2 To build capacity and support producer organizations with management, business and organizational skills for income generation through self help approach

The existing farmer groups were weak in terms of management, business development and organizational development. Members relayed on saving without profits and avoided loans for fear of making losses.

During the project period, AWODA trained the groups in entrepreneurship and poultry farming for women leaders, Skills development for women in sewing, training in Indigenous poultry management, trained in entrepreneurship and business management and trained in vegetable management and kitchen gardening

Under the groups self help innovative interventions of managing poultry projects, fruits and vegetables production business management; bought and distributed household group members with vegetable seed (especially cabbages, spinach carrots, egg plants, Nakati, sukuma wick, bitter tomatoes and the tomatoes) they improvised the dodo seedlings.

Bought 8 Sewing machines, 2 Knitting machines, established a tailoring training center and trained 25 women in tailoring, making sweaters, school uniforms, suits for women, and men and children clothes.

Purchased and distributed 280 Chicken to women groups trained in poultry management.

Chicken rearing/ Poultry management:

36 farmer representatives from 10 groups were trained in poultry rearing and management by UGA-CHICK. Topics covered included starting poultry farming, selection of the breeding stocks, and housing, improved management practices of rearing indigenous chicken, hatching, brooding and rearing chicks. Ten members were given hens and cock. Mukunyu Twimukye women group through their farmer field school thereafter raised a poultry house and were supported with 10 hens and 2 cocks, reared as group under the programmed brooding management arrangement. At least 150 eggs laid by the above mentioned birds are ready for hatching and will be distributed to other groups. The rest of the eggs are sold in the local market, for 9000 shillings per tray for the group's income. The poultry is fed on maize bran collected from the milling machine established by AWODA.

Skills enhancement for women in tailoring and knitting

28 women from the 10 groups were identified and are undergoing training in tailoring from the two centers. 18 sewing machines were purchased and distributed to the two centers. Two of the machines were sweater weavers. Women are learning tailoring, designs and weaving sweaters and are set to complete training by end of December 2014.

Since September 2013, out of 6 women trained in sewing and knitting, three women have bought their own sewing machines from the proceeds in the savings and credit group arrangements.

Training in vegetable management and kitchen gardening

Trained 120 women in vegetable growing, kitchen gardening, bought and distributed to them the following category of vegetable seeds; egg plants, tomatoes, Nakati, Spinach Sukumawiki, watermelon, carrots cabbages, green pepper. At the climax, the beneficiary households were trained in nutrition.

2.2.3 To strengthen women capacities in sustainable agricultural practices and technologies

Butiti sub county community practiced poor agronomic practices characterized by; over cultivation, mono cropping, cutting trees for charcoal, bush burning, swamp burning and draining, overgrazing; which had resulted into poor soils, soil erosion, loss of soil fertility, crop diseases, causing poor yields and household food insecurity and consequently low incomes.

A needs assessment conducted concluded that to 90% households were practicing poor banana management, inadequate diversification of both crops and animals, over cultivation of cash crops such as tea, stray animals (cows), diseases and general poor animal health.

Designed interventions to address the above challenges were; Training farmer groups in good banana management (preparing planting holes, spacing of 10x10 feet) mulching, intercropping with leguminous plants such as beans, mulching. Diversifying food crop production to include G.nuts as a source of proteins, millet for iron and carbohydrates, maize for food security and income, sweet potatoes and cassava, local yams for potassium and food security in the dry seasons and growing coffee for income because it can be intercropped with bananas

Other trainings included Training households in mixed farming (i.e. growing crops and rearing animals), cattle management (general animal health, feeding, disease identification, and treatment and prevention mechanisms), and establishment of other animals on the farm such as pigs and their proper managed to limit disease spread.

Training farmers in agricultural skills and sustainable agricultural practice

Trained 24 farmer group representatives in good agronomic practices and supplied the following inputs to group household farmers; 900 suckers to 7 farming households, established coffee nursery beds with 10,000 coffee seedlings to 50 farmers.

In a bid to promote household food security, member households were organized into 24 farmer field schools and trained in good agronomic practices of maize, cassava, G.nuts, bananas and vegetable growing. Other trainings were farm planning, agriculture diversification, climate change mitigation, soil conservation and mixed farming.

As a result, the farmer field schools approach has enhanced social capital development; characterized by farming households learning together, monitoring one another and providing each other labor that would rather be very expensive when acquired financially by a single household

A **Farmer learning visit** was conducted involving group representatives and model farmers to successful model farms and seed multiplication sites in Kamwenge district. Participants also learnt best practices of village savings and loan associations in Ntara Sub County.

During the learning visit, entrepreneurship opportunities for income generation through food security, savings, credit, re-investment and the benefits of the farmer field schools were explored.

2.2.5 Procuring and setting up the grain mill

A diesel engine and huller milling machine was procured and installed at Munkunyu trading center, close to the women's tailoring training center. The milling machine grinds all flour grades depending on preference. This has reduced milling costs incurred by project beneficiaries and the community at large; it has brought the service close to the community reducing the time wasted during making flour using the local motor and paste technology at household level by the women and children, it has also reduced the transportation costs involve in finding a motorized milling facility.

