

AFRICA
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NEWSLETTER

January - March 2024

ISSUE 10



Mrs Mbabazi Jane, Lead Farmer under the ACCF-funded project in Bikonoka Village, Eastern Province - Rwanda
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MESSAGE FROM GARETH PHILLIPS

MANAGER, CLIMATE & ENVIRONMENT FINANCE DIVISION

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the first edition of our 2024 quarterly Newsletter. In 2023 we shared highlights of the great progress we made supporting climate change adaptation initiatives across Africa working with different entities from public to non-state actors, through our quarterly newsletters.

This year, as we unpack our 2024 work program, we look forward to spotlighting the ACCF funded projects achievements that are enhancing communities' resilience to the impacts of climate change, supporting enabling environment conditions across the continent.

In this 10th edition, we focus on the Mozambique project that has supported rural communities to identify and develop income generation activities in honey production and packaging with the construction of the first Honey House in Mocubela district to boost honey production capacities of the Mocubela Beekeepers Cooperative. Also, in Lesotho, Gabon, Liberia and Botswana, work has commenced to build the capacities and support the Governments to develop their long-term visions, a critical first step in the development of their Long-term Low-Carbon Emission Development Strategies. In Cote d'Ivoire, the solid and chemical waste project is under implementation in line with the country's

objectives as outlined in their revised Nationally Determined Contributions. In Rwanda, technical support including agroforestry trainings and access to weather information was provided to rural farming communities at different levels.

As a way of communicating its project results and mobilizing international support to strengthening gender equality in addressing climate change issues, IGAD Secretariat showcased the findings of the Gender Power Analysis study on the sidelines of the 68th edition of the Commission on the Status of Women held in New York. In Kenya, the Voices of Women with Disabilities were amplified through stakeholder dialogues where experts highlighted the importance of alliances and innovative approaches to advance the inclusion of people with disabilities in climate change negotiations and policy development.

Finally, we invite you to meet two project beneficiaries from Mozambique, Uganda and Kenya who share their experiences managing the ACCF/AfDB-funded project and the immediate outcomes of their projects. Moving forward, we are preparing to launch a fourth call for proposals by mid-year focusing on methane emissions reduction in key sectors.

We wish you a good read !

UPDATES FROM THE FIELD

MULTINATIONAL

Lesotho, Botswana, Liberia and Gabon developing their Long-Term low carbon emission and climate resilience vision

Four African Countries – Lesotho, Botswana, Liberia, and Gabon – have embarked on the development of their Long-Term low carbon and climate resilience Visions (LTV) with technical support from the [Africa NDC Hub](#) funded by the ACCF. The LTV is a critical first step in the development of the Long-Term Low-Carbon Emission and Climate Resilience Strategies for countries' transitions to a low carbon and climate resilient economy.

Between January and March 2024, kick-off workshops were held with relevant stakeholders in Liberia, Lesotho and Botswana to discuss and solicit feedback about the scope including the sectoral and cross-cutting issues of their LTV.

During the launch in Gabon in January 2024, the participating ministries and stakeholders present expressed their commitment and emphasized the importance of accurate data and reflecting sector-specific strategies. In Liberia, the development of the LTV is led by the Environment

Protection Agency (EPA), the lead government agency, the Bank's Country office and other development partners including world bank, EU among others. They emphasized the need for a collective action to formulate a robust LTV. The Director of the EPA reiterated the department's dedication to collaborating with all stakeholders throughout the LTV development process.

In Lesotho, the representatives from the lead Ministry of Environment, emphasized the importance of collaboration in addressing climate change and charting a path towards a resilient, low-carbon future. Meanwhile, in Botswana, a review meeting brought

together key stakeholders to discuss the draft of the Long-Term Vision (LTV). In Lesotho and Botswana the stakeholders in attendance engaged in parallel breakout sessions and delved into sector-specific challenges, priorities, and proposed important adjustments to the draft LTVs. A plenary session following the breakouts allowed each group to present their findings and discuss additional inputs. Participants provided valuable feedback on target setting, enhancing reporting accessibility, and refining terminology to ensure clarity and inclusivity.

