

TOGETHER FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

# SUCCESS STORIES





## AGRICULTURE AND AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

*IMPROVING FOOD  
SECURITY AND  
INCOME*

The overall goal of Millennium Promise (MP) is to support partner countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Agriculture and agribusiness are critical sectors for realizing these new targets given the sub-Saharan African context.

To sustain and scale up the sector achievements, many of the activities were carried out by the local technical services with support from MP. In 2016, MP developed a new Agribusiness Strategy with the ultimate goal of attaining the SDGs. Towards that ultimate goal the agribusiness sector will focus on two main objectives: (i) nutrition and food security; and (ii) employment and income generation. MP's interventions will target all actors along the value chain and ensure that farmer-based organizations (FBOs) remain a centerpiece of its activities through its interventions.



## **ORGANIZING WOMEN PIG FARMERS INTO COOPERATIVES IN MAYANGE, RWANDA**

In Mayange (Rwanda) the Agribusiness team of the Millennium Villages Project (MVP) worked with women cooperatives to identify business opportunities and search for funds to increase income and ensure diversification from agricultural activities that provides lower income due to various reasons including imbalance rainfall and archaic farming techniques.

Women farmers in rural areas of Mayange (Rwanda) have limited livelihood opportunities and are mostly engaged in subsistence farming and other small scale activities to generate nominal income. MVP in Rwanda organized the women into Mayange Pigs Farmers' Cooperative (MPFC - Abadahigwa) and linked them to Pilot Light Foundation (PLF), an American based foundation that partnered with MVP to fund businesses among women groups. PLF funded the construction of pigs shed, purchasing the initial stock of pigs and feeds. The main objective of the piggery business was to raise women's income and generate manure needed for their farms. The intervention demonstrated remarkable results. They started with 6 female and one male pigs, and raised 32 piglets just after the first six months of operation. They raise the piglet for two (2) months and sell them to generate income to purchase feeds, pay for night guards and buy seeds for their farms. Through the formation of cooperative and receiving financial support, the women farmers were able to improve pigs

production which resulted in increase in their incomes.

"The Millennium Villages Project is so well known around here because of the support they are giving to women," says the president of the Mayange Pigs Farmers' Cooperative, Jacqueline Musharakazi. "We have so many ideas for the future," she adds. With this passion and vision, as well as hard work, the future for Mayange's single women looks brighter than ever before.

## **HOW THE LEAD FARMER PROGRAM IN SADA MVP HAS CHANGED MY LIFE**

"The Lead Farmer approach helped me improve yields on my farm" says Elizabeth from Batuisa, Bulisa South District of Upper East Region, Ghana. Elizabeth had been farming for most years of her life and usually got an average of 2 bags (200kg) from an acreage of her maize farm. Things were however to change in 2013 when she received continuous practical training on good agronomic practices through the introduction of the Lead Farmer approach which was led by the Savannah Accelerated Development Authority (SADA) Millennium Villages Project (MVP). The Lead Farmer approach was used by SADA MVP to transfer agricultural knowledge and technology to rural farmers in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture in the three project beneficiary districts. Its main objective was to develop a more accessible and regular system of providing effective and efficient extension services to farmers in their communities.

Even though Elizabeth was initially reluctant to be a member of the farmer cooperative group, she later on changed her mind and became a member. Her farming fortunes started changing when she got 8 bags of maize in the year 2013 from the same one acreage plot of land that hitherto gave her an average of 2 bags. She recounts that “in the year 2014, I got 12 bags from my farm and 13 bags the following year...infact I am hopeful I will increase the number of bags I harvest this year”. Elizabeth continued; “from what I learnt, you can plant your crops in rows as opposed to the haphazard way we did it initially and planting in rows would easily help you refill sections of your farm which have germination problems and can help you increase your plant population”.