2.2.6 Gender balance, HIV/AIDS Malaria control, protection of the environment and other cross-cutting issues mainstreamed in the project

Gender mainstreaming was a best practice! Almost all groups attested to the improvement in gender relations between husbands and their spouses in the household. Both are able to sit together on a table and discuss how incomes are to be spent and women in most cases are tasked by their husbands to execute the expenditures. This improvement in gender relations is attributed to the success of group dynamics, and the training provided by AWODA that emphasizes 'a farmer household' as opposed to 'individual farmer' approach. The former allows for both men and women to be trained together.

On HIV/AIDS, it was evident that this issue was not tackled as an integral part the trainings IN sustainable agriculture. This report presents a highlight of how HIV mainstreaming can be done. However, some groups through training from other AWODA arrangements had encouraged members to undertake HIV/AIDS tests and those who tested HIV+ are receiving care and treatment. However no HIV/AIDS work policy has been put in place.

On Malaria, nothing was done on this aspect. Owing to the fact that Malaria is responsible for more deaths of people in Kyenjojo than HIV/AIDS, it is important that this aspect is addressed in the successor interventions.

On Natural Resource and Environmental management, some progress was made due to the strong linkage between sustainable agriculture training and soil conservation. Members in the focus group discussion were able to articulate the importance of mulching, fallowing, planting trees and windbreakers and using organic practices to conserve the environment. In addition, farmers are encouraged to plant shade trees; some farmers have energy saving stoves and water harvesting tanks as a result of project intervention.

2.2.7 AWODA as a development organization is strengthened

AWODA has strengthened its capacity over the project period and through partnerships has raised both internal and external resources exemplified by an increase of total income of 34,047,500 in 2013-2014. The organization has been able to improve monitoring of project interventions by buying 10 bicycles for project trainers.

3. ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

3.1 EFFECTIVENESS OF PROJECT STRATEGIES

3.1.1 Improve access to reliable rural financial services and credit management systems for 800 clients by 2013

The main reason why the savings and credit system registered good results was the effectiveness of the strategy itself. Use of material (in-kind), support in form of agriculture produce helped strengthen the group dynamics. Members became 'socially close' to the subsequent recipients, and as reported by one respondent, created 'a spirit of love and friendship'. Furthermore to ensure this system succeeds, groups were effective in dispute resolution and addressing any queries in the saving and loaning system. But there are 'redundant' rules that make enforcement unnecessarily ineffective; For instance, the ever changing amount to be saved in a given saving cycle period.

As will be highlighted under the section on cross cutting issues, the savings and loan system was effective in improving gender roles at the household and community levels.

3.1.2 Members using improved sustainable farming skills

AWODA used to the maximum extent possible the notion of sustainable agriculture and its advantages and made it an integral part of the 2013-2014 project interventions. Using already existing groups was the most effective strategy in reaching rural farmers at no further costs related to group mobilization. The success of farming groups attracted new members into the groups and identification and involvement of new groups that saw the number rise from 14 farmer groups in 2013 to 24 groups in 2014.

Groups were encouraged to register their members, draft group roles and constitutions and meet on a regular basis. Developing group self-management mechanisms can reduce the burden on AWODA for constant follow up.

3.1.3 The number of small scale farmer groups involved in the AWODA activities has increased

The number of farmer groups rose from 14 to 24 over the project period, registering an increase in project beneficiaries from 420 to 714. In addition to these over 43,00 beneficiaries were reached. By using farmer groups, AWODA was effective in reaching more beneficiaries since other household members benefited indirectly and in the process, reducing poverty overall.

The arrangement of multiplying seed and the establishment of demonstration canters availed more seed to needy participating group members.

3.1.4 The self-empowerment of the farmer groups has increased

Using the sustainable farming technologies and related training AWODA was able to empower farmer groups and increase their capacity to increase productivity on their farms in a bid to increase household incomes and reduce poverty. To bolster farmer empowerment AWODA undertook a series of interventions to support groups operations, mediate group misunderstandings and increase their efficiency in self-

monitoring and own growth. There are three main challenges that remain at the farmer organization level:

- i. Farmers and groups need storage facilities, tarpaulins for drying maize and more credit to purchase maize for sale
- ii. Banana wilt and other diseases are threatening the productivity of these crops
- iii. Most groups have attested to loss of crops due to drought.
- iv. Poultry farming is threaten by disease
- v. Some groups (majority) do not keep records, or a group bank account or a constitution
- vi. Price fluctuations that have created a situation where prices at the group is at times lower
- vii. Women trained in tailoring often lack capital to buy their own sewing machines and to begin business

3.1.4 Gender balance, HIV/AIDS, malaria control and environmental issues mainstreamed in the project activities

Though the project did well on gender mainstreaming, no strategies were put in place to address the important aspects of HIV/AIDS and Malaria which are the two largest concerns of morbidity in Kyenjojo District in particular and Uganda as a whole.

