



KENYA | INTEGRATED ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Challenge of Improving Agricultural Livelihoods

Nearly one-fifth of the world's 7.3 billion people live on less than \$1.25 per day¹. The vast majority of these people live in rural areas and depend on agriculture for their livelihood. Economic conditions in Nyanza province in Kenya reflect this larger trend, with 72 percent of households dependent on agriculture.

Episcopal Relief & Development and Anglican Development Services-Nyanza (ADS-Nyanza) have developed and implemented a unique Integrated Economic Empowerment (IEE) program to address the shortage of government agricultural extension workers. In the three years since this program started in two of Nyanza's counties – Migori and Homa Bay – the program has generated 151 volunteer trainers and reached 900 total farmers, with 72 percent of farmers increasing their income by 15 percent. Of these 900 farmers, one-third were targeted for participation because they are vulnerable, such as people living with HIV/AIDS, the elderly or people with disabilities.

Transforming Lives and Livelihoods with Integrated Economic Empowerment

Currently, there is one government extension worker for every 3,000 farmers, which has led to low adoption of agricultural best practices. The IEE program brings volunteer extension workers to the rural poor, where one volunteer trainer provides mentorship to 10 to 15 farmers to improve agricultural livelihoods and market access, and increase savings and access to credit. ADS-Nyanza staff determine the selection criteria for volunteer trainers, then ADS-Nyanza and all of the participating trained farmers select the volunteer trainers from among their ranks. Once volunteer trainers are selected, they receive training on a wide range of agricultural and business issues such as composting, seed selection, safe use of agro-chemicals and poultry care, as well as marketing and financial management.

¹ United Nations Environmental Programme Report, http://www.unep.org/pdf/SmallholderReport_WEB.pdf

Transforming Lives & Livelihoods



Vulnerable Populations

65%
HOMA BAY

35%
MIGORI

68%
PARTICIPANTS ARE WOMEN



Volunteers Trained

63
HOMA BAY VOLUNTEERS

+ 88
MIGORI VOLUNTEERS

= 151
TOTAL VOLUNTEERS TRAINED



Farmers Trained

900
TOTAL FARMERS TRAINED

Community ownership and use of local volunteers is integral to the IEE program and also cuts across the ADS-Nyanza's savings and health programming. The IEE program also emphasizes analysis, monitoring and feedback by volunteer trainers and farm workers to collaboratively make decisions, address challenges and, if necessary, make course corrections.

Providing Technical Assistance: The volunteer trainers provide technical assistance and intense mentoring typically with a ratio of 10-15 farmers to one volunteer trainer, who manages three trainings per year for their assigned farmers and does a one-on-one monthly visit with each farmer. For example, since Migori experiences a dry period, volunteer trainers instruct the other farmers on composting for improved water retention and soil health. Volunteer trainers also currently manage five demonstration sites, which other farmers can visit. The intensive mentoring by the volunteer trainers has significantly increased farmer production knowledge, translating into better use of land and crop yields. As a result, there has been a significant increase in income seen by 72 percent of the participating farmers. In addition to capacity building among participant farmers, the volunteer trainers are increasingly being tapped to share lessons from the program such as when the Ministry of Agriculture invited them to participate in World Agriculture Day.

Sourcing Seeds: When the program started, the passion fruit seeds were sourced from a supplier 400 km away at a price of 50 Kenyan Shillings (KSh) or \$0.50. Following analysis, and with ongoing financial support from Episcopal Relief & Development and technical assistance from ADS-Nyanza, the existing Manywa Fruit Growing Association started a local nursery producing seeds for 20 percent less. Volunteer trainers received capacity building on nursery management, finance and sophisticated grafting techniques, and now manage all aspects of the nursery with some support from other farmers.

Optimizing Production: Migori farmers previously had been dependent on tobacco and sugar cane, both of which use significant land, have long harvest cycles (up to 24 months) and, in the case of tobacco, present health risks when harvesting. ADS-Nyanza and participating farmers did analysis on alternative value chains with the volunteer trainers using their land to evaluate how passion fruit and bananas would fare in Migori. In Homa Bay, the volunteer trainers actively participated in analyzing local markets when evaluating the new poultry value chain.

Identifying Markets: The IEE program created a collection center run by the volunteer trainers, where farmers bring their produce to be weighed and graded. Initially, farmers opted to export top-grade fruit. When fruit spoiled during transport, bringing a lower total price, volunteer trainers and the farmers decided to focus on local markets and value-added products such as juices and baked goods, both of which have a higher margin than export.



Saving Group Data for Two Pilot Counties

50
SAVINGS GROUPS DEVELOPED

\$50,000
IN CUMULATIVE SAVINGS

\$62,000
CUMULATIVE LOANS PROVIDED

Building Savings and Accessing Credit: Historically, farmers have had difficulty saving and have had little access to credit. IEE uses a member-led Savings with Education (SwE) program for participating farmers. Since the volunteer trainers are members, the SwE groups provide an additional touch-point to strengthen the relationship between the volunteer trainers and the farmers. The SwE program couples financial and business training along with life-saving health information. Participants contribute 50-200 KSh (\$0.50-\$1.95 per week) and pool the funds enabling members to take loans for agriculture expenses such as fertilizer and seed, as well as loans for school, medical expenses and emergencies. The SwE model is self-sustaining, with a repayment rate of 98 percent, and already volunteers are forming additional savings groups.

Impact and Sharing the IEE Model

The dividends of the IEE program in Nyanza include improved agricultural practices and increased income for the participants. The communities also have built assets in the form of SwE groups and volunteer trainers from their community who can provide ongoing agricultural extension services. Because of the success of program participants, many non-participant farmers have expressed interest in joining. Going forward, ADS-Nyanza plans to expand the program within the province in concentric circles to leverage existing capital assets such as the nursery. Other organizations, including ADS offices in other provinces, have visited the program to understand how IEE works and how it might be applied outside of Nyanza.

Episcopal Relief & Development and ADS-Nyanza will need to address how to responsibly scale the program and meet demand from other organizations while maintaining quality.

- How can ADS-Nyanza use volunteers to scale the program?
- What type of creative financial and other incentives, such as SwE, can be developed to motivate volunteers in support of scale-up beyond their immediate communities?



Impact and Sharing the IEE Model

INCOME BEFORE IEE (FROM SUGARCANE)

\$28-37 PER MONTH
18-24 MONTH HARVEST CYCLE

INCOME INCREASE AFTER IEE (FROM PASSION FRUIT)

\$74-111 PER MONTH
6-9 MONTH HARVEST CYCLE



15%

INCOME INCREASE FOR 72% OF FARMERS



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