## **“A FAMILY IN HARMONY WILL PROSPER IN EVERYTHING”**

This Chinese statement aptly describes and summaries the sentiments expressed by the members of the Ayaachaab Women’s Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) located in the Builsa South District of the Upper East Region of Ghana. The VSLA intervention, which was introduced by SADA Millennium Villages Project, has been a driving force for economic empowerment of rural women in the Project cluster. The VSLA allows women to contribute small amounts of money (shares) periodically into a common pool from where loans can be taken and repaid at an agreed interest rate. For the President of the Ayaachaab Women’s VSLA, Adogo Ayonpok, “being a member of the group is very good

because we are able to give loans to each other since the money which we contribute is readily available”. Adogo Ayompok’s group has a membership of 20 women and all the members have benefitted from loans which have helped them go into activities such as petty trading, brewing of local beer (pito) and expanding their farming activities. Indeed, the financial and economic independence accruing to the women of Ayaachaab women’s group is contributing immensely to family unity and harmony because “we now contribute more to the household income and sometime we borrow money from our group to buy planting seed, fertilizer, pay for ploughing services and even renew our medical insurance for our children and husbands”.



**The Millennium Villages Project is so well known around here because of the support they are giving to women”**

*- Jacqueline Musharakazi,  
President of the Mayange Pigs  
Farmers’ Cooperative*







## HEALTH AND NUTRITION

# 02

The mission of our health sector is aligned to the Sustainable Development Goal 3, that is, to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. We focus on achieving universal health coverage defined as quality, essential health service coverage and financial coverage, extended to the entire population.

The priorities of our new strategy are aligned with health and nutrition related SDGs, we focus on building and strengthening the primary health care system by creating a continuum of service delivery from household, to clinic and to the referral facility. We continue to strengthen community and household based health care delivery through the deployment of Community Health Workers (CHWs) program in which the selected community members are empowered, trained and equipped to deliver basic yet essential health care services at the household level.

Our interventions have greatly contributed to improved quality healthcare for women and under five children including the management of malnutrition and prevention of diseases such as malaria, diarrhea, pneumonia, tuberculosis and HIV.





## **BECOMING A COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER – AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE HEALTH CARE OF THE RURAL COMMUNITIES**

Community Health Worker (CHW) program is one of the innovative approaches of how Millennium Promise (MP) is advancing healthcare in all sites, household visit by household visit. The MP also provides CHWs with a user-friendly smartphone equipped with the CommCare system that allows them to record patient information, access decision-making guidance, and show videos to parents about nutrition, all at the point of care. The system helps health workers in faster identification of epidemics, better access and tracking of patient symptoms and treatment. It further targets a wide variety of health issues, including maternal health, malaria, TB, HIV, malnutrition, and lab workflows, it is a multimedia for counseling. The Phones increase credibility for the CHWs and improve client engagement. Evidence shows that multimedia job aids improved CHW performance, confidence, and client engagement.

Seynabou Ndiaye is a Community Health Worker (CHW) in the Millennium Village of Potou in Senegal. With her health care training and a decade of experience, she has been working for the CHW program since 2007 in order to contribute to improving her community's health and to help her brothers, sisters, and relatives get access to health care.

Each month Seynabou would receive a stipend to deliver essential health care to more than 100 families. She conducts regular monitoring of 200 children under the age of 5 and more than 20 pregnant women. Her household visits focus on monitoring hygiene conditions, inspecting bed nets, providing prenatal consultations, and managing cases of malnutrition, fever, and diarrhea.

Seynabou Ndiaye is very proud of her role in her community "I graduated from primary school and I have undergone many health trainings from MVP. Now I benefit from 10 years of experience in community health. My activities as CHW make me feel overwhelmingly happy to be useful to my community."

## **RUHIIRA'S MIDWIVES, DELIVERING HOPE**

As evening closes on another busy day at the Ruhiira Health Centre, a small crowd gathers around new ultrasound scanners, which have just been delivered. Excited whispers come from children and adults alike.

For Helen, a midwife at the center, the delivery of this improved technology will mean that problems can be identified and addressed much earlier in pregnancies. But no amount of technology can equal the value that someone like Helen brings to the wellbeing of women throughout the community. Indeed, midwives are the driving force behind restored hope and trust in the institutional healthcare system.