However, to a small extent, project data was disaggregated by sex in some records but it is important to note that gender based reporting is only a small proportion of gender mainstreaming. At AWODA, no staff was trained during the project period on gender issues.

Environmental Management is an area where AWODA performed relatively well as far as cross cutting issues are concerned. Being a project that involved farming and the integration of sustainable systems in agriculture, AWODA was effective in using its trainings and capacity building at the farmer group level to extend messages on soil and water conservation, planting of trees as well as general issuance of the need for 'healthy crops and healthy lives'. In addition was the promotion of growing high value tree cash crops like coffee for income. Most respondents attested to this as an aspect that was well articulated by AWODA.

3.1.5 AWODA as a development organization is strengthened

Over the project period, AWODA as an organization increased its capacity internally to increase its effectiveness in design of strategies to aid successful implementation of its agenda. However the project logical framework was not designed to guide project interventions in a more streamlined manner.

3.2 EFFICIENCY IN GENERATION OF PROJECT OUTPUTS

3.2.1 Efficiency in mobilization, absorption and utilization of Project tools and funds

Use of systems to ensure efficient use of resources

AWODA has no monitoring tools developed to monitor project activities and progress from time to time. There is also presently limited capacity of the field workers to (double) check answers from the farmers and follow through with accurate and updated data from time to time.

3.2.2 Efficiency in use of opportunities of partnerships and networking

AWODA has no sustained strategies to seek partnerships with local, district, national and international organizations and institutions. Yet partnerships and networking have potential of expanding AWODA's opportunities as a development entity in the future.

3.3 EFFECTIVENESS OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

AWODA has no well developed Organizational Structure. While gaps remain, overall, AWODA managed to implement the project interventions, regardless of its staffing and financial limitations. The management of AWODA was effective mainly in the following ways:

- a) Utilizing already existing farmer groups to advance farming technology and being able to sustain their use of these practices to a level where farmers have seen their productivity and household income rise;
- b) Developing partnerships and networks with agencies and organizations at community, sub county, district and international level to support result areas;
- c) Being able to sustain the running and development of the tailoring training center and the milling machine.

Areas that AWODA as an institution need to improve:

- a) Setting up quarterly and bi-annual meetings with leaders of farmer groups and AWODA management to disseminate quarterly reports and identify solutions for challenges within groups;
- b) Strengthening reporting, monitoring and appraising project Activities and outputs. To aid this there will be need to increase capacity for reporting at the farmer group level and organizational level;
- c) Strengthening partnership for tailoring center development; this could also take the form of buying more machines to meet the increasing number of women attending the tailoring classes
- d) Strengthening the credit and saving facilities for farmer groups; and

- e) Emphasizing the aspects of Gender(violence prevention in homes), HIV/AIDS and malaria

4. IMPACT MADE BY PROJECT INTERVENTIONS

4.1 IMPACT ON HOUSEHOLD INCOMES AND LIVELIHOODS

Measurement of impact can be best done after a substantial period (like 5 years) after the end of the project. To attribute change in household income to AWODA interventions alone, there is need for a generic household survey with metrics that sieve out only the intervention contribution to household income. Nonetheless, it was evident from the evaluation mission that over the project period, farming households realized substantial increase in the volume of the harvested crops, rise in incomes and ultimately their livelihoods.

Most of the responds attested to a rise in their levels of nutrition and general increase in stock of health of their children. Prior to the project most members of the famer groups used to record very merger returns from their gardens to the extent that some opted to lease out their land. With training provided by AWODA most of these farmers have since returned to growing food crops, ground nuts and other crops recording a rise in yields and sales.

Livelihood conditions did not just improve only for group members but also for the wider community. The impacts identified by VSLA members include: improvement in hygiene and sanitation; social cohesion and empathy towards people in vulnerable situation positive business competition in the community leading creation of semi urban vibrant local communities, social security measures the community and development of a culture savings.

Agriculture, particularly crop production, remains the mainstay of the economy and so IGAs are of particular importance to members. Yet, given the fragility of Uganda's rain fed agricultural system, economic benefits from such interventions will fluctuate from one season another. Therefore, emphasis needs to be placed on agricultural based IGAs being value-adding activities that help to, improve storage facilities, and other agricultural technologies, including crop varieties.

