A catalogue of solutions

to facilitate community ownership of development initiatives.

SGP The GEF Small Grants Programme Nigeria

gef

UNDP

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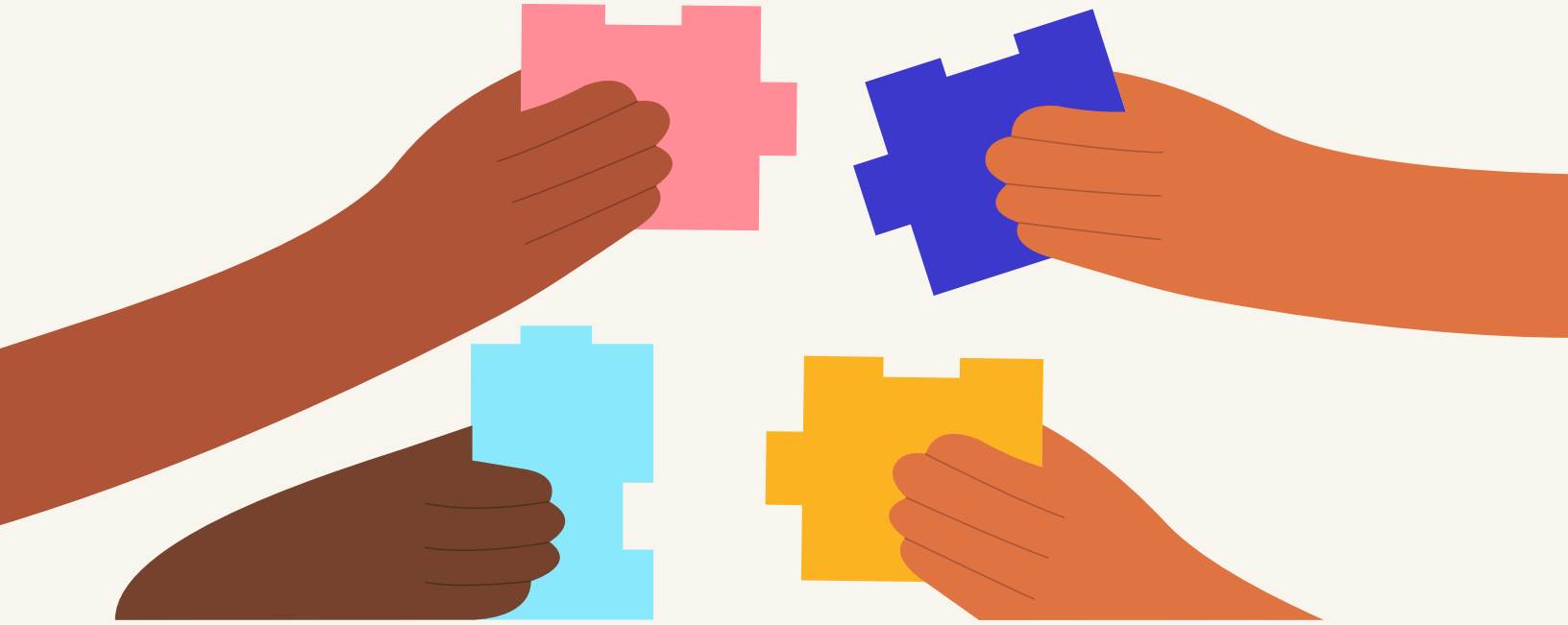
About the GEF Small Grants Programme

Established in 1992, the year of the Rio Earth Summit, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme embodies the very essence of sustainable development by "thinking globally acting locally". By providing financial and technical support to projects that conserve and restore the environment while enhancing people's well-being and livelihoods, SGP demonstrates that community action can maintain the fine balance between human needs and environmental imperatives.

The programme provides grants of up to $50,000 directly to local communities including indigenous people, community-based organizations and other non-governmental groups for projects across the following thematic areas: Biodiversity, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation, Land Degradation and Sustainable Forest Management, International Waters and Chemicals and Capacity Development.

The GEF SGP has worked with over 130 Civil Society Organizations to implement over 190 community environmental initiatives in over 200 communities in 29 states, with over 8 million USD in cash and over 7 million USD in kind co-financing

About the UNDP Accelerator Lab



The UNDP Accelerator Labs is the world's largest and fastest learning network on wicked sustainable development challenges. Co-built as a joint venture with the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany and the Qatar Fund for Development, the Network is composed of 91 Lab teams covering 115 countries and taps into local innovations to create actionable insights and reimagine sustainable development for the 21st century.

