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PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY THROUGH CLIMATE SMART LIVESTOCK FARMING NEWSLETTER



MADAM WORKS WITH THE MOST VULNERABLE AND MARGINALIZED PEOPLE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES OF SIERRA LEONE TO IMPROVE THEIR LIVELIHOOD SECURITY WITH A STRONG FOCUS ON WOMEN, YOUTH, AND CHILDREN INCLUDING THOSE LIVING WITH DISABILITIES. MADAM'S APPROACH IS DRIVEN BY THE BELIEF THAT POVERTY AND VULNERABILITY ARE BEST OVERCOME WHEN AFFECTED POPULATIONS TAKE THE LEAD IN THEIR DEVELOPMENT ASPIRATION.

PROJECT OVERALL OBJECTIVES

- Improving food and nutrition security and strengthening resilience and adaptation to the impacts of climate change in Moyamba and Karene districts of Sierra Leone.

● PROJECT GENERAL OVERVIEW

The population of Sierra Leone is 7,541,641 according to the Medium Term Population and Housing Census 2022 (StatSL, 2022). The project area comprises two districts, Karene District in the northwest with a population of 290,312 (4% of the total population), and Moyamba in the southern region with 346,771 inhabitants (5% of the total population).

Moyamba district has the largest poultry population in the southern region and is the district with the second highest poultry population in the country. Vegetables are also grown extensively in the district. Karene is the youngest district in the country and is very poor but is known for its small livestock farming. Food insecurity has worsened over the last decade for most people in Sierra Leone and in does district in particular. In both Karene and Moyamba, farmers complain of declining yields and loss of soil fertility in a changing environment. The community's over-dependence on conventional agriculture (due to lack of access to agricultural inputs such as fertilisers, improved crops, finance, knowledge, and farming skills) leads to low yields and consequently high food insecurity in the face of climate change. In Sierra Leone, only 4% of farmers use irrigation to increase the production of their agricultural produce, with only 1% in Karene and 0.3% in Moyamba using some form of irrigation.

In Karene District in particular, poultry farming is already a widespread activity, especially for poor women, as poultry farming requires little input. The main problems in poultry farming are New Cattle Disease (NCD) as well as dwarfism of the animals, poor housing, free range (due to high losses of animals from birds of prey and snakes, among others), and general lack of care, especially in terms of feeding. As a result, it is estimated that more than 50% of chickens are lost (EU-BAFS, 2018).

In line to this backdrop, MADAM and SLAWS have received funding from WHH/BMZ to implement a 3 years project to Promote Sustainable Food and Nutrition Security through Climate Smart Livestock farming in Moyamba and Karene District in order to address the overarching situation of our local farmers

PROJECT GOAL

2,000 vulnerable smallholder households in Moyamba and Karene districts benefit from the development of climate-smart agriculture and small-scale livestock and improve their food and nutrition security.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

A total of 40 communities have been identified and registered, 20 communities in each district. At least each community will host two groups of FBOs; one will be purposely for livestock farmers and the other 1 for vegetable grower's farmers. But overall all the groups will also benefit from the VSLA package, and the LANNN package, and also form 6 cooperative associations plus other components of the project targeting all the project participants. So A total of 80 FBOs are already being registered altogether, 40 FBOs per district. 25 members registered per group and these members are taken from a household in the community as direct participants. Each of the registered members passes through the selection criteria with prior confirmation from the chiefdom stakeholders who are present with the team in the communities.

The selection process commenced with a quick joint planning meeting that took place at the district council halls simultaneously both in Moyamba and Kareneh district. Five days were set aside effectively starting Tuesday 9th and completed Saturday 13th of January 2024. What is interesting most in all the district exercises is the full participation and cooperation of the key stakeholders of the project including councils, MAFFS and chiefdom authorities.

MADAM and WHH Partnership

Welthungerhilfe (WHH) Sierra Leone has been cooperating with MADAM since 2018. Currently, MADAM is implementing three BMZ-funded interventions in partnership with WHH: "Skill Up! Strengthen Vocational Training, Create Prospects for the Future" (PN4411 from 01/07/2020 to 30/04/2023), and "Promoting Sustainable Food and Nutrition Security through Organic Agriculture in Falaba District (ProFaNS), in Northern Sierra Leone" (PN5917 from 01/10/2021 to 30/09/2024).