Below is a testimony from one of the project beneficiary;

"I am married to a husband who likes drinking alcohol and playing cards and we have 4 children. In 2009, I was advised by AWODA to join a VSLA but I turned it down because I had no way of finding the money to save. I thought about it later and decided to join. I saved maize and then sold a hen to save in the VSLA. Then I underwent income generation (SPM) training, kept wondering what business would do even if i had savings in the VSLA. The trainer took us through the processes of identifying a trade. I continued to save for some time and later borrowed 50,000/=, I bought piglet, the balance I bought sukumawiki (spinach), seeds for greens then maize brands to feed the birds. I grow the vegetables for 3 weeks, after some months i sold the piglets. I paid back the loans and borrowed 100,000/=, and then reinvested in cassava with which I made 42,000/= weekly. I paid back the loan and remained with interest of 200,000/=. With this, started making bricks and left a percentage to pay the monthly interests. I sold the bricks and made 900,000/=. I repaid all the loans, kept utilizing the money and later I bought iron sheets. We are soon sharing the money and i plan to buy more piglets and a cow. I'm very grateful to AWODA who brought me light. I used not to eat meat, but now I can when I want. I am very grateful to

AWODA, and all those behind VSLA, my household has changed a lot and you can even see it from the way I look. My life would not be the same. Female, Butiti Uganda”

To document a comprehensive analysis of the impact of the project, it is advised that AWODA in the future undertakes a quantitative household survey that documents actual impact of the project interventions on household incomes and analysis on livelihood changes traced overtime in a panel survey that studies households across a sustained period of time.

4.2 IMPACT ON MIND-SET CHANGE AT COMMUNITY AND INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

Given limitations of time and scope of this evaluation it was not possible to critically study the impact of the project on mind-set change among beneficiaries and community institutions. Nonetheless the evaluation presents below ways in which interventions impacted positively on the community in particular;

- a) Farming practices were understood and farmers realized a change and the contribution these new farming methods generated. At the community levels farmer groups who met evaluators in focus group discussion mentioned that households outside the farmer groups were very keen on joining them because they could see the difference in productivity on their gardens.
- b) At sub county level, the officials contacted by the evaluators affirmed the positive contribution made by AWODA on demystifying rural development through farming. They were happy with the success of the poultry projects, group saving and loan arrangements, and groups being exemplary in keeping farmers engaged in poultry farming and livestock.
- c) The community of Butiti appreciates setting up of the tailoring center and look at the center as one of the ways the young people will be encouraged to participate in vocational initiatives.
- d) The milling center has reduced costs of value addition in the community, especially on transport, time and workload.

5. CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

5.1 GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Ideally gender mainstreaming in such a project should ensure the following structure is in place:

- a) Both men and women are involved in project activities
- b) Both men and women have equal chance of being selected for group leadership
- c) Both men and women and children participate in farming
- d) Both men and women and children participate in group savings and loan schemes
- e) Resources generated by the household are spent in lieu understanding of spouses
- f) Men participate in supporting their female counterparts in the entire value chain (from tilling the ground, to selling of the harvest) and not leaving this entirely for the women especially so for women who are expectant or ill.
- g) Reporting is done in a way that demonstrates both the process factors and benefits of the project interventions to both men and women and the impact on gender relations.
- h) Logical framework is designed based on baseline information with targets that reach a desirable gender balance in participation and benefit from project interventions, and followed up appropriately by project staff.

Targeting a farming-household as opposed to an individual-farmer provided a strong foundation for addressing the aspects of gender equity and equality¹. It was evident in the evaluation that most of the Gender has been always emphasized in all project activities (including in the planning phase), but has not been 'quantified' yet. Gender has been always emphasized in all project activities (including in the planning phase), but has not been 'quantified'.

As indicated in section 3.1.5, some project documents tried to disaggregate information on group participation by sex. Most of the respondents to this evaluation affirmed that training on gender roles by AWODA staff and particularly the engagement of both women and men in farmer groups drastically improved gender relations at the household level.

5.2 CLIMATE CHANGE AND CONSERVATION OF ENVIRONMENT

This being a project based on farming, AWODA embedded the aspects of natural resource management and environmental conservation in messages and training to farmers. During training sessions, farmers were taught the benefits of soil and water conservation, the adverse impact of climate change and how farming methods are important in averting this impact.

However, the evaluation did not see a deliberate attempt by the project to specifically tackle natural resource and environmental conservation aspects. Only documented in the AWODA reports is promotion of fruit tree growing (especially avocados). Another

¹ Gender equality means that both men and women are free to realize their potential, make choices without limitation usually set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles and prejudice. In addition gender equity means fairness in treatment of both men and women according to their respective needs. (UNESCO, 2000)

aspect was conservation of heat (and thereby reducing on cutting of trees for firewood and charcoal) through the use of energy saving firewood stoves. Improved cooking stoves have been made to support on use of firewood at house hold level by the end of the project period. Below is a picture of such stoves.

Photo 1: Energy saving stove built by a farmer beneficiary to conserve the environment



5.3 HIV/AIDS & MALARIA

Apart from participation of AWODA staff in HIV/AIDS workshops, and very limited sessions on HIV/AIDS with the farmers, it was evident that the aspect of HIV/AIDS was not tackled yet it remains a significant challenge to communities in Butiti Sub County.

During the evaluation, members of farmer groups and cooperatives alluded scantily and to very few times that the issue of HIV/AIDS was mentioned during their training sessions. To begin the process of integrating HIV/AIDS in project programming, AWODA needs to start by drafting an HIV/AIDS workplace policy for itself as an organization and using this process to develop a manual for training farmers on issues of prevention, and care and support for People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHAs).

