



Project Completion Report - January 2016

Building Sustainable Futures; Training in Farming for Income Generation for Disadvantaged Families in Rural Kenya

Summary

We are pleased to report that this project has been very successful and all the project objectives have been achieved in accordance with the original project proposal. The positive outcomes for the beneficiaries of this project have been significant and will be sustained well into the future.

Context

The project took place in the rural communities of Makueni County of eastern Kenya (formally Kibwezi District). It is a semi-arid climatic zone where rainfall is unreliable and the majority of the population collect water from bore holes or seasonal rivers. Rural dwellings are usually constructed from mud and grass thatch or tin roofs and services such as paved roads and electricity are scarce. Most families rely upon subsistence farming and live near or below the poverty line. This project consciously targeted some of the most disadvantaged beneficiaries, namely those people who are living with HIV or have a disability.

The project ran from January 2015 to the end of December 2015 with a grant of £15,000.

Local partners

Advantage Africa's local partners for this project were Kibwezi Disabled Persons' Organisation (KDPO) and Rescue Team for HIV & AIDS.

KDPO In addition to income generation projects, KDPO initiate and support village level self-help groups and they run a continuous programme of home visits to disabled people's families to offer rehabilitation advice and other practical support. They also run a small rehabilitation workshop to make and repair assistive devices for disabled people and where appropriate KDPO facilitate the provision of prostheses and corrective surgery.

Rescue Team for HIV & AIDS supports people living with HIV in their community. They facilitate access to anti-retroviral drugs and provide information and support on how to manage the effects of HIV. Rescue Team also offer HIV testing and counselling (HTC) services and run a comprehensive programme of HIV awareness and community education initiatives with children, youth and adults.

Project Outcomes and Results

The aim of this project was to provide about 540 people in 90 disadvantaged families with the knowledge, skills and resources to start small-scale income generating activities which are self-sustaining.

Identifying beneficiaries and purchasing livestock

The project started with the identification of project beneficiaries. Rescue Team and KDPO already knew of a large number of the most vulnerable individuals who are either living with HIV or people with disabilities. They also liaised with community leaders such as village elders and sub-chefs to ensure that they had a final list of 90 people who were not only disadvantaged, but at the same time were keen and committed to taking on small-scale income generating activities (IGAs) at their homes.

The project team were keen that beneficiaries would have their donations of livestock available for taking home at the end of the training. They therefore made bulk purchases of local breed (hardy) chickens and Gala goats in February 2015, just before the training started. The chickens were locally available from the market in Kibwezi town and local poultry keepers. The Gala goats however had to be purchased from the remote Orma tribal area about 200 km to the north east of the project location.



Some of the Gala goats before being donated to the beneficiaries

Training in Poultry and Gala goat rearing

The training for all 90 beneficiaries took place in February 2015. Three courses of four days each were run and it was decided that the opportunity of learning both Gala goat keeping and poultry rearing should be given to all the beneficiaries regardless of which type of IGA they were starting. The technical aspects of animal husbandry were taught by a local agricultural expert (Mr Abed) who has been involved in this initiative from the pilot project stage, together with officers from the local ministry of agriculture. Project staff from KDPO and Rescue Team also helped with training topics concerning the management of successful IGAs, such as record keeping and simple financial management.



Beneficiaries attending the training courses



Demonstration on administering chicken vaccinations and a group of trainees after completion of their course

The evaluation of the training was carried out eight months later, towards the end of the project year. This allowed project staff to determine how much of the learning had been retained and also the participants could evaluate the quality and relevance of the training having experienced the reality of starting and running their IGAs.

The training evaluation was conducted with a random sample of 40 beneficiaries (20 with poultry and 20 with Gala goats). The key findings are shown below:

Question: How would you rate your knowledge before the training and after the training	Knowledge level before training	Knowledge level after training
Expert	0	10%
Very good knowledge	20%	75%
Some knowledge	35%	15%
Very little or no knowledge	45%	0

Question: How would you rate the overall quality of the training	Percentage
Excellent	20%
Good	65%
Moderate	15%
Poor	0
Very Poor	0

Note: Beneficiaries who experienced good success with their IGAs tended to rate the training highly whereas those who had difficulties were more inclined to rate the training as moderate.