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Stakeholders Consultation Workshop on Decarbonization of Medical Waste

On January 25, 2024, the project team convened a stakeholders consultation meeting to introduce the project to secure buy-in and guidance for implementation. At the workshop, the project team highlighted some of the key challenges with decarbonization of solid, medical and pharmaceutical waste management in Côte d'Ivoire as outlined in the country's revised Nationally Determined Contributions. Mr. Kouame Jean Yves, the Monitoring and Evaluation Assistant in his presentation highlighted the nexus between medical waste and climate change and the environmental and social and economic benefits of waste management. Dr. KOUASSI

Joëlle, health and medical waste management expert provided an overview of the medical waste sector in Cote d'Ivoire. Dr Joelle added that *"waste management in Cote d'Ivoire follows a six-step procedure consisting of sorting at the source of production, pre-collection, collection, transport, storage and disposal"*.

Finally, Mrs. Marie-Sylvie LIADE, the Project Coordinator presented the project's rationale, its objectives, components, key activities and expected results and the implementation arrangements and how it contributes to addressing the challenges faced by the country. This stakeholders consultation workshop was chaired by Mr. Parfait KOUADIO, Chief of

Staff of the Minister of the Environment, Sustainable Development and Ecological Transition who acknowledged the country's ineffective solid waste management system and welcomed this project's contribution to addressing this challenge and to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Cote d'Ivoire.

The workshop was attended by 55 participants, including 16 women and 39 men from government agencies, the private sector and civil society organizations.

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Group Photo of participants at the end of the meeting
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Innovative Approaches for Engaging Women with Disabilities in Climate Negotiations and Policy in Africa

Addressing the negative impacts of the changing climate requires inclusive participation and equitable decision making. On February 15, 2024, under the auspices of the Strengthening the voices of women with disability to actively participate in climate change policy and negotiations (STREVOW) project, the Inclusive Climate Change Adaptation for A Sustainable Africa (ICCASA) and the Centre for Minority Rights Development (CEMIRIDE) hosted the dialogue that highlighted the importance of alliances to advance the inclusion of people with disabilities in climate change initiatives. Speakers from diverse backgrounds offered inputs on designing innovative solutions to engage WWD in climate negotiation and policy.

Dr. George Wamukoya, a seasoned policy expert and climate negotiator, emphasized the significance of collective action in promoting inclusive policies and practices, noting that effective climate action requires the active involvement of all stakeholders, including those with disabilities.

Ms. Lucy Mulombi, Chairperson of the Kakamega Disability Caucus, shared perspectives on the obstacles faced by women with disabilities in the context of climate change. He also mentioned some disregarded difficulties faced by WWD such as obtaining assistance during disasters and addressing menstrual hygiene in areas with limited access to water resources.

The dialogue amplified the need to do more to include

WWD in climate change negotiations. Speakers shared some challenges faced by WWD in rural areas including inability to access shopping centers for internet access, lack of hearing and braille aids, and disparities in sign language interpretation. These challenges form part of the reasons why WWDs are unable to participate in virtual forums, a gap which the STREVOW Project seeks to address by engaging urgent innovative solutions to ease the burden of WWD in their endeavor to participate in climate policy and negotiations.

The WWD participants, indicated that they were ready to be part of climate action. Ms. Jacinta Kirigia, CEO, and founder of Africa Women for Climate Change emphasized the transformative potential of collaboration in uplifting marginalized communities. She urged policymakers to prioritize the voices of those most affected by climate change and advocated for inclusive decision-making processes.

Ms. Lydia Kimani, the Moderator, underscored the significance of

inclusive policies and practices for enabling meaningful engagement of marginalized communities with disabilities. She urged attendees to contemplate disability friendly methods for elevating the voices of individuals with disabilities within climate action efforts, emphasizing the power of united advocacy.

Participants at the dialogue also pointed to the lack of coordination in Africa's climate action as a major contribution to the lack of inclusion. While the dialogue showcased the challenges faced by WWD in climate negotiations and policy, the recommendations provided by the experts offer hope for inclusive and innovative solutions. By emphasizing the inclusion of marginalized voices and fostering collaboration among all stakeholders, we can pave the way for a more equitable and sustainable future for all.

The STREVOW is a two-year project implemented by ICCASA and CEMIRIDE.

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Supporting community-led climate action in the Eastern Province

On March 13, 2024, the project distributed smartphones to 50 lead farmers (27 women and 23 men) who were selected and trained at project's demonstration sites on the benefits of trees planting and on how to maintain trees.