The SLE 1105 Promotes sustainable food and nutrition security through Climate-smart agriculture in the districts of Moyamba and Karene. These projects have enabled MADAM to extend its geographical reach to the newly created and severely underserved Falaba and Kareneh District, which is avoided by many development agencies because it is difficult to access.

In addition, the collaboration between MADAM and WHH has further strengthened the livelihoods portfolio of both organizations.

Introductory workshops organised by WHH for implementing partners

During this quarter reporting period, A two-day introductory project workshop was conducted as part of the inception meeting that took place at the MADAM Head office in Makeni between the donor organization WHH, and implementing partners at MADAM and SLAWs to further discuss and clarify certain issues that are of concern in the project SLE1105-PSuFoNS and for better understanding of the project by staff.

Among other issues discussed are Expectations from participants after the inception meeting, To get familiar with the Project objectives and goals, To Identify challenges and solutions for those challenges, To know the Roles and responsibilities of project staff, To Understand the project document, To Understand project specifics, Identification of key stakeholders and their level of involvement, Identify direct project beneficiaries, Understand the projects financial template, What is SLAWS and MADAM involvement, Learn more about cash management, Understand more about WHH procurement process, Clear guidelines of beneficiary selection and WHH reporting tools.

Participant of this inception meeting workshop was drawn from MADAM, SLAWS and WHH with a total number of 35 participants who attended the meeting.



PROJECT OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND OTHER KEY STAKEHOLDERS INCLUDING WHH AS DONORS.

During this quarter reporting period, the project team headed by the project manager Momoh Lawrence Official launched the project in Kareneh district and Moyamba district respectively, the project location district stakeholders, donors, project participants, and the media were all in attendance to witness and climax the occasion.

Deputy Minister two(2) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security Shar Hermo honored the invitation through WHH to officially launch the project titled “Promoting Sustainable Food and Nutrition Security through Climate - Smart Livestock Farming in Karene District".



The minister also served as the keynote speaker and officially commissioned the kickstart of the project in Kareneh District and Moyamba The occasion was witnessed by The Donors Welt Hunger Hilfe (WHH) the HOP@ Gospel, partnership Manager @ James Alpha and Tamba Borbor @communication, all in attendance together with other line ministries and key stakeholders of the district and chiefdoms including paramount chiefs, council chairman, section chiefs, councilors and representatives from all the FBOs. The Director of MADAM, Mohamed Sorie Conteh, HOP, Edward Conteh, and Sheku Gbla @ SLAWS spoke on behalf of the implementing partners and members of the project team from MADAM and SLAWS were in top gear to ensure the best was achieved.

The launching took place at LA Galaxy Hall Center in Kamakwi Kareneh and Moyamba District Council Hall. The launching targeted a population of 150 participants including 2 representatives of 40 FBOs, project team members, district stakeholders including line ministries, chiefdom authorities, and the media.

Integration of animal husbandry and vegetable production – training in organic farming

During this quarter reporting period, 2,000 women who are organized in 80 groups capacitated with Training in crop production and rearing of small animal husbandry integrated farming using organic approaches at community level in the two operational Districts was successfully conducted. A total of two days training sessions was dedicated to this training. The training was facilitated by the field staffs after a TOT was conducted for the project team staffs by the technical personnel from the ministry of agriculture and later replicates to the farmers at community level. The training was conducted in both practical and theory interactive session. 25 member's in all at community level benefit from attending the training.



ESTABLISHING AND STRENGTHENING VSLAS

During this Quarter reporting period, 2,000 women received training on VSLA methodology and equipment kit support in Moyamba and Kareneh districts. MADAM/SLAWS As implementing partners through the support they have received from WHH/BMZ commenced the rollout of VSLA methodology community-level training with full VSLA equipment kits in 40 project communities, 20 communities in Kareneh and 20 communities in Moyamba district respectively. As the training happened in the two districts including Moyamba and Kareneh, Every community is hosting a total of two VSLA groups making it altogether 80 newly formed VSLA groups which the PSuFONS project has already established in the two districts and support them with training facilities and equipment to run the groups. A three-day training session was set aside for every community with 25 female members per VSLA group. Now all the 80 VSLA groups are functional and operatives.



