Women Empowerment through Compost Making, Organic Farming and Mushroom Production

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President, Union Park Women Association &
Elected President Grand Port Women Regional Council &
Board Member of National Women council

THE SADC GENDER PROTOCOL SUMMIT 2014
SYNOPSIS & OUTLINE

• Background & Objectives
• Activities & Beneficiaries
• Results & Outcomes
• What next? Sustainability & Replication
BACKGROUND & OBJECTIVES

• The **Union Park Women Association** has been in existence since 1980s, with Association members mostly unemployed women

• Recent change in sugar sector resulted in closure of Rose Belle Sugar Estate a major source of employment for the inhabitants of nearby villages

• in the past association activities were mainly with ‘traditional’ activities of ‘sewing’ and ‘cooking’, ..., but perception of role of women in society has changed and *thus association had to adapt and change with the times*

• In the last few years 3 key activities/projects were promoted and funding sought:
  – Compost Making
  – Organic Farming
  – Mushroom Production

• **Objectives**: Create Employment and Empower women through activities and thus generate a source of income to support their family
# ACTIVITIES & BENEFICIARIES

*Training & Actual Production for each key activity*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>WOMEN</th>
<th>MEN</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>% WOMEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct beneficiaries e.g. number of MEMBERS trained in Organic Farming &amp; Compost Making</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect beneficiaries (e.g. through other networks)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Port Savanne Regional Committee (Women’s Associations)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Regional Committee (women’ Association)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other NGOs</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct beneficiaries e.g. number of MEMBERS trained in Mushroom Production</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect beneficiaries (e.g. through other networks)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Port Savanne Regional Committee (Women’s Associations)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Background & Objectives; **Activities & Beneficiaries**; Results & Outcomes; What next? Sustainability & Replication.
Activities I & II:
Beneficiaries trained in Organic Farming & Compost Making

Background & Objectives; Activities & Beneficiaries; Results & Outcomes; What next? Sustainability & Replication
EXHIBITION OF BIO PRODUCTS (VEGETABLES) 2010
SALE OF ORGANIC VEGETABLES CULTIVATED USING COMPOST 2010
Activity III: *Mushroom Production*

Creation of Job Opportunities for unemployed Women of Union Park in the region through Mushroom Production (A European Project) in 2011

*Mushroom Production Building*
Mushroom Production Project
Mushroom Production Unit
Not Yet Ready (in production)
Harvested Mushroom Production
RESULTS & OUTCOMES

all activities

• Women’s empowerment
• Outreach through the media
• Changes at household level
• Changes in attitudes
• Recognition & Awards
Women’s empowerment
Example of Evidence

• I am a housewife with one child; I joined the Union Park Women Association in year 2006 to be able to participate in activities/training/courses like dress making, paintings, pastry to empower myself.

• In order to improve and empower women in different sectors, we formed the Fairy Women Entrepreneurs Cooperative Society Limited to benefit from Training to Cooperators in different fields: I am a Director and Founded Member.

• I participated in several trainings like compost making, mushroom production, food preservation.

• Thus from discrimination, persecution, stereotyping or even illiteracy, Mauritian women are now respected, valued and are excelling at all levels.

• With acquired knowledge I prepare clothes, snacks pastries to sell in Fairs in order to enjoy social freedom, economic independence and equal rights.

• Name: Basantee RAMESSUR

• Designation: Member Union Park Women Association
Beneficiary of ongoing projects
Outreach through the media
Example of Evidence

• Media organisations can play a more proactive role in changing attitudes and mindsets, in delivering key messages and the effective application of the National Gender Policy Framework.

An Interview on Compost Making

MBCTV Local Radio and Television
Changes at household level

Example of Evidence

• I am a housewife with three children, one is a boy 20 years who is a mentally handicapped child and needs constant care; I joined the Union Park Women Association in year 2005 to be able to participate in activities/training/courses like to empower myself.

• I participated in several trainings like compost making and Organic Farming

• To earn and additional income I am working with the Association for Organic Farming of vegetables.

• With acquired knowledge I prepare clothes, snacks pastries to sell in Fairs in order to enjoy social freedom, economic independence and equal rights.

• Name: Rajnee Sookoo
• Designation: Secretary, Union Park Women Association
• Beneficiary of ongoing projects
Changes in attitudes
Example of Evidence

Civil society organisations have an important role to play within the National Gender Policy Framework to create a strong vibrant proactive constituency for gender equality.

Alongside being a working mother with four children of the same age, I am a member of the Union Park Women Association working to promote the welfare status of women.

I had to change my habits, my attitude towards my children to make them aware of the necessity to do community work, learn more techniques to have an additional income.

I have to cater for my four children who are in Form VI with every books, schooling materials. I was encouraged by working with other members for training purposes to change other members attitude to work for the enhancement of women.

Name: Koomaree PERSUNNOO
Designation: Secretary, Union Park Women Association
Recognition & Awards
Example of Evidence
1st Prize MACOSS AWARD 2011
In Agriculture (Organic Farming) and Poverty Alleviation

CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION
This is to certify that
Union Park Women Association
has participated in the
‘NATIONAL NGO AWARD 2011’
OSMOSE
Développement durable
L’agriculture bio, c’est possible !

L’Union Park Women’s Association recevra bientôt sa certification bio, une première chez nous. Et elle est loin d’être seule dans sa démarche. Quelques pionniers sont en train de lancer...
What next?

SUSTAINABILITY AND REPLICATION

• How can the work be sustained & How can the work be cascaded to other organisations?
  – Non-profit Organization so far >> Partly Transform into Business Venture via Fairy Women Entrepreneurs Cooperative Society Limited >> working on Business Plan
  – Macro level >> Bring awareness to all stakeholders in all regions
Thanks!!

Q&As

Lakshmi
Pasteurizers for Mushroom
Visitors from other Countries
Capacity Building at Regional Committee Level