These lead farmers train other farmers in their localities and support the distribution of seedlings to them for planting. The smartphones will allow the lead farmers to access weather information from Rwanda Metrological Agency to inform their fellow farmers for farming. The smartphones will help the farmers collect data to inform their agroforestry practices through the Regreening Africa and ODK collect apps installed.

Also, 43 people (with 28 farmers and 15 beekeepers –including 22 women and 21 men) were trained on entrepreneurship, business

planning and marketing skills from 15 to 18 February 2024 in Kayonza district. The beneficiaries shared knowledge gained in the trainings through weekly community meetings in their home villages. The project installed solar powered irrigation systems in Murama Sector, Kayonza District. These irrigation facilities will help farmers cope with droughts in this area. The irrigation system are powered by solar energy instead of diesel, which is expensive and emits carbon dioxide when burned.

Lastly, under the income generation component, the project is constructing a selling point for fruits with a cold room, which will serve as a short-term storage for up to seven days for fruits before they are sold. These facilities were conceived by the project to motivate farmers to plant more fruit trees as part of the agroforestry initiatives. The

selling point is located on the international route connecting Kigali City to the Tanzania border. It is anticipated that many people, mostly passengers will buy from vendors at this selling point, which will improve livelihoods of local farmers.

Promoting climate smart agriculture for improved rural livelihoods and climate resilience in the Eastern Province project is under implementation in Kirehe, Kayonza, Nyagatare and Gatsibo districts. It is implemented by the International Center for Research in Agroforestry, Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Agency and Center of Excellence in Biodiversity and Natural Resource Management (CoEB)-University of Rwanda.

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Group photo of lead farmers posing with their smartphones
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IGAD Presents the findings of its Gender Power Analysis Study at the 68th CSW in New York

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The 68th CSW held from 11th to 22nd March 2024, was on *“Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective”*.

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and two of its Member States, Uganda, and Kenya, participated in and co-organized four side events. The side-event on “Promoting Gender Transformative approaches in Land tenure security, and management for climate change Adaptation in the IGAD Region” was held on 15th March 2024 with the goal to highlight the importance of addressing systemic gender inequality and power imbalance impacts on climate change; the linkages between women’s tenure security, land management and climate resilience for robust climate change policy; practical strategies to promote stronger women’s tenure security and leadership for accelerated realization of climate targets and raise awareness about the gender dimensions of the water, agriculture and tourism sectors. Hon. Minister Judith Nabakooba Nalule, Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban development of Uganda who moderated the session noted that, without

access and control over natural resources, women are less resilient to climate shocks and are prevented from adopting climate-smart agricultural innovations. She commended IGAD for supporting its Member States to formulate harmonized policy frameworks on similar issues and indicated that in Uganda, her Ministry has strengthened coordination with key sectors responsible for delivering on NDCs and the Gender Action Plan.

Ms. Reena Ghelani, UN Climate Crisis Coordinator for the “El Niño” noted that Africa has faced prolonged droughts, famine, and conflicts which have reduced food production to 34% since 1964. She identified pastoral communities around the horn of Africa as the most affected by the droughts and alerted that women and girls will remain more disproportionately affected if not addressed. She called upon Governments and development partners to ensure that there are gender responsive policies for climate change, especially in terms of improving accessibility to appropriate technologies for agricultural production and upscaling women financing in more gender responsive manner to curb the current situation with only 2.4% of the global financing addressing gender equality. In IGAD region, only 3% of the funding focuses on climate financing, implying that only 2.4% of the 3% allocated for climate financing is for gender equality.

Dr Al Hamndou Dorsouma, Manager of the Climate Change and Green Growth Division at the African Development Bank (AfDB), discussed the Bank’s strategy for securing women’s land rights. He mentioned that the major role of the AfDB was to finance bankable projects and had directed 40% of all investment to climate finance which has seen incremental gains since 2020. In its continued efforts to invest and prioritize financing for climate adaptation, the Bank Group directed 67% of its climate finance investments toward adaptation in 2021, and 63% in 2022. He highlighted the work of the Africa Climate Change Fund (ACCF) to contributing to the Bank’s efforts to support African countries build their resilience to the negative impacts of climate change and transition to sustainable low-carbon growth. He added that the ACCF approved the grant to IGAD to execute the project titled “Towards enhancing Gender Equality in Access to Land resources for transformative climate change adaptation in the IGAD Region” which seeks to reinforce the gender equality in accessing land resources to facilitate transformative climate change adaptation across the IGAD member States. As a way forward, Dr. Dorsouma recommended the need for IGAD member states to adopt gender transformative and human rights approaches for gender equality to be enjoyed by everyone – Leaving No One Behind.