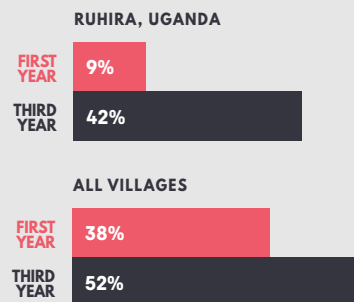
Improving maternal health has been one of the biggest priorities of the Millennium Villages Project in Ruhiira. Partly as a result of the midwife program, institutional delivery has increased from 8% in 2006 to as high as 42% in 2009. Since the program began in 2007, it is reported that not one mother delivering with the assistance of a midwife has died during childbirth, a wonderful example of improved maternal health.

Thanks to a combination of excellent ante-natal care, a finely-tuned referral system between community health workers and clinics, vastly improved medical facilities, available technologies like the ultrasound scanners, and midwife assistance during labor, mothers like Angelica can live to see their children grow up.

“My labor was so obstructed. If Millennium Promise was not here, I know I would have died without a child. But instead I am alive and have a beautiful baby girl.”

### PROPORTION OF BIRTHS DELIVERED BY SKILLED ATTENDANTS

Improving infant and maternal health



Reference: Year -3 Survey Data

### CLEMENTINA 10 YEARS AFTER A SUCCESSFUL STUDENT

Clementina and Linet Atieno were little girls when Sumitomo Chemicals partnered with MVP to supply long lasting treated mosquito nets in the Millennium Villages. Their pictures were taken during the distribution of the mosquito nets by the visiting team not knowing this would mark a big milestone in their lives many years later.

Clementina’s picture was blown up on billboards, business cards and was a household picture in the Sumitomo staff circles. Many years later Sumitomo staff contacted MVP to know the whereabouts of Clementina. MV quickly located her home and made arrangements for a visit by Sumitomo staff.

“

**My labor was so obstructed. If Millennium Promise was not here, I know I would have died without a child. But instead I am alive and have a beautiful baby girl.”**

- Angelica, Uganda



As a result, Sumitomo pledged to support Clementina's family by constructing a house for them and educating her and Linet. Clementina is very sporty and plays in the school football team. Although her mother is widowed now, she continues to be a pillar and ray of hope in the family. A decade after Clementina sat for her Kenya Certificate Primary Examinations and she passed well with 384 marks out of a possible 500 marks. She has been offered admission in a secondary school in Mombasa, the country's second largest city.

Clementina hails from a very humble background. Her case is an example of going against all odds to shine. She has shown that given an opportunity a child can excel in what she is doing.

## **IDB SUPPORTED EYE CAMP: FREE EYE TREATMENT IN ISINGIRO, UGANDA**

An eye care service is one of the specialized health care that is not easily accessed in remote hard to reach places. When need arises for eye care services, the community in the MVP area have to move to Mbarara town which is approximately over 60km away since the Ministry of Health does not provide eye care services in its primary health care packages. This is very costly in terms of transport costs, up-keep, eye care and treatment which end up ranging from 50 – 80 USD depending on the magnitude of the problem and the type of treatment required.

The Millennium Villages Project II (MVP II) supported by the Islamic Development Bank and government of Uganda through the Ministry of Local Government is therefore conducting annual eye camps in Isingiro District.

With additional funding and donation of eye glasses from United States based Tommy Hilfiger Foundation and technical collaboration from the staff of Mbarara Regional Referral Eye Hospital over 740 patients have benefitted from this year's camp from the two selected site centers of Kabuyanda HCIV and Nyakitunda HCIII, adding to 1,200 who benefitted last year, and 2,000 for the year 2013. This brings the total number to over 4,000 patients treated, operated and provided eye lenses.

"Poor nutrition is among the cause of eye problems in the children and adult aged population we are seeing. said Dr. Sam Ruvuma. Isingiro is one of the districts in Uganda that has grappled with challenges of malnutrition and according to MVP baseline report, at project inception in 2006 over 50% of children under 5 were malnourished and stunted. As such Dr. Sam Ruvuma, an eye specialist with Mbarara University Hospital Eye Department encouraged the communities to keep a good diet.