Malaria is the leading cause of death of people in Kyenjojo. In Uganda, malaria alone was reported as a source of illness in 2.9million cases in 2013 alone (46.2%) of the population at the time. Statistics from Uganda Malaria Consortium indicate that only 34% of Ugandan households have members sleeping under mosquito nets. In light of the threat to human life posed by this disease it's important that AWODA integrates it in its programs. Unfortunately during the project period, there is no record of effort or results to this end.

6. PROJECT CHALLENGES AND OPTIONS FOR SUSTAINABILITY

6.1 PROJECT CHALLENGES

Result Area 1: Group Savings and loans Arrangement

The group savings and loans arrangements were well organized and managed and evidently this was the flagship. However, it faced some challenges that mainly included the following:

- a) The project did not document specific regulations for the arrangement;
- b) Data is not strictly updated which has created a gap in reporting and follow up. To improve the data system there needs to be records showing:
 - Saving, loans and names and sex of farmers passing in a cycle
 - No. of savings and loans per quarter and who is with them
 - No. of items revolved per quarter
 - Volume of seed revolved and how much the person passing them on produced
 - Delays duration and cause of delay
 - Quality of items revolves and documentation of death or loss
- c) The productivity of the revolving seed remains low due to delays in revolving the inputs and some inputs do not produce well enough to be paid back in time. In occurrences of theft or death of poultry birds, the system would be adversely affected.
- d) Due to poor recording keeping at the household level, it was difficult to aggregate the net benefit of the savings, loan and seed revolving arrangements throughout the project period and for all items.

Generally more capacity in data management needs to be built at organizational, group and household levels for all project interventions.

Result Area 2: Members using improved farming skills increased

The project was in general terms able to increase the number of members using improved farming and trainings provided by AWODA staff over the year increased skills in this area. However, this result area was faced with the following challenges:

- a) The farmers have had a problem of banana wilt diseases and available herbicides are very costly. Unless this is resolved farmers may be tempted to opt for the inorganic solutions thereby thwarting gains made.

Result Area 3: Farming groups well functioning profitable and self reliant

The evaluation noted that other than the challenge related to result 2 above; they faced similar three main problems:

- a) Insufficient storage facilities for their maize and other logistical support especially tarpaulins for drying on their maize;
- b) Limited funds to purchase maize so that they increase their returns from selling in larger volumes and increase their shareholding amounts
- c) Competition from middlemen who purchase at distorted prices and thereby discrediting the whole idea of group marketing, savings and loans.

Result Area 4: The number of small scale farmer groups increased

As was demonstrated in section 2 of this report, the number of farmer groups increased over the project period from 14 in 2013 to 24 in 2014. Two main challenges are noted on this result area:

- a) The project did not develop guidelines for graduating 'old' and self-sustaining groups.
- b) There is limited information on group dynamics i.e. who constitute these groups; how has each member in the group benefitted; who has dropped out; who has joined; how different do members of the group wish to see interventions ran; etc. Due to this information gap, it became difficult to qualify if increment in number of groups also meant increment in quality of life of group members and to what extent? It is important to know the quantitative increase but more important to know the quality of benefit from project interventions.

Result Area 5: The self-empowerment of farmer groups has increased

AWODA project 2013-14 was successful in increasing its coverage and it reached out to more rural farmers over the year. The challenge for the project over the period was to strengthen these groups and empower them to sustain their activities. In this bid, AWODA faced the following challenges:

- a) The entire concept of farming is highly technical. Most of the targeted farmers are illiterate. This largely has been responsible for a low adaptation rate of new technologies. Over the next period, model farmers should be used to mentor and coach 'struggling' farmers in their respective groups.
- b) As the groups increased from 14 to 24, staffing almost remained the same. This presented a challenge for close monitoring and follow due to increased in workload for staff.
- c) Hash weather for farmers in the dry zone disappointed most of the farmers that had invested in grain production. During the short rains of March crop season, farmers experience an infestation of army worms that attacked maize, beans fields. For instance the average loss was about 50% for the farmers in Butiti Sub County.
- d) The poultry farmers were face with a challenge of diseases and expensive feeds.
- e) The tailoring center still faces challenges of running costs during the low business period
- f) The center also faces high costs of servicing the sewing machines because servicing experts are not resident in Mukunyu trading center
- g) The milling machine maintenance costs are high being diesel powered compared to hydro power.