The Nigeria Lab's portfolio covers system level support to public and private sector innovation ecosystems exploration of key trends which harness strategic innovation, digitalization, and development financing. The Nigeria Lab works with public sector partners, regional innovation collectives and private sector organizations to achieve this. The lab's work is agnostic, cutting across climate, energy, food security and youth entrepreneurship to name a few thematic areas.

Context

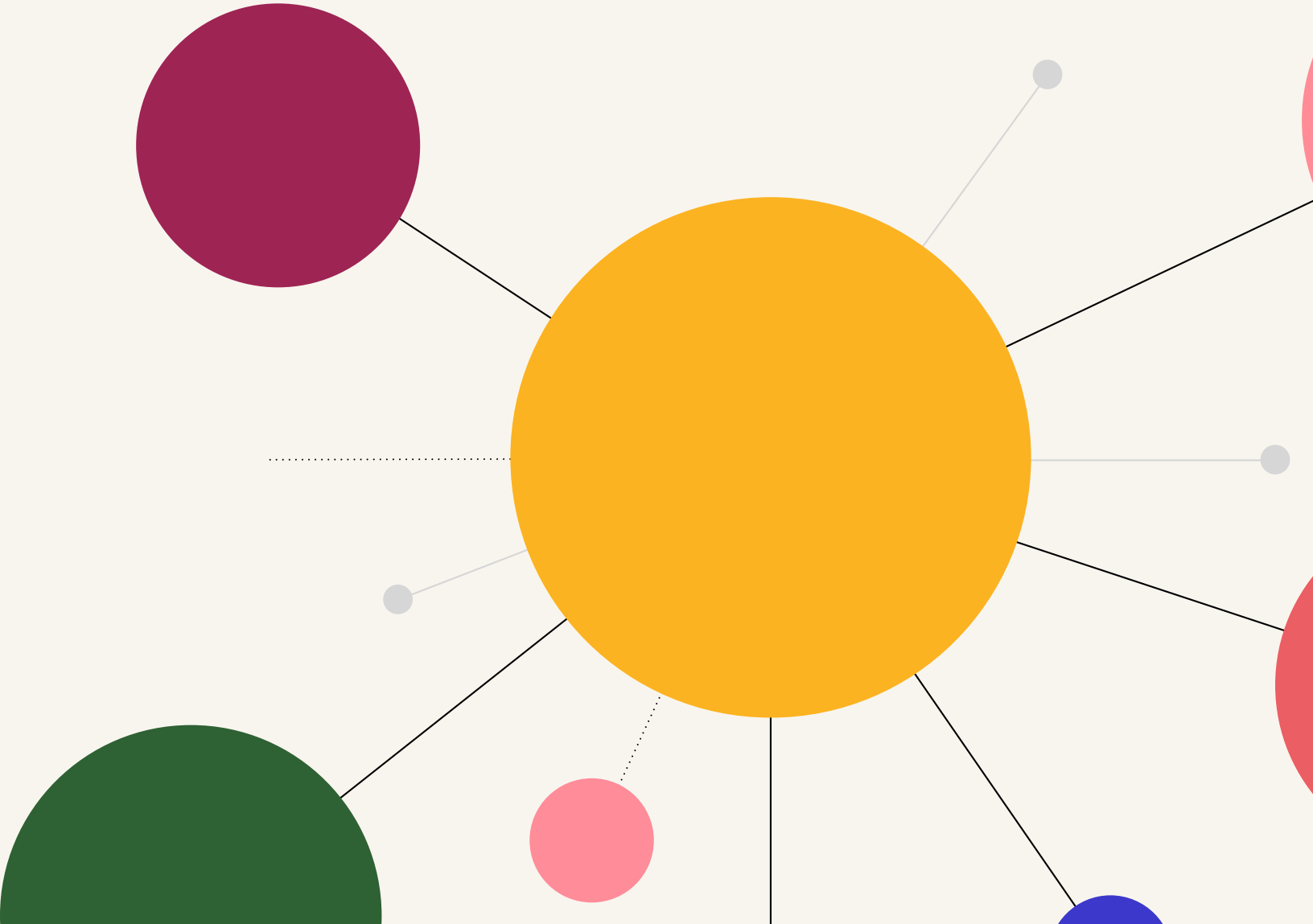
Sustainability in the development context refers to the ability of communities to uphold, maintain or continue development activities and indicators independent of external actors. For sustainability to be achieved, it is crucial that community ownership of development initiatives occurs. In this, communities include residents, institutions and governments within localities.
For development actors (NGOS, IOs, IFIs, Governments etc) to facilitate community ownership of their initiatives, unique solutions need to be adopted and deployed within both the design and implementation of initiatives.
In this, development actors must take approaches that seek to uncover the unique human, social, economic, political and environmental characteristics of communities. In recognition of this, dialogue can occur between development actors and communities, positioning communities as co-creators and owners of initiatives that may shape their future realities.