At the end of the training, participants identified other beneficiaries who lived near to them and where possible they organised themselves into informal support groups according to their home locations. These groups were formed so that beneficiaries could continue to share knowledge and plan simple collective marketing and immunisation systems where appropriate.

IGA Start-ups

After the training 60 beneficiaries were each donated five immunised chickens and a large sack of starter chicken feed. 30 beneficiaries received two female Gala goats each along with a 500 litre plastic water tank, which was necessary to store water to keep the goats hydrated and in good health.



Beneficiaries receiving their donations of chickens, water tanks and Gala goats after the training

Measuring the success of IGAs - Poultry

Poultry keeping is a common pursuit in rural Kenya, but it requires careful management in the arid climatic conditions experienced in our project location. Many subsistence farmers try to keep a small number of chickens but often give up when they lose their flock to disease. The most common is Newcastle disease which tends to occur in this area when the rains come. It is therefore essential that newcomers to chicken rearing understand the importance of immunising their birds and administering boosters at regular intervals. Security and protection from predators is also a key issue in chicken rearing. That is why our beneficiaries were given instruction in how to construct simple chicken houses

made out of local natural materials. These houses serve several purposes. They offer shade from the hot sun during the day and security from predators such as mongooses and birds of prey at night. They also provide chickens with a safe place for eggs to be laid, and for sitting birds to hatch their chicks.

Our project evaluation showed that all of the chicken beneficiaries were still operating their IGAs after the first eight months and most had achieved significant increases in the number of birds they owned. Of the initial donated chickens, our sample showed that overall the numbers had increased by an average of 400%, and this was despite 24% of the original birds having died. This means that on average a beneficiary who started with five birds, had increased their flock to 20 birds after eight months. This statistic shows good overall success, however this average figure does not tell the whole story. In fact some beneficiaries showed high increases in numbers of chickens (e.g. 50 from the original 5) whilst one or two had much more modest increases, having lost almost as many birds as had multiplied.

In terms of income, most recipients of chickens concentrate on egg production and only sell chickens for meat when they are very confident that they have good flock numbers. We found that on average they use more than half of the eggs produced to help feed their own families and therefore save money on purchasing food (average 8 people per family in our sample). The remaining eggs are usually sold for 15 Kenyan shillings (about 10 pence each) and chicken owners reported that the local demand for eggs was good.

Summary table showing egg production numbers and the cash value of production.

Percentage of beneficiaries	Average number of eggs produced in a day (for consumption and sale)	Average number of eggs produced in a month (for consumption and sale)	Average value of eggs produced in a month in £s (1 egg at 10 pence each)
25%	9 - 15	270 - 450	27 - 45
49%	5 - 9	150 - 270	15 - 27
26%	1 - 5	30 - 150	3 - 15

Although at first glance the income for beneficiaries may seem modest, in the context of the subsistence way of life in the project location, these amounts of money can easily make the difference between a family going hungry or being fed. Many beneficiaries started this project living below the poverty line (less than \$1.90 per day) and have now managed to lift themselves above this level. The most successful 25% of beneficiaries are making a significant income, and are now considered to be 'doing very well' by local standards. This is a significant achievement considering their vulnerability before the start of the project.

Measuring the success of IGAs – Gala Goats

Although goat keeping has always been a part of the subsistence way of life for the local Kikamba people, the rearing of Gala goats is relatively new in this location. Gala goats are a hardy breed from the arid far north of Kenya near Somalia, but they are now recognised to be well suited to the semi-arid conditions found further south. They are a high milk yielding breed and can survive periods of drought.

Each Gala goat beneficiary was donated two female goats and as far as possible they were given goats that were expectant. Beneficiaries were made aware that the first offspring from their animals would be made available to other disadvantaged people as the project developed, thus multiplying the beneficiary numbers over time. Two male goats were also purchased as part of the project, and these were used on a rotational basis to breed with the female goats as they came into heat.