Ms. Joselyn Bigirwa, IGAD Head of Mission in Uganda and the Coordinator of the ACCF-IGAD Project, shared the findings of the GPA study, which showed the power dynamics and gender inequalities in Djibouti, Kenya and Uganda. Ms. Bigirwa also pointed out that despite the progress made by African countries in developing climate related frameworks, the continued exclusion/absence of women and other marginalized people's voices in policy and decision-making spaces on climate action further reinforces existing barriers to guaranteeing that climate action are contextual and applicable. She added that IGAD has urged member states to support implementation of regional women land rights

agenda to address the land rights problems.

Mrs. Dorcas Okalany, Permanent Secretary Ministry of Lands of Uganda, presented the finding from the Uganda GPA study on the Climate Change Vulnerabilities in Land Governance for women and girls. The IGAD-study was focused on Kotido District, Karamoja area where climate change is a serious challenge that needs a concerted effort. The study showed that women in this area face severe climate effect consequences as compared to their male counter parts and so there is need to continuously engage the Karamajong to adapt and conform to new social norms, values, attitude and behaviors

that are transformative, and most importantly, government should scale up the efforts to enhance women's land rights for climate change adaptation and social economic transformation. The side event was attended by wide range of stakeholders (over 120 Participants) including Development partners, IGAD Member States, National and International Civil Society organisations, UN Agencies among others.

The CSW outcome document can be accessed [here](#).

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Mrs Joselyn Bigirwa, Project Coordinator introducing the project at the session – ©IGAD, 2024

Global Shea Alliance members call for 4 million hectares of shea parkland to be restored by 2030

From 5th to 7th March 2024, the Global Shea Alliance (GSA) held its annual international conference in Abuja, Nigeria, on the theme «Bridging the Gap». The conference brought together 385 participants from 12 countries in Africa, Asia, and Europe. The Conference featured panel discussions, B2B networking sessions, an exhibition of shea products, and trainings for small and medium-sized enterprises.

Discussions focused on strategies for bridging the gap in market access for shea products, in the restoration of shea parks, in community resilience and adaptation for women shea collectors and processors. More specifically, the panelists discussed how to implement and benefit from a park restoration policy. Experiences, results, and recommendations from integrated agroforestry farm models, as well as the opportunities they offer in terms of economic empowerment for shea processors, were presented.

The Presbyterian Agriculture Service, an organization working in Ghana, shared how increasing efforts to restore landscapes are helping to mitigate soil degradation and, in turn, to guarantee sustainable agricultural production and food security. Alhassan Mahama, a member of this organization, shared how in 2023, Salamatu Mejida, a shea nut picker and soya farmer from the community of Tinguri, in the North-East Region of Ghana, cultivated 1 hectare of soya on her farm and harvested 7 bags equivalent to 700 kg and harvested 4 sacks equivalent to 340 kg of shea kernels compared with 170 kg of shea kernels in 2022.

On the sidelines of the conference, GSA members issued a call to action, committing industry stakeholders to the «Action for Shea Parks» initiative to restore 4 million hectares of shea parks by 2030. To achieve this goal, members intend to strengthen collaboration with women shea producers, government

institutions, national associations and among others.

This call to action demonstrates the importance of shea park preservation and restoration in the shea industry and is fully in line with the project «Towards climate-resilient shea communities in Togo and Burkina Faso». This two-year project, is implemented by GSA with funding from the ACCF, aims to reduce the climate vulnerability of 7,500 women shea collectors and their communities (more than 30,000 people), by increasing income generation from activities such as shea production and beekeeping, and by improving community-led park management practices.

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Group Photo of participants at the end of the session
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Strengthening Capacity of African Countries through a multi-stakeholder approach to monitor and track NDC Implementation

In the dynamic landscape of climate change, the African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS) emerges as a beacon of innovation to ensure sustained adaptation and mitigation of the impacts. Rooted in trans-disciplinarity, ATPS unites researchers, policymakers, private sector, and civil society organizations and draws synergies across various stakeholders towards a more sustainable climate resilience in Africa. The Paris Agreement galvanized global efforts to combat climate change. While mitigation took center stage, adaptation remained an essential thread. African countries, with their unique vulnerabilities, grappled with integrating adaptation strategies into their NDCs. In collaboration with like-minded institutions, ATPS embarked on a transformative endeavor to empower countries in monitoring and tracking their NDC implementation. This has been done through a series of engagements and stakeholder mapping exercises.