Solutions Mapping

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme, Nigeria and UNDP Accelerator Lab, Nigeria have collaborated to develop a catalogue of solutions that facilitate community ownership in development initiatives

All solutions that have been catalogued have been successfully utilized by grantees of the GEF Small Grants Programme and development actors in Nigeria. The catalogue of solutions can be used as toolkits to support the design and implementation of community-based development initiatives. The solutions can also be repurposed, iterated and adapted for use in communities nationally, regionally and globally.
Solutions in the catalogue are categorized as business practices, policies, products, services, business models or community practices.

The Catalogue



Locality | Category | Project name

Tags | Organisation

Community Integrated Participatory Approach

Community Practice

Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF)

Community Integrated Participatory Approach is an approach that incorporates diagnostic dialogues, monitoring training and role plays to engage oil and gas impacted communities to equip them with the needed knowledge to advocate for healthy, livable and pollution free communities, moreso for remediation, restoration and for livelihood justice.

The diagnostic exercises help to understand the socio-ecological issues – going back in time to reflect on what communities were like (social dynamics, cultural affinity, livelihoods and local economy, etc.) and come to the present to analyze what they are now. In between lines, identifying what has gone wrong, who is responsible, who is affected, what the needed actions are and by whom. The monitoring training strengthens the capacity of communities to engage in popular environmental monitoring – taking them through the step-by-step rigors of monitoring methods. Here, observation skills are sharpened and lines of actions are established for organizing. They are also taught on reporting and developing messaging strategies. The roleplay sessions are simulative sessions where community people take up roles and act out the prevailing situations in their communities as well as the needed actions. Some community people take the roles of the government, some take the roles of the polluting companies, some assume the role of communities while others take the roles of CSOs.

This approach was used for the project: Conservation of Marine Ecosystems for Livelihood and Advocacy for Marine Protected Areas project supported by the Small Grants Programme.

Rivers State, Nigeria

Storytelling
Faciliating Reflection

Locality | Category | Project name

Tags | Organisation

Addressing Climate Change and Land Degradation Risks on Livelihood Activities

Business Practice

Gender and Environmental Risk Reduction Initiative (GERI)

Activities included a 3-day training of 200 persons including 120 women and 80 men on sustainable and innovative farming and forestry practices; and the distribution of 3,146 trees comprising of improved palm seedlings for planting on 22 hectares of land in the community. The project provided livelihood support for beneficiaries and thousands of dependents, who previously had to rely on unsustainable means of livelihood. The project' beneficiaries were trained on the production of feeds, compost manure, and soap; as well as fuel wood efficiency stoves.

The project team also established leadership structures in the community to ensure long-term sustainability by working with key stakeholders. Women beneficiaries formed a multipurpose cooperative society to facilitate women's empowerment in the community.

A participatory evaluation was conducted with the aim of assessing the effectiveness and sustainabailty of the project. The evaluation included training workshops, focus group discussions, individual interviews, and surveys. The evaluation team consisted of representatives from GERI and members of Usar community in Kwande Local Government Area of Benue State, Nigeria. The team worked closely with project participants and other stakeholders to design and implement the evaluation. Individual and collective voices were given equal importance in the evaluation process.