We are pleased to report that the Gala goat initiative has been a great success and the recipients have been very appreciative of the project. The Gala goats have provided good levels of milk production, often over a litre per day. Even during the very dry months of July to October when vegetation for foraging is scarce, they still managed to maintain some level of production while conventional local breeds stopped producing milk. Our evaluation sample showed that on average over 50% of the female goats gave birth in the first 8 months and many of these were multiple births (twins). However a few animals also died. Some died as a result of complications at the time of giving birth, whilst some became sick. The total number of deaths extrapolated from our evaluation and first hand information from follow-up home visits was 10% (6 of the original 60). Overall therefore, we saw an increase in Gala goat numbers of 65% over the first 8 months (45 births, assuming half were twins, minus 6 deaths= 39).

In addition to the increases in animal numbers, milk production was the key indicator of income generation success for the beneficiaries. Our evaluation sample showed that the level of milk production fluctuated throughout the months in accordance with the availability of vegetation for the

goats to forage. At their most productive a single goat was producing over two litres of milk a day, whilst in dry periods this could fall to less than half a litre. The beneficiaries were taught not to harvest all of the milk but to allow sucking offspring to feed so that the young goats would develop well.

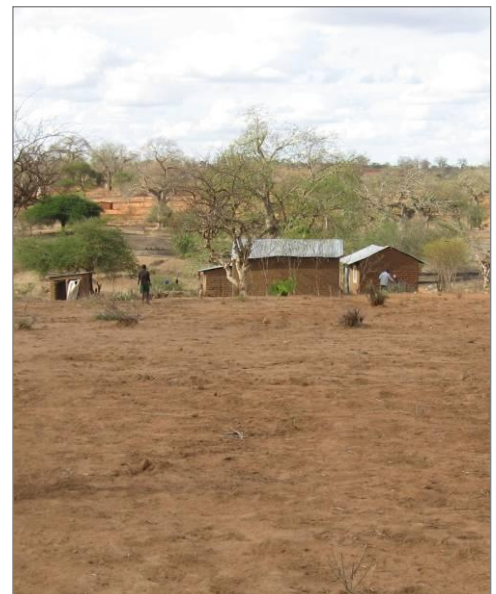
Goats' milk is known locally to be much richer in nutritional value than cows' milk, and all the goat recipients reported that they used milk for their own nutrition to make porridge and other maize based dishes. They had therefore saved money on purchasing milk. At times of high production they had found a ready market for the sale of goats' milk at 60 Kenyan Shillings per litre.

Overall the recipients of the two Gala goats reported an average production of 1.5 litres of milk per day which equates to a value of approximately £21 per beneficiary per month. This is in addition to the increasing asset value as the goats breed and multiply in number.

Case Studies

Frances Mutoka is a blind man of 30 years who lives with his elderly mother and three children in an isolated homestead far from services such as electricity, running water and paved roads. KDPO have known him for some years and with their support he has always strived to live as independently as possible. KDPO felt that Frances could benefit from the training in farming for income generation and in February 2015 he was donated two Gala goats and a plastic water tank. Frances says that before the training he had very little proper knowledge of Gala goat keeping, especially concerning the issues of vaccinations, de-worming and the importance of providing them with clean water. He said that the training was very beneficial, and he also now knows other people in his village that are beneficiaries of the project and can help him succeed.

Since receiving his two Gala goats, each has given birth and Frances now has four animals. He is aware however that the first born goat will be given to another disadvantaged family when it is mature enough to be separated from its mother. He says he is proud to be able to help another family, 'I was the receiver, now I will be the giver!'



Frances's homestead

At the time of our visit to Frances's home in October there had been a long period of drought and food for the goats was scarce. Despite this Frances's goats were still producing half a litre of milk each per day. He said that he was allowing the young goats to suckle some milk, and using the rest in the family's tea and Ugali (staple maize dish). He said he was saving a lot of money by not buying milk and when the goats were producing well he was selling about two litres a day in the village. He says 'there are always people ready to buy goats' milk, they like it and they know it's nutritious'.

Frances expressed his sincere thanks to those that had included him in this project. He says 'although I have a disability, people around here no longer see me as useless because now I have something which gives me food and money! Also I don't now feel stressed everyday when my children come home from school; I always have at least something small for them to eat'.



Frances with one of his goats and sitting with his family in front of his donated water tank.