Among the services offered during the eye campaign are mass screening of common eye conditions, basic treatment for eye problems, diagnose cases that need further treatment or surgery and those for referrals, give medication for some of the ailments, carry out minor surgeries like cataracts and provide glasses/lenses required.



## **HIV+ MOTHERS GIVE THEIR BABIES A CHANCE IN UGANDA**

Justine Tuzarirwe, (26 years) got to know that she was HIV+ when she was four months pregnant and she was so scared for her life and her baby's life. Her baby is now eighteen months old testing negative and Justine is happy.

Justine luckily enrolled in the EMTCT program at Kabuyanda HCIV soon after discovering her HIV status. She was counseled & initiated on lifelong HAART (Highly active Anti- Retroviral Therapy). After birth, the child was given ARVs (Anti Retrovirals) for the first 6 weeks of life at the end of 6 weeks the baby received the first PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) tests, and after one year of cessation of breast feeding. And at 18 months, a rapid HIV screening test was done to confirm HIV negative or positive results.

She confided in her husband and asked him to go to the health facility with her for testing but he refused claiming that he was not infected. Justine says that she kept on praying that he secretly goes for a test and medication. As her expected labor date drew close she got more worried. She was not sure that her baby would survive the deadly virus because she thought that she would get re-infected by her husband if he was not on medication.

However, the counseling coupled with Community Health Worker (CHW) follow up kept her going. Justine gave birth to her baby boy and he was immediately put on the Neverapine syrup and multivitamins. "I breastfed my son up to 10 months. My biggest

problem is the ARV treatment gets me a low appetite and that is why I always try so hard to keep it up by buying foods and eating a variety of fruits".

Today Justine is among the 70 mothers celebrating after her son was declared HIV free. This was after 18 months of regular monitoring by the Millennium Villages Project (MVP) CHWs and health facility medical staff. Justine says that she is glad she is attached to a health center where she goes for routine checkups; she believes that it is because of this that her baby is HIV-negative, even after breastfeeding him. She also suspects that her husband is getting treatment much as he will never admit because of his fear and pride.

Justine further encourages fellow HIV positive women to embrace PMTCT and family planning services for good health.



## EDUCATION



Our Education Sector activities focused on aligning the sector strategy to the SDGs. Transitioning from the MDGs to SDGs, activities and priorities were adjusted to address the SDG education goal: “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality Education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”.

A new strategy was developed taking into consideration the SDGs targets and the indicators for education and shared with all the sites. Support was provided to all the sites to finalize the scale up and transfer key activities to the government staff. Meanwhile, CTL component continued with an integration of vocational training. Most of the East Africa sites were engaged in fundraising activities to keep alive the education component with the development and submission of proposals in collaboration with CSD staff in New York.





## **AMIT GEBRESELASSIE TEKA: BIOGRAPHY OF A SUCCESSFUL CTL SCHOLARSHIP BENEFICIARY IN ETHIOPIA**

Amit Gebreselassie Teka is a 19 years old. Born and brought up at Selam Village which is one of the MVP villages this is around 15 KM far from the capital of the district, Hawzien. Her parents are farmers and she has two sisters and two brothers. She has attended her primary school (1-8) at Meshil elementary school .In the academic year 2012/13, MVP has announced to support female students from Koraro cluster who precede the grade 8 national examinations from the MVP complete primary schools to continue their secondary schooling under the Connect To Learn scholarship Program. In this program, based on her academic merits, she was selected as one of the 90 female students from the cluster and pursues her education in Masho Secondary school. "The support of Millennium Village Project to pursue my secondary education is the highest point in my life. I am getting my secondary education with all the necessary support provided by the CTL that includes school expense, school materials expense, access to reference books, Living Expenses (cost for accommodation and food) , Scholar Well-Being Expenses( sleeping materials, clothing, hygiene materials and etc.).

Due to low income, it would have been very difficult for my parents to fulfill the basic necessary educational and livelihood demands for me. Without such assistance, secondary school would have remained only a

participation for me and would suffered like other female students for paying house rent, preparing food, weekly transportation to bring flour and others from my families with meager income who also support other 4 children.