Benue State, Nigeria

Storytelling

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Locality | Category | Project name

Tags | Organisation

BPC Tortoise Theatre

Community Practice

Biodiversity Preservation Center

With support from the GEF-SGP, implemented by the GEF-SGP United Nations Development Programme, BPC established the Wildlife Theatre with focus on mobilizing indigenous people amongst biodiverse rich communities. The project's focus on the importance of culture and traditions for community-based wildlife conservation ensured it had strong support from the local village chiefs and active involvement of their community members from the beginning. Moreover, the initiative trained 50 households on sustainable bamboo and rattan handicrafts production, ecotourism and conservation, providing these families with valuable alternative livelihoods, as well as a greater understanding of the benefits of protecting their local biodiversity. The project also helped to enact local community by-laws forbidding all hunting of the monkeys for bushmeat.

BPC held interactive sessions at the Town Hall on selected days when the majority of the villagers were back in the village after their daily activities. Traditional Music and Dance drama (Wild Animal Theatre) was used to draw community members to the village square and the performance were carried out amidst serving of foods, snacks and drinks. The value of protecting animal species as well as their habitats was then lectured by experts and consolidated by conducting video shows using projector screens to show relevant documentaries. BPC then commenced with the Train the Trainer and Skills acquisition and enterprise building processes and brought Experts who taught/trained participants on necessary skills for continuing with the initiatives. Thereafter BPC instituted the "Best Tree Planters Awards" and selected best male, female, youth and children best tree planters and rewarded them with letters of commendation and cash awards. BPC elicited the strong support of the members of the community in the diaspora being that they were highly respected by the community people. Benefiting persons and families were presented their awards during annual community festivals. At this stage the council of Chiefs having appointed enthusiastic and proactive men and women into a Community Conservation Committee empowered them to be responsible for working in tandem with BPC to achieve our project goals. This committee takes decisions and serves as links to the villagers thereby building a sound sense of ownership of the project.

BPC with the help and support of SGP Nigeria expanded their conservation education center and Animal Rescue Centre / Mini Wildlife Sanctuary in Uyo. The center plays host to 100s of school groups on excursions, and has impacted over 150,000 thousand households in Akwa Ibom and Cross River State.

Akwa Ibom & Cross River State, Nigeria

Storytelling
Capacity Building

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Locality | Category | Project name
Tags | Organisation

Digital Solutions for Plastic Use And Waste Management

Community Practice, Business Practice, Business Model

Digital Peers International

The fusion of IT and youth-driven initiatives promises to reshape the narrative of plastic use, fostering a future where technology and environmental stewardship merge for a cleaner, healthier environment. The project focused on empowering youths from six local government areas in Abuja with the necessary digital tools to address the pressing issues of plastic waste in their communities.

Training Methodology:
1) Call for Youth Participation: The process of engaging youth participation for this project commenced with an effective awareness through adverts on media houses and community-based platforms.
2) Lectures and Training: The training was carried out through classroom sessions, which included interactive and hands-on practical sessions, dump site visits, and recycling factories within the FCT and environs. Participating youths were engaged in intensive brainstorming sessions for a period of one week which covered the following subjects; The Science of Plastic, Using Plastics – Products Design, Uses, Specification, State of Plastic Disposal in the FCT, Use of ICT for Research, Business Sense of Plastic: Recycled Plastic Products.
3) Site Visitation: Youths were engaged in a sightseeing visit to the Nasarawa Waste Management Board and their landfill, in Nasarawa State and private plastic production factories.

Tools:
1) Mass Media: Leveraging media for information dissemination, awareness creation, and sensitization was a powerful strategy in promoting effective plastic use and management, especially when fully engaging youths from different communities in Abuja. Collaboration with media houses such as AIT, NTA, Channels TV, Clear View TV, and Arise TV, as sources of continuing dissemination of solution efforts and avenues for the persuasion of the public may be necessary
2) Internet and Social media: Through social media campaigns, documentaries, and interactive platforms, young individuals were able to play a vital role in spreading knowledge, fostering behavioral change, and building a collective commitment toward sustainable plastic practices within their communities.
3) Collaborations: With the University of Abuja and Technical Colleges to form clubs that will ensure awareness and sensitization among students in school and their communities.
Brokering partnerships with communities linking and recycling companies that will buy from them.