ATPS recognized that effective NDC implementation hinges on robust capacity. The NDC project aimed to equip countries with the tools, knowledge, and skills needed to navigate the complex NDC landscape. The project's

heartbeat lays in building a cadre of experts capable of translating NDC commitments into tangible actions. ATPS meticulously designed training modules tailored to each country's context. These modules spanned diverse areas:

- **Monitoring Mechanisms:** Trainees to delve into monitoring frameworks, data collection, and reporting structures specific to NDCs.
- **Tracking Progress towards NDC targets.** Trainees are learning to assess indicators, evaluate gaps, and identify corrective measures.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Effective NDC implementation requires collaboration. ATPS is fostering dialogue among policymakers, practitioners, and communities to build a more resilient action.

Recognizing Africa's linguistic diversity, ATPS has ensured that training materials are in both French and English. This inclusivity facilitates knowledge exchange across borders. National committees, comprising experts and stakeholders, identified trainees who will later become the Focal

Persons of Climate Champions. Passion, commitment, experience, expertise, and contextual relevance guided their selection. Trainees represent various stakeholder categories and diverse sectors – from agriculture, environment, transport and industry to energy and health – reflecting the holistic nature of NDC implementation. Beyond formal training, ATPS is nurturing peer networks that will sustain the movement on NDC implementation tracking in African countries. Trainees connected virtually and physically in their respective countries and are sharing experiences, challenges, and best practices. These networks hopefully will transcend national boundaries, fostering a sense of shared responsibility. The ATPS NDC capacity-building project is expected to lead to:

- Trainees emerging as NDC champions, bridging policy and practice.
- Countries strengthening their adaptive capacity, aligning NDCs with local realities.
- The ripple effect extends beyond trainees – it permeates ministries, research institutions, and civil society organizations.

As Africa navigates climate uncertainties, ATPS's NDC project illuminates a resilient path. By empowering individuals and institutions, ATPS contributes to a sustainable, climate-conscious future. The journey continues – one NDC at a time.



Dr Nicholas, Executive Director of ATPS speaking at the session – ©ATPS, 2024

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MOZAMBIQUE

Inauguration of the Mocubela Beekeepers Cooperative Honey House

On March 22, 2024, local authorities, representatives of Istituto Cooperazione Economica Internazionale (ICEI) and members of the Mocubela Beekeepers' Cooperative (APIMO) inaugurated the Mocubela Honey House. The Mocubela honey house was completed under the ACCF funded Syntropic Agriculture project in Zambezia Province, which is implemented by non-governmental organisations, ICEI and AMDER in Mozambique. This building will be managed by the APIMO Cooperative which is made of 70 members (with 30% women) to process, package and sell the honey that is being produced in 10 (Nialene, Joaque, Gurai, Maiva, Mucuna, Alto Mutabide, Aliua, Ginama, Maneia and Barada) communities in Mocubela district. It is expected that the Honey house will enable the cooperative members to produce about 2,500 kg of honey per year, which will generate approximatively USD 10,000 for the community members in the first year. The honey house will help the cooperative to process, package, and store honey under the appropriate food safety standards and support joint sales and fair pricing for beekeepers.

The construction of the honey house was done under the supervision of the District Planning and Infrastructure Services.

This official handing over ceremony to the Mocubela Beekeepers' Cooperative took place jointly with the inauguration of the water well also financed by the project. The ceremony was presided over by the Honorable Administrator of the Mocubela district, accompanied by the ICEI and government officials including the District Service for Economic Activities (SDAE) and the District Planning and Infrastructure Services (SDPI) that supervised the construction. Members of the APIMO Cooperative in attendance gave a short demonstration on the processing of honey and received messages of unity among beekeepers and encouragement.

The cooperative is run by 5 board members and will be supported in its continuity by the SDAE.