From the time when I engaged in the CTL, I have rented house and stopped traveling home .The scholarship support helped me to attend my regular class, to study more in night due to access to electricity and follow tutorial support on time and get time to spend in library. During my stay in grade 9, I was very outstanding students and stood 1st in my class out of 60 students and 2nd from the whole 2200 grade 9 students with an average score of 97 % grade point and won the annual prize from my school and Women's Affairs of the district. This result motivated me to study hard. Without the CTL support, I couldn't achieve great success in my education. I got the support of the CTL since grade 9 & I have scored 4.0 in Grade 10 national exam and as promised I have been getting the support for consecutive four years until I finish my university preparatory program (i.e. Grade 12). This year (2016), I am grade 12 and hope fully will pass the Ethiopian national exam and will join University.

My aspiration is to graduate from a university and be a Medical Doctor. In the future, I would like to devote my time in supporting mothers and children. Lastly, I would like to say "The support of Millennium Village Project to pursue my education is the highest point in my life" and would like to thank for their support and remind to continue their support to enable and

## **COMMUNITY EDUCATION WORKERS (CEWS) ARE BOOSTING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IN PAMPAIDA MVP IN NIGERIA**

The Community Education Workers (CEWs) were introduced to work at community level, sensitizing parents on the need to send children to school and boost school attendance especially for girl students.

In most of the cases, the CEWs, young unemployed people, were used to fill the gap of teacher in their own community. This help reduces the teacher /student ratio in most of the schools in the cluster.

The project provided to the CEWs trainings on classroom management and professional development. Most CEWs seized this new opportunity to upgrade their capacity by attending teacher training distance learning programs. As a result, most of them became trained teachers. Their dedication to their community drastically improved the quality of education.

In Pampaida, all the 49 CEWs recruited and trained by the project have been absorbed into the Government system and supervised by the District Education Support officers (DESOs) in Saulawa, while the CEWs monthly incentive is covered by the Department of Education and Social Development of Ikara Local Government Area (LGA).

The Project education team is supporting the DESOs in schools and CEW monitoring, through effective

monitoring schemes that allow to track progress and identify needed improvements before the end of academic years.

## **LIBRARY BOOKS TRANSFORM LEARNING IN RUHIIRA MILLENNIUM VILLAGE**

“For the first time, we are getting story books to read from home. We have never had anything like this before. My favorite book is “The Clever Little Heir” “says Martha Tusimire, a primary seven pupil of Ngoma primary school in Ruhiira Millennium Village in Uganda. Martha and her fellow students are the first beneficiaries of the “My Book Buddy” program in Ruhiira, implemented in partnership with the Millennium Villages Project.

“

**The support of Millennium Village Project to pursue my education is the highest point in my life ”**

**- Amit Gebreselassie Teka,  
scholarship**





In most parts of rural Africa, children like Martha do not have access to story books, which are frequently unavailable and unaffordable. This has far reaching implications for learning outcomes, reading proficiency and numeracy rates, which continue to limit a child's prospects and opportunities way into adulthood.

"Low levels of literacy and numeracy are one of the challenges children in rural schools face, and this is attributed to lack of sufficient books for the learners to read especially story books that can motivate them to read," says Ms. Peninah Tumusiime, the MVPs Education Facilitator in Ruhiira. "There is a lack of reading culture amongst students, lack of support for children to read regularly, and absence of systematic way children can improve their reading skills," she explains.

The My Book Buddy program has opened a window to the world for over 22,500 children to date. Started in 2010, the My Book Buddy foundation started the first children's library at a primary school in the slums of Nairobi in Kenya. Not a children's library in the traditional sense of the word, but an evidence based concept which is already embraced by 18 countries. The program works with disadvantaged schools in creating and maintaining physical spaces where children's books are available and can be read.

To lay the foundation for reading development, the program focuses on early childhood and primary education, where the learning process begins and the culture of reading can be inculcated at an early age.