Result Area 6: Cross cutting issues- Gender HIV/AIDS, Environment and malaria control

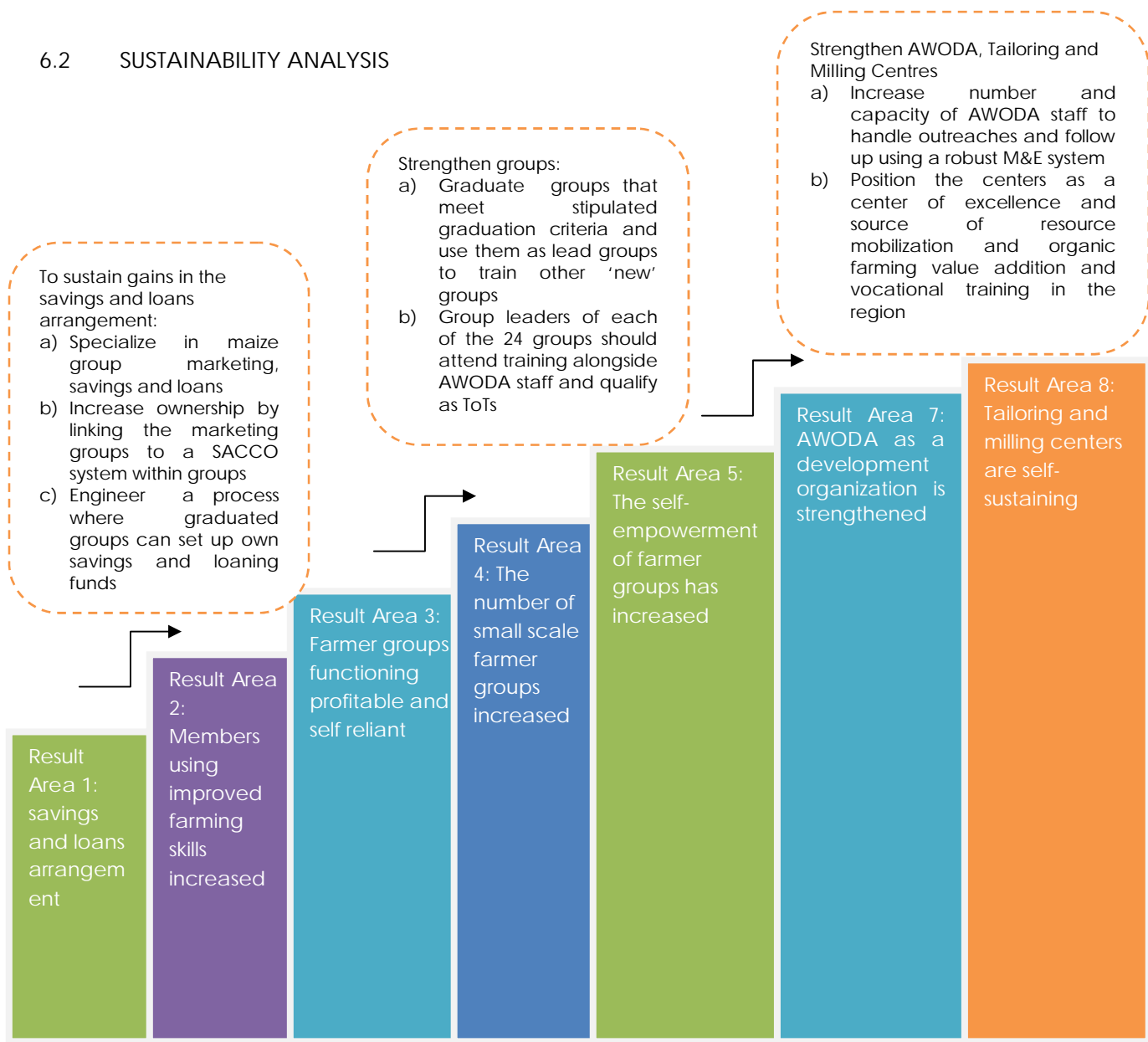
Integrating HIV/AIDS and Malaria and well as environmental conservation was an area that partially addressed throughout the project period. Its important, therefore, that the next phase develops Workplace policies for malaria and HIV/AIDS and develops manual on gender mainstreaming and integration of environmental issues in capacity building programs for farmer groups.

Result Area 7: AWODA as a development organization is strengthened

AWODA as an organization grew drastically in visibility and clout over the project period. The success of the interventions has elevated AWODA as a popular institution among rural farmers and the district local government authorities. It is important the organization moves into the next phase. The organization just like any other still faces some challenges:

- a) The organization has limited capacity to generate its own revenue and in the medium term will remain heavily dependent on development partners for its survival;
- b) The organization has lean staff. As the workload goes up with increase of farmer groups, more effort in terms of manpower and logistics will be required sustaining monitoring and training activities across the project area.
- c) Most of the farmers that were targeted (indeed as the situation is in most rural areas in Uganda) are illiterate and this required translation of almost all literature into the local dialect.
- d) Price volatility for maize and other produce remains a threat to the success of the project.
- e) Group marketing, savings and loans face daily competition from other buyers and lending institutions. Items like coffee depended on for income also suffers mentioned volatilities. As an organization, AWODA staff will need to keep focused on price and financial market trends and communicate sustained accurate information to farmer groups.
- f) It was evident from the evaluation that for the size of the organization, it was stretched to implement the result areas.

6.2 SUSTAINABILITY ANALYSIS



7. BEST PRACTICES, LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Result Area 1: Group savings and loans arrangement

The saving and loans system has been a resounding success and the following lessons have been learned.

