



Passing on the Gift Approach for Climate Change Adaptation Strategies: Igunga Eco-village Project, Tabora Region, Tanzania

Passing on the Gift

Passing on the Gift is being applied in the Igunga Eco-Village project and has already led to an increase in the number of farmers benefitting from project activities. It's a promising pathway for project

sustainability, even after the project phases out. It brings together community members to share knowledge, skills, experience and resources for economic development. Through this philosophy, resources and knowledge provided by the project are acquired and passed on from one individual to another through farmers' groups. Nkinda Chenya, a farmer from Mwakipoleja Hamlet in Mbutu Village, said this about passing on the gift:



“After receiving training on local chicken husbandry and chicken brooder ‘Kinengunengu’ The Igunga Eco-village provided me with 2 local chickens and one improved chicken brooder. I managed to keep a total of 72 chicks and 145 chickens. I sold some of my chickens and I used the money I got to rent a farm for growing maize and greengram in this farming season. I also bought materials for construction of fuel efficient stoves. I have passed on the gift to my fellow farmers in a new group, including educating them about vaccinations, something which is very new in my area.”

How to Pass on the Gift

Passing on the gift is an approach for project sustainability spearheaded by the Igunga Eco-Village project, funded by the European Union, under the Global Climate Change Alliance Tanzania, whereby resources and knowledge provided by a project to farmers' groups are passed on to other farmers' groups. It is done in a way that the first groups that received resources and knowledge from the project are required to form new groups and pass on the same amount of resources and knowledge to the newly formed groups after harvesting. For example: Group A

received 75 chickens at the age of 5-6 months and were trained on chicken husbandry and management; therefore they have the responsibility to form a new group and hand them 75 chickens at the age of 5-6 months and also the skills and knowledge they received from the project. Every newly formed group continues with this process so as to ensure that every group member receives the gift. The cycle will continue until the whole community has received the gift. Passing on the gift is a simple and practical approach for project sustainability, which can be adopted by communities and different stakeholders.



About the Igunga Eco-Village

Igunga is one of six districts in Tabora region, in north-west Tanzania and is one of the driest regions, with 500 – 750 mm annual rainfall and a dry period of six months. Igunga Eco-Village is a four and a half year project, which started in April 2015. The project is run in two wards, Mbutu and Igunga with a total of 10 villages. The project target is to reach 6,000 vulnerable families/households (consisting of 36,000 individuals) directly and another 6,000 families/households indirectly. The approach is inclusive, particularly involving people with disabilities, female headed households and People Living with HIV/AIDS.

The project aims to increase the resilience of vulnerable rural Tanzanian communities through improved adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change. It combines interventions in the fields of water, energy, agriculture, livestock, fisheries, natural resources, gender, markets and entrepreneurship. Good farming practices are scaled up through Farmer Field Schools (groups of farmers that learn, test and implement activities together). Enabling policies favouring good practices are developed in close collaboration with the Igunga District Council. The project operates through five partners; Heifer Nederland, Heifer Tanzania, Igunga District Council, Aqua for All and ICIPE (International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology).



Funded by the European Union



Challenges

Lack of project sustainability often means that interventions which were promoted by the project either stop or sometimes do not perform as well as planned after the project phases out in an area. Also, during the project operation reaching out directly to all community members puts a high demand on resources from the project. Usually resources are too limited for Non-Governmental Organizations and Governments to be able to provide support to all community members, leading to only a small group of community members directly accessing project resources.

The problem affects target beneficiaries of the project in the following ways:

- Adoption rate of the project interventions becomes low since new knowledge remains limited to farmers who were directly reached by the project.
- Farmers who don't get resources and knowledge e.g. on good agricultural practices continue practising poor agricultural practices and therefore get poor harvests.
- Farmers will continue to depend a lot on experts from the Government, whereas through passing on the gift much dependence on experts' decreases since the early trained farmers groups will pass on knowledge to the next groups.

Therefore, passing on the gift ensures the continuation of project activities by the community members even after the project phases out.

How to Pass on the Gift

The approach of passing on the gift starts by community mobilization meetings to introduce the formation of Farmer Field School groups (for crops, poultry and fish farming), Natural Resources Management committees, Environmental school clubs (for nursery establishment and tree planting and management) and a selection of local artisans (for construction of biogas, fuel efficiency stoves, water harvesting tanks, well drilling and rope pump manufacturing) in the ten villages. After the group's formation, for example for Farmer Field School groups, each group selects two Farmer Field School Facilitators who received training from the project to then train their respective group members.

The group members also received materials such as crop seeds, fish fingerlings and chickens and are educated on the management of each given item. Furthermore, these groups are trained to form new groups, and pass on knowledge and skills. After the original groups' first harvesting they come together with the new groups to plan and arrange a passing on the gift ceremony.

Why does it work?

Passing On The Gift fosters social cohesion and accountability because one community member becomes a sponsor to another person. This builds solidarity among groups and individuals. It goes beyond passing the resources and knowledge which they received originally from their fellow group, and includes other things such as utensils and clothes. All these practices foster social cohesion.

So far two new fish farming groups have received some fish fingerlings and knowledge on fish farming from two old fish farming groups. Five crop groups have passed on the gift of sunflower, maize and greengram. Also, two new chicken groups with 36 members have already received 108 chickens from two original groups with 36 members. The project provided only 108 chickens to two original groups but through this method, two other groups have received 108 chickens, forming a total of 216 chickens. This is an indicator of continuation (sustainability) and upscaling of the project interventions even after the project phase out.

There are however some challenges on implementing the approach including:

Drought – has sadly led to the death of fish due to ponds drying out and therefore breaking the chain. The original group that encountered this loss will fail to continue in the next season.

Poultry Disease – has led to the death of chickens and affected the approach of some group members.

The Way Forward

To address the challenge of fish ponds drying out, the project is educating the community on water sources conservation, tree planting (afforestation), environment conservation at large, and practice conservation agriculture and on the use of renewable energy. Achievement in the implementation of climate change adaptation strategies will be the best solution depending on the rains and the assurance of accessibility of water all year round.



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