1,000 Women smallholders in good agronomic practices in vegetable production

During this Quarter reporting period, 1,000 women in vegetable gardens have COMPLETED training on good organic agronomic practices training in Moyamba and Kareneh districts. This has also serve as an alternative approach to their traditional use of fertilizer and replace with organic practices. Practical sessions in communities for both Moyamba and Kareneh Districts during and after training including.

1. Vegetable women showing demonstration on covering of compost pits
2. application of water during compost preparation to enhance decomposition
3. A fence demonstration plot of women in organic farming
4. preparation of green manure for compost by women trainees.



Supported 1,000 women vegetable farmers with improved, adapted seeds and cultivation equipment

During this quarter reporting period, The project team commenced the community level distribution of vegetables farm tools and seeds to all the 40 FBO in Kareneh and Moyamba district, a total of 20 communities in Kareneh and 20 communities in Moyamba district benefitted from the distribution of seeds and tools respectively. several assorted tools including hoes, cutlass, shovel, watering cans ,rake, wheelbarrows and seeds including pepper, okra, cucumbers, watermelon, garden eggs, Crain Crain etc.



Trained 1,000 women in compost production, green manure preparation, and application

During this quarter reporting period, the training for the 1,000 women in compost production green manure preparation was completed in all 40 communities in the two districts of Kareneh and Moyamba . The facilitators of the sessions were drawn from the Ministry of Agriculture at the district level with support from the project team; three days was set for every community to train 25 members per group. The idea of the training is to prepare the vegetable women growers with enough knowledge on how to prepare compost pits and green manure to support their vegetable gardens. This will promote a high yield of harvest of vegetables in their farms.



ONGOING SEEDBED PREPARATION AND SEEDLING GERMINATION NURSERY SITES

During this quarter reporting period, we are able to also support the 1,000 female vegetable farmers Groups to completed their nursing of seedlings , correct practices of weeding around the nursery sites and methods of transplanting, bush clearing and land tilling, bed construction and preparing for transplanting and direct planting. We encourage men to support the women in bush clearing and tilling the land which shows their commitment towards the project since the project's direct beneficiaries were 100% women.



Pilot projects for greenhouses with solar irrigation systems for selected FBOs

During this Quarterly reporting period, land identification and location for the construction of the greenhouse including market building, hatchery, boreholes and rabbit hutches was conducted by the project team with technical support by the WHH engineer Thomas Foray to initiate BOQ before the procurement process starts. A selection criterion for the location of the facility was followed and consultation of district key stakeholders including council, chiefs and ministry of agriculture where part of the land identification and selection. The developments of the BOQ were all completed during this reporting period before the construction starts in the following quarter.



TOT training of 15 project staff on CLIMATE SMART LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT

During this quarterly reporting period, Five days' TOT training of 15 project staff on CLIMATE SMART LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT was conducted. The training is hosted at the MADAM hall in Makeni. The facilitators are being drawn from the Ministry of Agriculture Livestock Department and the Ministry of Fisheries.

The activity is being implemented and facilitated by the Sierra Leone Animal Welfare Society (SLAWS) in collaboration with MADAM as Co-implementing partner of the project. After the TOT training, the project field staff has also completed the roll out of the training down to the community level to the project participants in all the two Districts of Kareneh and Moyamba. A total of 2,000 participants were trained both livestock and vegetable farmers.



Introduction of LANN to all 2,000 participants of the target group

During this Quarter reporting period, The project team has COMPLETED the community level training rollout sessions for 2000 women on Linking Agriculture and Natural Resources Management (LANN+) modules. After a successful conduct of the TOT training for staff hosted in Makeni for a period of five days, on the community level rollout, the participants were drawn from FBOs of both the 25 women in vegetable production and the 25 women in livestock production in all the 40 communities of the project operational locations in Kareneh District. The training focused on the first module called KNOWING YOUR FOOD. This module has four sessions and all were completed with both practical and theoretical approaches which includes the following. Now we have working nutritional approached at community level that have change the eating habits and cooking styles of project participants on a daily basis.