"Every child receives a water proof bag for carrying a book daily to read at home. In addition to that, the Buddy program provides the school with book lockers, a program guide for teachers, book marks, borrowing record cards, the buddy stamp and flag that flies once a week on the school playground. The weekly ceremony consists of children raising the flag and singing a song composed by them, followed by an introduction by the school head teacher about the importance of reading. A new book is chosen on the day," explained Betty Ahereza, Headmistress Ngoma Primary School.

"Literacy unlocks the door to learning. Throughout life, is essential to development and health, and opens the way for democratic participation and active citizenship," stated Kofi Annan, the former United Nations Secretary-General.

## **GRADE SEVEN SCHOOL LEARNING CAMPS IN MBOLA MVP, TANZANIA**

Improvement of school enrolment, attendance, completion rates and general academic performance requires a substantial commitment. During a 33 day-learning camp that was organized at Mbola and Lolangulu Primary Schools respectively; Mbola MVP invested in school meals program whereby the project offered meals to 1,662 grade seven and four pupils at both learning camps. A total of 100 treated mosquito bed nets were given to both Mbola and Lolangulu primary school learning camps to prevent malaria and thereby enhance smooth learning.

The project also facilitated some teachers who took part to train the students. A small token was advanced to the teachers to just recognize and motivate them as they left their families and homes to concentrate in re-sharpening the students as they prepare themselves for the national examinations.

This particular investment by Mbola MVP consequently yielded fruits as there was a sharp improvement in academic performance by the students. Comparing the three years results it can be seen that the pass elevated from 27.5% in 2013, to 47.12% the year 2014 and to 60.93% the year 2015. MVP Mbola advised the district education department to look for possibilities to continue this useful initiative that commenced at the project area in the year 2014. The initiative was implemented following poor students' performance in the cluster where grade seven national examination pass rate assumed a sharp drop from 63.2% in the year 2012 to 27.5% in the year 2013.

## **CLEAN HANDS FOR HEALTHY STUDENTS FROM LOCAL MATERIALS, ISINGIRO SCHOOLS CHILDREN PRODUCE THEIR OWN SOAP FOR HANDWASHING STATIONS IN SCHOOL - UGANDA**

It is estimated that Uganda loses about 400 people daily from water-borne infections including, but not limited to; diarrhea, dysentery, cholera, typhoid, Ebola and Marburg fever, health ministry statistics show.

Faced with the challenge of ensuring that schools have got soap available all the time, coupled with financial constraints, the Millennium Villages Project with funding from Unilever engaged schools in rural Isingiro in soap making competitions using locally available materials and the results were exciting.

"The schools were able to make both liquid and solid soap! This means that schools can now have soap available for hand washing all the time" Says Mugarura Edward, MVP, Uganda WASH facilitator. The five Primary schools in Ruhiira that are Ngoma, Ruhiira, Omwichebamba, Nyakamuri and Ryamiyonga participated and engaged in sanitation campaigns over a period of one year. The Lifebuoy School of 5 hand

washing with soap behavior change program is registering positive results in the communities, complemented by Global Hand washing Days observed in October 2013 and 2014, hand washing with soap is now a common practice in schools. The schools have locally made hand washing facilities (tippy taps), piped water supply, rain water harvesting systems, safe drinking water facilities all provided by the MVP. All schools maintain and use soap as a habit and children at school assembly once every week, pledge to always wash their hands with water and soap on the 5 critical occasions.

Teachers were taken through a step by step process in soap making by local soap manufacturer. The school children participated and they were able to make their own soap using the available materials.

While addressing the gathering of parents, teachers and school children from 21 primary schools in Isingiro, the MVP Team Leader Lawrence Ssenkubuge said "If we want to change households, change the children. The children used simple but effective methods and have shown that they can add value to local materials in soap production." He further thanked the Isingiro District Resident District Commissioner and LCV chairman for gracing the occasion.

"Handwashing with soap is one vaccine against most diseases, and people need to embrace it." said the MVP Health Coordinator.

Looking ahead, the knowledge and skills acquired at school is expected to be adopted by the parents in the larger community. Thanks to the good working relationship between the project and the Isingiro District local government which put in place a WASH team that has spearheaded the program. This is in addition to the active Community Health Workers in the frontline, the entire Ruhiira community that has accepted to cooperate, and the continued funding from Unilever that has facilitated the program to run uninterrupted.



## INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE, ENERGY, AND WASH

Our infrastructure and energy program aims to promote universal access to reliable, affordable and clean energy services while expanding infrastructure to support sustainable rural development.

Our main focus is to work on strengthening sub-national capacities to develop sustainable and resilient infrastructure that supports economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for communities.



## **A CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE HANDWASHING IN MAYANGE**

In addition to the handwashing campaigns rolled out in schools as part of the Unilever partnership, some MV sites ran campaigns of their own to promote behavior change and encourage healthier habits at the community and household levels.

In Mayange (Rwanda), for instance, more than 100 local leaders received training on hygiene and sanitation in order to pass along this knowledge to the community and help change unhealthy practices. The MP supported the establishment of 41 Hygiene and Sanitation Clubs in to raise awareness to over 4,000 households about using safer water to drink, cook, and wash. A member of each participating family received a checklist to review at home in order to guide improved sanitation and cleanliness practices. In response, many families set up handwashing facilities near their latrines.

On Global Handwashing Day on October 15, more than 250 community members, local government, and district officials joined the celebration, and the Bugesera District Mayor awarded the best performing Hygiene and Sanitation Club. The celebrations can be very effective in helping encourage handwashing and acceptance of healthier practices in the community.

## **SOLAR LIGHTING KIT PROJECT LIGHTS UP DERTU COMMUNITY IN GARISSA, DERTU SITE, KENYA**

It was pomp and joy for the community members in Dertu, Garissa County in Kenya as they came together to witness the launch of the solar home lighting kits. The event served as the culmination of the project to equip 42 households with indoor lights between the month of February and March 2015.

The chief guest at the event was Honorable Abdi Ali, member of County Assembly, popularly known as 'Mwalimu' (Swahili word for 'Teacher') – Dertu Ward who thanked the Millennium Villages Project (MVP) team for their vision to help light up this part of the county.

"It is exciting that the Millennium Villages Project has initiated solar lighting for Dertu homes," he said. "It is my hope that this lighting project will be expanded to more homes. I commend those who took interest in the lighting project and contributed 20 percent without hesitating – they had trust that MVP would fulfill their promise. I urge those who have benefited to take care of the solar kits to prolong their usefulness."

A few days following the installation of the solar kits to their homes, community members were not only optimistic about the project but were already giving positive testimonials.

"I have charged five mobile phones using the solar kit and made Ksh 100 (about 1 USD ) in one day. I expect to recoup my investment by generating some income," Farah Askar said.

"Last night my wife had an easy time attending to our baby girl; she left the



solar lighting dimmed," added Abdi Hussein, another beneficiary.

These remarks were indeed a different tune from the ones the community members made during the sensitization meetings earlier. Back then, Ms. Kamilo Ahmed Bull one of the mothers had narrated the difficulties her children had been undergoing when doing their school home work. "I am tired of holding up my hand torch when my son is doing his class work at home," she had said.

## **FIRING UP DEVELOPMENT WITH FUEL-EFFICIENT COOKSTOVES**

Cooking is perhaps not the first thing that comes to mind when one thinks about economic development. But in several Millennium Villages, including Pampaida (Nigeria), improved cookstoves are bringing many benefits to the community. The new stoves save families fuel money and create new opportunities for income. They also reduce indoor air pollution, which results in important health benefits. And the energy-efficient stoves reduce the need for firewood, leading to less tree-cutting.

Saratu Dalhatu, a mother and small business owner in Pampaida, says that she now spends half as much money each week on firewood with her new fuel-efficient cookstove. "When people come to visit us, I now have more money to entertain them," she says. "My sister just had a child, and I was able to send her money." Families like Saratu's are also using these savings to buy more food, fertilizer, and livestock.

Sold through a local cooperative, the new cookstoves are generating new revenue streams for Bakuwa Babale and the 18 other cookstove vendors in Pampaida. "I am using the money from selling stoves to buy chickens," Bakuwa says happily.