Federal Capital Territory,

Capacity Building
Show and Tell

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Locality | Category | Project name

Tags | Organisation

Enabling Clean Energy Access in Underserved Communities through the Creation of Women-Owned Green Enterprises

Community Practice, Business Practice, Business Model

Solar Sister Nigeria

The goal of the project was to enable the adoption of energy efficient solutions in 10 underserved communities across Nigeria through a gender driven entrepreneurship structure. This was achieved through an innovative social enterprise model where 100 women were supported to kick start a clean energy enterprise by providing them with a revolving seed capital grant to start distributing clean cook stoves and solar lamps in their respective communities

The project which focused on target underserved communities deployed and integrated community involvement from inception in order to ensure its sustainability post-project. A last mile approach ensured that women entrepreneurs are selected through involvement of community stakeholders (community leaders and champions, community gatekeepers, heads of households); driving stakeholder information collaboration and participation across multiple engagement meetings. A core activity of this project also includes community identification, entrance and collection of baseline surveys. High collaboration is embraced upon baseline data collection through community champions and leaders who have more information about their communities than Solar Sister as an implementing organization. Adequate community sensitization was done in order to ensure inclusion and diversity. These strategic steps help drive quality relationships with community members as they provide meeting venues and local security for meetings and volunteers for the sensitization events.

Solar Sister entrepreneurs are able to use their own first-hand experience as users, and the power of their social networks, to educate their community about the benefits of clean energy. Being rooted in their communities' means that they are also more trusted and readily available for quality after-sales service. As a lesson learnt from previous projects, men as decision makers both at the household and community level are always involved in activities. Their buy-in is received to mitigate erroneous social perception about women being financially empowered.Lastly the women are established in a 'sisterhood' groups where peer-to-peer learning and monthly capacity building engagements are carried out, fostering group accountability and community cohesion. This included a joint ownership and operation of a 'Village savings and loan association VSLA' by the women groups per community. Since commencement of operations in 2015, Solar sister Nigeria have built quality partnerships that have enabled replication and up-scaling of our work and outcome. An outcome including supporting over 3,500 networks of clean energy enterprenuers in 31 states across Nigeria. The target population of this intervention are 85% Women, who become clean energy drivers providing clean energy access to their communities and beyond.

Bayelsa, Kwara, Kogi & Nasarawa State, Nigeria

Community Intergation

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Locality | Category | Project name

Tags | Organisation

Community Committees

Community Practice

Care & Action Research Non-Governmental Organization (CaRE-NGO)

CaRE-NGO since inception believes in working with the community. For any project to be embarked upon, a community needs assessment is carried out using participatory tools. On approval of any project, a Community Project Implementation Committee is formed comprising of community members. Pre-baseline studies and post project reports, monitoring and evaluation and procurements are conducted in colloboration with the committee. The committee also contributes their time and security to protect equipment bought for projects.

CaRE-NGO has adopted the aforementioned actions in following projects supported by SGP/GEF/UNDP 1) Farming, using compost from local dump sites. This has made it possible for people to use small spaces in urban areas to farm in the midst of insecurity in rural areas. 2) Conversion of agricultural wastes such as maize cobs into animal feeds 3) Sugar cane farming 4) Fish smoking

Kaduna State, Nigeria

Community Intergation

SGP The GEF Small Grants Programme Nigeria

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Locality | Category | Project name

Tags | Organisation

Clean Energy Solutions

Community Practice

Community Research and Development Centre (CREDC)

Most of the clean energy solutions developed by CREDC, particularly solar mingrids are donor funded where funding does not extend beyond the timeline of the project. To cater for sustainability (Operations and Maintenance) a Power Committee is set up at the inception of the project development within the benefiting community / village comprising of residents. These persons representing the community in the Power Committee are picked by members of the community themselves. A site engineer from CREDC and a staff employed from within the community for the purpose of monitoring the project are also part of the Power Committee. Youths are also trained on the basic operations of the system while the project is being developed and the staff member continues training them after the development of the facility.

The Power Committee decides tariff prices and since all stakeholders are represented in the committee, everyone's interest are put into consideration. Revenue for paying the salary of staff and repairs on the facility is from electricity tariff sales. All stakeholders must therefore be carried along when deciding this. The commiteee also decides penalties/ punishment for offenders who flout some basic rules relating to being connected to the facility.

This solution has been supported by The GEF-SGP UNDP, in several communities in two States. This solution has also been adopted for the Ijaye Solar Mini Grid system.