- a) The system provides material items which are easily transferrable and easier to pay back unlike cash which may be easily diverted. Inputs in kind make people be proud and allow them to show the results to others.
- b) There has been progression within the system. For instance very poor people go for smaller items (like cups of ground nuts) and later migrate to bean and then maize.
- c) The savings and loaning was a key aspect of group dynamics. It kept groups together, created a sense of love and friendship, as well as ownership and responsibility.

Result Area 2: Members using improved sustainable farming skills increased

Use of improved farming methods is an integral part of project activities. Most farmers are able to articulate the importance and benefits of organic farming with comparison to inorganic farming and this knowledge creation has strengthened the adoption of modern farming practices responsible for increase in farm productivity.

Result Area 3: farmer groups function well, profitable and self reliant

Farmer groups have been strengthened and have contributed significantly in strengthening of farmer entrepreneur skills, business management, vegetable production, tailoring and value addition to maize and cassava and more so in providing a better price to farmers high than the prevailing market price.

Result Area 4: The number of small scale farmer groups increased

The number of small scale farmers has increased from 14 in 2013 which comprised of 420 members to the current 24 groups comprising 714 members.

Result Area 5: The self-empowerment of farmer groups has increased

The savings and loaning, poultry and vegetable growing and tailoring project interventions have created a further positive role in strengthening the farmer groups. At the group level increasing the capacity of farmer groups through trainings for farmer groups have strengthened group organization and increased efficiency in realization of project objectives.

Result Area 6: Cross cutting issues- Gender HIV/AIDS, Environment and malaria control

Women participation increased from 50% to 56.6% overall. More importantly, it has been evident from this evaluation that gender roles at the household level have been impacted by this project. Women and men in the farmer groups demonstrated that they are able to discuss at the household level as spouses on matters of expenditure of household income with equal voice in determination use of money earned. Owing to the fact that the program emphasized farming, issues of environment and natural

resource management were integrated in the training, especially soil conservation, planting of trees and removing polythene bags from gardens.

Result Area 7: AWODA as a development organization is strengthened

New policy documents have been elaborated to streamline AWODA'S operations and mechanisms in place for staff development. Staff AWODA though small has the zeal and personal motivation to play its distinct roles.

7.2 SUMMARY OF LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Result Area	Lessons learned	Recommendations
<p>Group savings and loans arrangement</p>	<p>The system provides material items which are easily transferrable and easier to pay back unlike cash with may be easily be diverted. Inputs in kind make people be proud and allow them to show the results to others.</p> <p>There has been progression within the system. For instance very poor people go for smaller items (like cups of ground nuts) and later migrate to bean and then maize.</p> <p>The savings and loaning was a key aspect of group dynamics. It kept groups together, created a sense of love and friendship, as well as ownership and responsibility.</p>	<p>a) Specialize in maize group marketing, savings and loans</p> <p>b) Increase ownership by linking the marketing groups to a SACCO system within groups Engineer a process where graduated groups can set up own savings and loaning funds</p> <p>c) The Initial improved varieties of maize (Nalonge V) need to be given to more farmers for strengthening the revolving and pay back system such as 1:2 to help speed up the rate of savings(crop) and milling</p>
<p>Members using improved sustainable farming skills increased</p>	<p>Use of improved farming methods is an integral part of project activities. Most farmers are able to articulate the importance and benefits of organic farming with comparison to inorganic farming and this knowledge creation has strengthened the adoption of modern farming practices responsible for increase in farm productivity.</p>	<p>a) Find solutions (and soon) for banana wilt challenges and boost the morale of organic farmers and remove the temptation of seeking inorganic alternatives</p> <p>b) Increase training on farming practices and follow up on the training provided through the farmer field school approach</p> <p>Integrate livestock production in farmer group activities like piggery, and goat farming</p>
<p>Farmer groups function well, profitable and self reliant</p>	<p>Farmer groups have been strengthened and have contributed significantly in strengthening of farmer entrepreneur skills, business management, vegetable production, tailoring and value addition to maize and cassava and more so in providing a better price to farmers high than the prevailing market price.</p>	<p>a) Set up storage facilities for groups and provide them with necessary logistics tarpaulins, weighing scales etc</p> <p>b) Expand the revenue base of the farmer groups by boosting their financial resources to buy, process and sell more maize volumes continue the initial support of crop finance system</p> <p>c) Set up arrangements for other crops</p>