Because the new stoves produce significantly less smoke than traditional open fires or three-stone stoves, they result in better indoor air quality. According to the World Health Organization, about 20% of under-5 childhood deaths worldwide are due to respiratory infections, which often stem from the use of open cooking fires within homes. The improved

cookstoves reduce this serious health risk for children and adults alike.

Fuel-efficiency also means reduced reliance on cutting down trees for firewood, which is a significant environmental benefit, and also reduces the labor burden of collecting firewood, which is usually borne by women and children.

Bringing cleaner air, fuel savings, and opportunity for entrepreneurs, improved cookstoves are playing a valuable role in bringing sustainable development to rural Nigeria and beyond.

## **FRESH WATER FOR DERTU RESIDENTS**

The year was a turning point for the 8,000 Dertu residents in Kenya. They had an opportunity to celebrate the commissioning of piped fresh water supply, with the participation of an estimated 100 community members.

During the commissioning, the Guest of Honor Mohamed Ali- CEO Ministry of Water Services – County Government of Garissa –said "I congratulate the Millennium Project for the good work they have done. I am happy that the Millennium project is collaborating with the County Government. Clean water is a key component of our lives. We need water for our bodies, for our families and for our livestock. A Government which cannot supply water to her citizens is not worthy. We are keen to work with partners like MVP towards provision of water. Among the items contributed by the County Ministry of Water Services, was technical design and supervision. The MVP provided the resources for the piped water project".

Mohamed Hudle Buul who is Chief, Dertu location said: "We have been complaining about salty water. Now we are happy that the project has been completed. Pregnant women used to be affected by the saline water. We are relieved that mothers can now access fresh and clean water from the borehole. The water committee ought to look for ways of better managing the piped water supply".

Abdi Ali who is the Member of County Assembly –Dertu Ward, popularly known as ‘Mwalimu’ said “Our mission here today at Dertu is to commission the piped water. The problem of water has been a thorn on our side. There was a time that whenever I came to Dertu, people would mob me and ask: “Where is water?” “Today we have fresh water for Dertu people. It is important that Water Users undergo training on management skills and request MVP to organize such training”.

The commissioning of piped fresh water supply in Dertu was a major milestone with far-reaching impacts considering that one of the MDG goals was to Increase access to safe water for households and public institutions. Dertu households now have basic access to safe water for drinking, cooking, and cleaning. Basic access is considered to be 20 liters/person/day from a source no more than 1,000 meters or up to 30 minutes total collection time per day, from an improved source. Dertu Health Centre, Dertu primary, Dertu Girls Sec, the local mosque and Administrator’s office now have sufficient quantity of water for service provision.

Before MVP, the only source of domestic water for Dertu village was a borehole drilled in 1997 by UNICEF in collaboration with Supreme Council of Kenyan Muslims (SUPKEM). Although the availability of water from the old Dertu borehole led to establishment of Dertu settlement, the water is saline and the residents had no other option.

Other sources of water are excavated earth pans which store runoff during the rainy season. But these are temporary sources and are often contaminated by the animals. The pans are mostly used by pastoralists who settle around them when the water is available. As soon as the pan dries up, the pastoralists relocate to other areas with water.

The drilling and equipping of the 200 m deep fresh water borehole from which the piped water is drawn was done by the MVP in partnership with Ministry of Water Services- County Government of Garissa in 2010. Hydrogeological survey, the drilling of the borehole, installation of PVC tank was done at a cost of 41,546 USD. The Ministry of Water Services contributed by installing a submersible pump and construction of pump house and installation of 60,000 liter steel elevated tank at a cost of 53,256 USD.

For sustainability concern, the MVP worked with the Dertu Water Users Association (Dertu WUA) in the oversight of construction works. The Dertu WUA also manages the water supply system and fee collection on behalf of the community. Revenue collected is used to pay for the borehole operator and for maintenance and operations costs.

The MVP facilitated training of the WUA officials and members on leadership, management of water supply system and financial management. It is envisaged that the knowledge impacted to them during the training will greatly improve their managerial skills.

As the MVP transitions into the SDG era, one of the technologies opened up to the people of Dertu is use of modern efficient irrigation methods such as drip system to raise crops.

# MP

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