Cross River & Oyo State, Nigeria

Community Intergation

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Locality | Category | Project name

Tags | Organisation

Protection of River Ethiope through Environmental Personhood

Policy, Community Practice

River Ethiope Trust Foundation (RETFON)

The River Ethiope is a vital watercourse sustaining ecosystems and communities, that face threats from human activities and climate change. This project aims to establish legal recognition for the river as a living entity with inherent rights, ensuring its long-term protection. In doing so, this project focused on creating a network of community champions to influence and advocate for a legal framework that acknowledges the river's intrinsic value and grants it legal personhood.

Key activities

1) Awareness campaigns through media, workshops, and community events to educate stakeholders about the ecological importance to support the recognition of the river as a living entity
2) Community consultations to gather local perspectives and involve residents in decision-making processes of policy advocacy

Key achievements

1) Increased awareness and understanding of the River Ethiope's ecological importance by local stakeholders
2) Policy changes acknowledging the river as a living entity with legal rights
3) Strengthened community involvement and ownership in the river conservation efforts
4) Establishment of a precedent for recognizing rivers as legal entities for broader environmental protection
5) Drafted and submitted to relevant authorities a preliminary legal framework (including Rights of River Ethiope Bill) for the river's recognition
6) Established a network of alliance of key stakeholders, including governmental bodies, communities, corporate bodies and environmental organizations

Delta State, Nigeria

Show and Tell

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Locality | Category | Project name

Tags | Organisation

Empowering Iwo with Thaumatococcus Daniellii Leaf Sustainability

Community Practice

Environmental Management and Development Trust (EMADET)

The *Thaumatococcus daniellii* leaf held immense economic significance for the local community, serving as a healthier alternative to plastic for the consumption of edibles. However, the community faced challenges in selling this leaf to neighboring areas. Residents of Osun communities had to travel from Iwo to other parts of the state to find buyers. EMADET initiated contact with both buyers and sellers and established a centralized market in Iwo town, the primary hub for *Thaumatococcus daniellii* leaf sellers. Consequently, there was no longer a need for sellers to travel to other locations to hawk the leaf, as buyers started converging in Iwo for their purchases. Recognizing the necessity for a market hub, EMADET facilitated the construction of a market specifically for the sale and preservation of *Thaumatococcus daniellii* leaf. This development enabled community members to meet their trading needs locally, eliminating the need to travel outside the community.

To raise awareness about the benefits of the *Thaumatococcus daniellii* leaf among community members, EMADET employed two strategies: 1) A Moi Moi (bean pudding/steamed bean) Wrapping Competition. A competition was organized involving 50 women, challenging them to fold the *Thaumatococcus daniellii* leaf properly for Moi Moi. The ten fastest participants were awarded with a cooking gas each. 2) A Goat Feeding Experiment: Five goats were placed in separate compartments, each with Moi Moi and *Thaumatococcus daniellii* leaves. The goats consistently chose to consume the *Thaumatococcus daniellii* leaf before the Moi Moi. This experiment effectively communicated the nutritional value of the leaf to community members.

These strategies undoubtedly played a crucial role in sensitizing the community about the advantages of the *Thaumatococcus daniellii* leaf, deepening a greater understanding of its benefits among community members which brought about capacity building and community participation in the upselling of *Thaumatococcus daniellii* leaf.

The leaf stock were also used to produce shoes, bags and mats. The next stage is to fabricate a machine that would produce plates and cups using the leaves

Ekiti, Ogun & Osun State, Nigeria

Show and Tell

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Locality | Category | Project name

Tags | Organisation

Provision of Solar Power Systems as an alternative Clean Energy Sources

Product

Foosteer Initiative for Community Health and Social Development

The provision of a Solar Power System as an Alternative Clean Energy Sources in Adankolo Community, Lokoja, Kogi State, is a renewable energy solution that used a participatory method of design, planning, implementation and monitoring.

A participatory social mapping exercise was led by Foosteer Initiative in collaboration with representatives of Adankolo community leaders and other stakeholders. This was to identify target beneficiaries at the early stages of implementation. This increased the likelihood of local buy-in and ownership. Foosteer employed story-telling and solution demonstration during community sensitization outreaches to cause a change in behavior and raise awareness of environmentally friendly and sustainable business practices that reduces greenhouse gas emission in Kogi State. Formation of 12 cooperatives in 12 Adankolo districts helped to foster participative community-life, by educating and enabling rural households clean energy access, which facililated the formation of the Adankolo community renewable energy committee (REC) that ensured maintenance of intervention installations and provided opportunity for the replication of project activities.