Muthoki Nyanai is a grandmother to six children who were orphaned when their parents died of AIDS several years ago. Muthoki is herself HIV positive which she contracted through her former role as a traditional birth attendant (informal midwife). When Rescue Team first became aware of Muthoki she was very sick and weak, but with several years support and medication provided by Advantage Africa and Rescue Team she is now strong and active. She says 'without the help from Rescue Team I would not be standing today'.

Muthoki was included in the project because although she made a small income from making charcoal she wanted another means of income to support her grandchildren and she wanted to become more self-sufficient and be able to afford her own HIV anti-retroviral drugs without continually relying on Rescue Team's support.

Muthoki received the IGA training and soon afterwards she built a basic chicken house with help from the project team. After 8 months her original five chickens had multiplied quickly, and she had sold some birds to buy cement to improve her mud house. When we visited her she still had 18 adult birds and a further seven chicks. Muthoki said she has plenty of eggs for her grandchildren and can now afford her own HIV medication. She says her main challenge is from the mongooses which live in the rocks near her home and sometimes try to catch her chickens.

Muthoki thanked the project team for the assistance and particularly for the follow-up visits to her home which helped and encouraged her to make the chicken project a success. She did not let her visitors leave without giving them some eggs to take home!



Muthoki at home



Muthoki's chickens, chicks, eggs and chicken house

Challenges and Lessons Learnt

At the end of the project year Advantage Africa and their local partners, Rescue Team and KDPO reflected on the project to identify the challenges and lessons learnt. They all observed that the project had been implemented efficiently and the benefits had been significant.

One major challenge however had been the purchasing of the Gala goats. These animals are only available for purchase in the remote north east of the country and there are security risks associated with travel to the Orma tribal areas. The Orma warriors who sell the goats set up informal open air market places and are known for carrying arms and for their fiery temperaments. The price of each goat was bargained for individually and once each purchase was agreed the project staff had to immediately mark the animals with paint so that they could not be stolen back into the sellers flock. Project staff were also warned against the possibility of banditry when carrying large numbers of livestock away from the market. In future project staff will be more prepared for the security measures required for the purchasing of Gala goats.

One other lesson from the project was that Gala goats, although hardy, are more susceptible to sickness during periods of drought. Future projects should emphasize this point even more with trainees and stress that the hydration and feeding of animals at these times requires special effort and attention.

Expenditure

The £15,000 grant from Charles Hayward Foundation has now been fully used. Most of the funds were transferred to Kenya in January 2015 for the training and purchase of livestock which took place in February 2015. The remaining funds were used for support for beneficiaries in their IGAs at their homes, monitoring follow-up visits and project management and coordination by Advantage Africa in the UK. Below are details of the international fund transfers made.

Date	Means of transfer	Local Recipient	Expenditure £s
Jan 2015	INTL Global Currencies	KDPO	6,294
Jan 2015	INTL Global Currencies	Rescue Team	6,294
July 2015	INTL Global Currencies	KDPO	364
July 2015	INTL Global Currencies	Rescue Team	32
Aug 2015	INTL Global Currencies	Rescue Team	95
Oct 2015	INTL Global Currencies	Rescue Team	238
Oct 2015	INTL Global Currencies	KDPO	288
June and Nov 2015	Contribution to Advantage Africa project management and monitoring visits	-	405
Throughout 2015	Advantage Africa UK based project management and monitoring	-	990
Total			15,000

Transfers were made in Kenyan shillings at the exchange rates on the dates of transfer and approx £s equivalents are shown.

Advantage Africa has contributed a further £3,100 towards this project as agreed in the original budget. This expenditure was principally for local staff allowances and some UK staff costs.

Conclusion and Thanks

We are pleased that the beneficiaries of this project have been assisted according to the original project plan. This has resulted in significant positive benefits to some of the most vulnerable, disadvantaged and stigmatised people in East Africa, and the benefits will last well into the future. Additionally the capacity and knowledge of KDPO and Rescue team has been further enhanced, and we believe that their development work will therefore be increasingly effective in the future.

The staff and beneficiaries of KDPO, Rescue Team and Advantage Africa would like to convey their sincere thanks to the staff and board of The Charles Hayward Foundation, without whom this valuable work would not have been possible.