Result Area	Lessons learned	Recommendations
		especially cassava, Irish potatoes and groundnuts for food security and nutrition at households
The number of small scale farmer groups increased	The number of small scale farmers has increased from 14 in 2013 which comprised of 420 members to the current 24 groups comprising 714 members.	a) Set up a system that shows growth not just in number of groups but on actual composition, inter-group changes, impact on individual households as a basis for group graduation
The self-empowerment of farmer groups has increased	The savings and loaning, poultry and vegetable growing and tailoring project interventions have created a further positive role in strengthening the farmer groups. At the group level increasing the capacity of farmer groups through trainings for farmer groups have strengthened group organization and increased efficiency in realization of project objectives.	a) Graduate groups that meet stipulated graduation criteria as use them as lead groups to train other 'new' groups b) Group leaders of each of the 24 groups should attend training alongside AWODA staff and qualify as ToTs. For members who can't train in sewing, could be involved in other vocational activities such as weaving (baskets, shopping bags, hats and money purses.
Gender balance, HIV/AIDS, malaria control and environmental issues mainstreamed in the project activities	Women participation increased from 50% to 56.6% overall. More importantly, it has been evident from this evaluation that gender roles at the household level have been impacted by this project. Women and men in the farmer groups demonstrated that they are able to discuss at the household level as spouses on matters of expenditure of household income with equal voice in determination use of money earned. Owing to the fact that the program emphasized farming, issues of environment and natural resource management were integrated in the training, especially soil conservation, planting of trees and removing polythene bags from gardens.	a) Set up HIV/AIDS and Malaria workplace policies for AWODA as an organization and farmer groups b) Develop manuals on gender mainstreaming at the farmer group level as well as natural resource conservation c) Plan for mainstreaming awareness on gender based violence and prevention
AWODA as a development organization is strengthened	New policy documents have been elaborated to streamline AWODA'S operations and mechanisms in place for staff development. Staff AWODA though small has the zeal and personal motivation to play its	a) Increase number and capacity of AWODA staff to handle outreaches and follow up using a robust M&E system b) Position the Milling and tailoring centers as

Result Area	Lessons learned	Recommendations
	distinct roles.	centers of excellence and source of resource mobilization, organic farming value addition and vocational training in the region. c) Support AWODA upgrade the maize milling machine to electricity by buying 50hp mortar and extending 3 phase electricity to the milling machine d) Translate training materials to the local language

8. APPENDICIES

APPENDIX I PERSONALITIES & INSTITUTIONS MET/INTERVIEWED

a) Key Informant Respondents

Butiti sub county Officials (Agriculture and councilor)
AWODA Staff & Board Members
Model farmers

b) Project Beneficiaries

1. Mukunyu tweyimukye A
2. Mukunyu tweyimukye B
3. Abagamba kamu A
4. Abagamba kamu B
5. Nyarugongo tweyimukye
6. Kicwera wome group
7. Isema ndongo group
8. Isema twiikiranganize women group
9. Buhemba bee keeping group
10. Munobwa tweyombeke women group
11. Ntoroko road group
12. Kirongo women poultry keepers
13. Kicwera abesiga mukama group
14. Kichwera tweyimukye group
15. Kichwera abaikiriza obumu group A
16. Kichwera abaikiriza obumu group B
17. Busanza emuka tukole group
18. Kichwera youth group
19. Kichwera abaitereine group
20. Kisabagwa yahura yohoza group
21. Busanza tukole hamu group
22. Miranga tweyigambe group
23. Miranga B women group
24. Mukabamu tweterane group

c) Centers

Milling center
Tailoring center

LIST OF MEMBERS INTERVIEWED

AWODA BOARD DE-BRIEF ATTENDANCE LIST			
NO	NAME	DESIGNATION	CONTACT
1	Nyabuthono Medius	Director	0782185104
2	Basoona Sarah	Secretary	0776811204
3	Hdijah Asimwe	Treasurer	0773820744
4	Betty Kobusigye	Member	0783974559
5	Ithungu Jetrace	Member	0779522520
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			

FARMERS GROUP LIST		
NO	NAME	SEX
1	Kemigabo cleophas	F
2	Tibakunirwa Florence	F
3	Muzabibu kawamara	M
4	Mperabusa A	M
5	Mugisa Robbinah	F
6	Rwobuyonjo Jane	F
7	Nsungwa Margaret	F
8	Kabajilizi Jacinta	F
9	Kobusinge Godfrey	M
10	Mwebaza Busoke	M
11	Katuramu Tadeo	M
12	Magezi Simon	M
13	Kakuliremu Rest	F
14	Kabahanuzi Getrude	F
15	Nyakoojo P	M
16	Kajumba L	F
17	Mugisa P	M
18	Kabasinguzi Masko	F
19	Kyaligonza P	M
20	Tinka P	M
21	Kebirungi Annet	F
22	Nnasanga Dorethy	F
23	Mugabe Robert	M
24	Nsungwa Rosemary	F
25	Kabahweza Sarah	F
26	Kabonesa Justine	F
27	Murokole Christopher	M
28	Kezabu Grace	F
29	Mutazindwa Kawamara	M
30	Kanyankole Ntambirwe	M
31	Kajoina Jane	F
32	Kajoina Betty	F

APPENDIX II LITERATURE REVIEWED

Annual Report (2013/14)
AWODA Annual Narrative Report (2013/14)
Project Plan (2013)

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+256 75 3 579255
samugie@yahoo.com



Awoda beneficiary rears chicken near Mill



An exempt of cash book of Mukunyu twimukye VSLA



Some women undergoing training in sewing/tailoring



A model farmer in his banana demo garden



A poultry house at Awoda –beneficiary



A member gives her submission during evaluation session



AWODA maize milling machine at Mukunyu T.C