Finally, all community meetings, sensitizations and capacity building exercises took place in the community itself, and at venues familiar to all participants; e.g community centers, schools, local palaces and community health centers. This strategy ensured the project was inclusive and lowered barriers of participation for community members.

Kogi State, Nigeria

Community Mapping

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Locality | Category | Project name

Tags | Organisation

Community Forest Management Project

Community Practice

Igbehinadun Agroforestry

The Aratu Sacred Stream within the Agabodo-Ekiti community faces threats to its existence due to human activities. The Aratu Sacred Stream serves as water source for local households, ethnomedicinal plants and local anismal, fishes birds and reptiles.

In response, Community Forest Management Committees (CFMC) were established to develop management plans to protect the Aratu Sacred Stream. CFMC with support of the GEF Small Grant Programme in colloboration with external financing, took a bold step to conserve 1.2 hectares of land named the 'Forest of thousands Herbs' as a model for ecosystem regeneration. This community forest was provided with a hall, fish ponds, and species including snails, mushrooms etc.

The 'Forest of a thousand Herbs' has since operated as a hub for community teaching, senstization and adovacy of protectionist practices. Community field demonstrations and workshops have taken place with topics focused on Sustainable Forest Management, Forest inventory and establishing micro-entreprises.

The project contact was awarded by Afe Babalola University and there is an on-going discussion for students to conduct research at the sanctuary.

Ekiti State, Nigeria

Community Intergation

Locality | Category | Project name

Tags | Organisation

Households and Community Systems Strengthening for Economic and Environment Sustainability

Community Practice

AIDS Care Education and Training Society (ACET)

Community structures strengthening, inclusive stakeholders engagement and capacity building are key actions in strengthening systems that drive sustainable development. Community stakeholders including Village Heads, women leaders, male and female youth leaders, heads of households, religious leaders, male and female child representatives, representatives of people with disabilities, vulnerable household caregivers (including widows and people living with HIV) were engaged in focused groups and facilitated to conduct a needs assessment.

The identified project was designed by the community stakeholders and a proposal developed from these processes was shared with GEF SGP UNDP. Upon approval, a Project Implementation Committee (PIC) and Community Environment Protection Taskforce (CEPT) each composed of these same categories of stakeholders and officers of relevant government departments, were set up and inaugurated by the community council of chiefs. ACET facilitated the PIC which implemented, monitored and evaluated the project.

Community volunteers were trained and supported who provided agricultural extension services to group and other community members. 50 youths (25 female and 25 male) were trained on energy efficient mud-stoves production who coached women to build mud-stoves for household cooking to reduce firewood consumption and eventual reduction in tree felling. These capacity building initiatives domiciled requisite skills base in the target communities that makes skills out-sourcing unnecessary. 93% of beneficiaries trained on climate smart agriculture were female which helped to increase gender inclusion.

Plateau State, Nigeria

Community Intergation

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Locality | Category | Project name

Tags | Organisation

Co-creation of Coastal Community Action for Sustainable Development

Community Practice

New Energy Frontiers

New Energy Frontiers piloted a project which explored the use of clean energy solutions to reduce post-harvest losss, improve food processing and boost economic growth in coastal communities. In doing so, the following key activities were carried out to ensure community owenership of the pilot project.

1) Memordams of Understanding were signed by local Heads to formalise the project's engagement with the targeted communities. Engagements were also held with local artisans, traders, fish processors and retailers to get different perspectives on community practices and priorities. This helped project implementation and informed system design and construction activities. 2) Seminars about the project were held for primary school pupils in the communities. The aim was to educate pupils on the role of renewable energy and cleaner energy technologies and foster early acceptance of the proposed project by young persons in the community. A total of over 200 pupils (120 boys and 80 girls) were engaged at Sagbokoji. 4) Community-based consultations, focus group discussions, business model interviews and awareness workshops attended by 250+ stakeholders were held to foster sustainability. A cooperative business model was identified as a practical solution. 5) Community members were employed across the project, within construction works at Sagbokoji including a total of 11 members.

The project attracted over $25,000 of in-kind contribution from international stakeholders, as well as the Sagbokoji community's contribution of an 80 sqm land space.

Lagos State, Nigeria

Community Intergation

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