The project has supported the legalization of the cooperative and convened the first ordinary

session with the participation of district authorities. Additionally, APIMO was supported with 100 beehives and 150 boxes to boost honey production in the communities, technical assistance including training of cooperative members in sustainable beekeeping practices such as identifying honey plants, capturing the swarms, stocking, and monitoring the hives, processing, and bottling honey. These are innovative practices compared to the unsustainable traditional beekeeping techniques like the collection of honey from the forest, which eliminates the entire swarm and hence reduce the bee population and honey production.

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Picture of the Mocubela Honey House

INTERVIEW



GIULIA BENEDETTO
Project Coordinator, ICEI - Mozambique

“We have had a great opportunity working with the African Development Bank through the Africa Climate Change Fund”

Can you briefly introduce yourself, your organization, and your role in the project?

I am Giulia Benedetto, a staff of ICEI since 2019. In 2021, I took on the role of Desk Officer Asia and Africa at the HQ in Milan and in 2022, I joined the Syntrophic Agriculture: a Strategy to foster Resilience, Climate Adaptation and Recovery of vulnerable communities in Zambezia Province project, as the focal point.

Istituto Cooperazione Economica Internazionale (ICEI), is an Italian NGO, working in Mozambique since 2011 and in Zambezia since 2016. We work with people and local communities to improve social and economic conditions and promote inclusive, equitable and sustainable societies in a participatory way, focusing

on environment, sustainable agriculture and responsible tourism. ICEI's work in Mozambique has focused on food security, income generation, and sustainable preservation of natural resources.

The role of ICEI in this project, besides coordination, was to promote in Zambezia an innovative approach based on Syntrophic Agriculture model, which was successfully tested in Latin America. Moreover, ICEI has been working with local communities for habitat restoration and to develop sustainable income generating activities like honey production.

How did you learn about the ACCF and its Call for Proposals, and what motivated you to apply?

We were aware of the African Development Bank's work in Mozambique, and the ACCF through the Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea.

The motivation to apply was strictly connected with the objectives and focus areas of the ACCF, which were/are in line with the work of ICEI, i.e. to promote a production model based on the balance between agriculture and the environment, which aims to meet the food security needs of the rural population, with a focus on women, youth and children, reduce vulnerability and increase the resilience to climate change.

Has your organization previously received a grant from the Bank?

No, this is our first project with the Bank.

Could you briefly describe your project's rationale and key objectives?

Almost the entire Mozambican coast is part of a macro ecological system, dominated by biomes of mangroves, forests, and semi-vegetative dunes, stretching from Kenya to southern Mozambique. This area features one of the largest and most biodiverse biological reservoirs for marine life in Southern Africa. This biome is strongly threatened by desertification due to unsustainable human activities.

Indeed, agriculture is the dominant activity in intervention and is practiced by almost all families in small plots at subsistence level, with limited storage capacity of production and seeds, without irrigation systems and unsustainable practices (like slash and burn). Soils therefore lose their fertility, they are impoverished in organic matter, and this obliges farmers to search for new land to cultivate to ensure their livelihoods leading to the clearing and deforestation of vast areas of native forest. Small-holder farming by households is only viable because it does not remunerate labour, especially women's labour, which are often excluded from the decision-making process. Also, riparian vegetation (mainly mangroves) is degraded, due to indiscriminate cutting of trees for construction of houses and production of coal, with serious consequences on freshwater habitats.

Furthermore, climate change is causing some severe droughts in the Region, creating an emergency. The outcome is the loss of ecosystem services and, therefore, the increase of socio-economic poverty, malnutrition, and vulnerability of the communities.

The key objective of the project was to improve environmental resilience and economic sustainability of smallholder families in Zambezia through proper management of natural resources, climate smart techniques and through involvement of local authorities in the dissemination of a gender approach in the governance of natural resources.

With the project closing soon, what are the achievements so far?

According to the rationale, the project intended to work on a multi-level approach. So far, some of the greatest achievements are related to women involvement in natural resource management, with a drastic increase in the number of women in the Natural Resource Management Committees at village and district levels, in the empowerment of young people as community promoters in reforestation of degraded ecosystems, with more than 50,000 trees planted, and great success of income generating activities such as beekeeping and honey production, with a volume of honey sustainably produced and sold above the expectations. This shows an interesting approach, which is supporting farmers to welcome and adopt sustainable and climate-smart techniques in agriculture.

What do you identify as the strengths and weaknesses of the project?