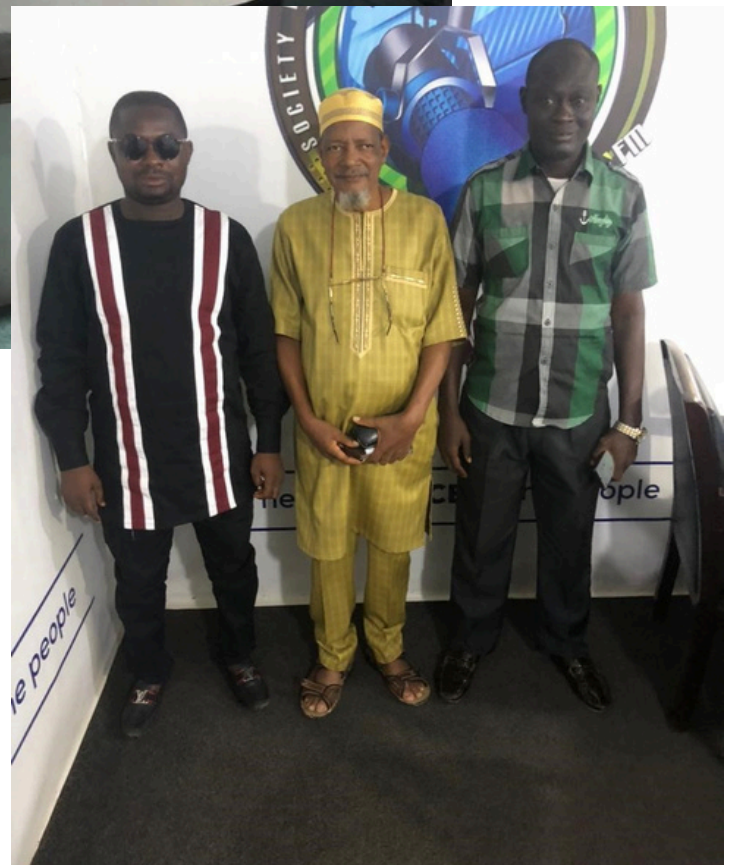
1. Session one: Introduction to basic problems identification
 2. session two: introduction to basic principles of nutrition, food group and balance meal, energy, growth and health.
 3. session three: good nutrition family
 4. session four: Food hygiene and cooking class.
- Module 2: child health care and complementary feeding
 Module 3: hygiene and nutrition
 Module 4: natural resources and management



Radio and TV Programmes on climate-friendly agriculture

During this Quarterly reporting period, the conduct of the first quarterly LIVE TELEVISION BROADCAST PROGRAM at Africa Young Voices AYV and broadcast of radio at 98.1 FM including district media house was fully conducted. On the popularization of the project, activities were conducted at the national level. As the VISIBILITY of every project implementation is one key approach for project sustainability, part of our project activities is to regularly host live TELEVISION and RADIO programs with a national audience of viewers and listeners both direct and indirect participants to create awareness raising on technical issues around the project implementations. At AYV, and during this reporting period, we have commenced the kick-start of our planned quarterly television and radio programs, attracting direct and indirect project participants nationwide. The project manager Mr. Momoh Lawrence Turay MADAM, including the Director of SLAWS Dr. Gudish Jalloh including personnel from the ministry of Agriculture and ministry of fisheries were part of the panelist for both television and radio live discussion.

The television and radio programs on climate-adapted agriculture will widely help to increase awareness and knowledge focused on project intervention and consolidate the learning content plus providing an enabling environment for complaints redress mechanism. Key topics discussed are the project objectives and overview, conservation agriculture, crop intensification, water Management and harvesting, post-harvest management, on-farm feed production, integrated fish and poultry farming, and vegetable production including livestock breeding and management



Establishment of 6 cooperative

During this Quarterly reporting period, Cluster meetings for the foundation of district cooperative meetings were successfully conducted, trained and formation of the cooperatives at district level. A total of 150 participants are put and organized into cluster meetings for the foundation of two district cooperatives, 75 in Kareneh and 75 participants in Moyamba to Mann the affairs of the farmers from both vegetable and livestock members of the project participants. 2 members are selected from each group to participate in a clusters meeting to discuss on the operation of the cooperative and initiate leadership to run the association democratically. The cluster meeting is being witnessed and Co-facilitated by the Ministry of Agriculture together with project team staff through the lead of the project Nutritionist officer Ester R. Mansaray. After the conclusion of the cluster meetings, a group of ten executive members are been selected democratically among the members present to form the district Cooperative Committee who will be held responsible for managing the facilities the project will provide for and on behalf of the FBOs.





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