The project strength is its multi-disciplinary and multi-level approach. The context presents several stakeholders and areas involved, with several needs which sometimes may appear in contrast, for instance the need of the communities for wood or land to cultivate, with

preservation and regeneration of the environment. The project intends to respond to all the identified needs, with solutions operating on different levels, the SAF (Syntropic Agroforestry) provides a diversified production with benefits for nutrition of the smallholder families and at the same time it regenerates the environment and land to be more fertile and productive. It also represents a tool for climate change mitigation.

Working in such a vast area with communities spread out was surely a challenge which required additional efforts to reach the defined objectives.

In what ways has the project made a difference in the lives of the target communities?

Target communities' capacities and resilience have been enhanced, and they have more tools for preparedness to climate crisis. In the short term, they could develop additional income generating activities (as honey production) which immediately brings benefits to the families' livelihoods.

What are the key lessons from your experience with the ACCF on this project?

We had a great opportunity working with the African Development Bank through the Africa Climate Change Fund. The project was the first one of its kind for us and started in the middle of pandemic, we could immerse in a path which developed our capacity to deal with a fast-paced environment and embed new perspectives.

From the project, we have evidence that giving voice to women in the communities is fundamental in developing equitable climate change adaptation plans.



MARIA OSSOLA

Project Coordinator, AVSI Foundation –Uganda/Kenya

“Our journey with the Green Energy for Women and Youth Resilience project has provided invaluable insights, highlighting the pivotal role of private sector partnerships in achieving the Sustainable Development Goal of universal access to clean and affordable energy by 2030”

Can you briefly introduce yourself, your organization, and your role in the project?

My name is Maria Ossola, and I serve as the Project Coordinator for AVSI Foundation, overseeing the project implementation in Kenya and Uganda. This transformative initiative is made possible with funding from the African Development Bank through the ACCF.

AVSI Foundation, an international non-profit organization, operates in 40 countries worldwide, reaching over seven million people annually through 364 projects. Our vision is to empower individuals to become protagonists of their own integral development and that of their community, even in crisis and emergency contexts, by recognizing their inherent value and dignity.

How did you learn about the ACCF and its Call for Proposals, and what motivated you to apply?

The Green Energy for Women and Youth Resilience project represents AVSI Foundation's pioneering collaboration with the Bank. Recognizing the call for proposal's alignment with our priorities in the energy and clean cooking sector, we saw a promising opportunity to promote human dignity and create positive change while collaborating with the Bank.

Could you briefly describe your project's rationale and key objectives?

Launched amidst the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, both Kenya and Uganda like the rest of the world, faced lockdowns and economic hardships. Despite these obstacles, we remained steadfast with our commitment to serve people, and adapting our strategies to reach remote communities. For more than three years, we successfully introduced clean cooking solutions and renewable energy for lighting to over 55,000 new customers. We provided training and support to 2,322 sales agents

and retailers, empowering them to establish thriving businesses.

What do you identify as the strengths and weaknesses of the project?

Our project's unique strength and weakness lies in its deep engagement with the private sector, including renewable energy firms, microfinance institutions, and small-scale retailers. Collaborating with these entities required flexibility to accommodate their capacities, needs, and timelines, which sometimes deviated from our initial plans. Nonetheless, we remained consistent with our mission of serving communities.

In what ways has the project made a difference in the lives of the target communities?

This project facilitated numerous partnerships between AVSI Foundation and private sector entities, enriching the initiative with diverse approaches and interventions. Serving as a bridge

between stakeholders, we facilitated connections between households seeking clean energy solutions, companies in need of skilled agents, young entrepreneurs requiring capital, and microfinance institutions seeking renewable energy partnerships. Through these collaborative efforts, we contributed to the project's need for sustainability.

After ten months of monitoring activities without direct intervention, we observed the resilience of many private sector

partnerships. Even those not yet finalized continue to pursue Memoranda of Understanding, while women and youth affiliated with renewable energy companies persist in conducting business within their communities.

What are the key lessons from your experience with the ACCF on this project?

Our journey with the Green Energy for Women and Youth Resilience project has provided invaluable insights, highlighting

the pivotal role of private sector partnerships in achieving the Sustainable Development Goal of universal access to clean and affordable energy by 2030.

As a learning organization, AVSI Foundation remains committed to this approach and encourages like-minded companies and microfinance institutions for collaborations in advancing this shared goal to empower communities, promote sustainable development, and to create a brighter and greener future for all.

OUR DONORS





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