

AACES

AUSTRALIA AFRICA COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SCHEME

Newsletter

December 2013

Issue No. 3

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“... through trainings and cooking demonstrations the community now understands that healthy living is within their reach.” Says Abalo Waziri.



EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome to the 3rd edition of the Australia Africa Community Engagement scheme (AACES) newsletter - a quarterly publication for partners in the 11 AACES countries. We at the Resource Facility hope that this publication will be useful in sharing information, program highlights and approaches, and lessons learnt.

We thank partners who shared with us stories and highlights published in this edition. We also welcome comments and suggestions regarding issues dealt with in this edition. If you have stories, information, ideas and photos you would like published, feel free to contact the editor, Douglas Waudo on: d.waudo@acbf-pact.org

AACES Gender Workshop

A one day Gender Workshop was held on 20 November 2013 at the Intercontinental Hotel in Nairobi, Kenya. Over 40 people including Australian and African NGO representatives and DFAT staff participated. The workshop presented an opportunity for AACES partners to learn and share experiences on gender equality and how they can practically be applied at various levels of the AACES program implementation.

Participants shared experiences on issues such as: understanding gender concepts – an African perspective; Gender analysis frameworks – an overview of AACES partner frameworks and DFAT gender policy. Additionally, a presentation was done on Africa gender protocols and their importance to AACES partners' work on advancing gender equality.

During the workshop, NGOs shared approaches they intend to use in implementing gender equality in AACES activities. The discussion that followed provided opportunities for NGOs to not only share their practical knowledge and experiences about gender equality, but also assess the strength and limitations of their approaches. Two female

members of the Kenyan Parliament attended shortly the workshop and addressed participants. They particularly encouraged NGOs to prioritise the advancement of gender equality in AACES implementation in order to realise sustainable development.

For more information on concepts and approaches discussed at this workshop, please read the workshop report which will be posted soon on Yammer.



Participants in an interactive session discussing gender equality programming.

Photo By Douglas Waudo / Resource Facility

Mgera Nutrition Counselling Group – Improving Maternal and Child Health

For the longest time, life in Mgera Division, Kilindi District in Tanga region of Eastern Tanzania has been characterized by malnutrition especially among expectant women and children. This largely contributed to increased cases of maternal and child mortality, morbidity trends and poverty. Ironically, all this was happening despite the enormous agricultural potential of Kilindi District.

However, in July 2011, World Vision working in partnership with Australian Aid, the Tanzanian Government and other NGOs began implementing the Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (MNCH) project in Kilindi District. The aim of the project was to improve Kilindi's health system, sustainable nutrition, water sanitation and hygiene practices and market diversity.

World Vision facilitated the formation of nutrition counselling groups as a strategy of addressing malnutrition. The groups counsel and demonstrate the use of nutritious locally available foods to the community. The Mgera Nutrition Counselling Group is one of the groups working with World Vision under the MNCH project. Formed in 2012 with a membership of 13 women and 7 men, the group members have been trained in maternal and child health, sustainable nutrition and farming of fruits and vegetables.

The group has since been instrumental in transforming the local community through offering training and counselling lessons in maternal and child health and nutrition. The training covers issues such as vaccination, pre-natal and post-natal care, importance of breast-feeding, methods of food preparation, preservation, packaging and proper storage. As a result, a significant number of malnourished children have been helped under proper feeding practices while maternal and child mortality and morbidity trends have considerably reduced. In addition, there has been an increase in male participation in nutritional counseling groups and on issues related to maternal and child health.

World Vision trained the group in good agricultural practices to improve their food security and nutrition as well as income generation. Subsequently, the group hired a 1.5 acre piece of land early this year where they have been growing a number of fruits and vegetables which include kale, cabbage, tomatoes, beans, maize, onions, carrot, water melon and green peppers. The group is also using the farm as a demonstration site to teach and train the local community on modern farming practices and technologies.

To date, the group has earned a total of 5 million Tanzanian Shillings (A\$3,277) from the sale of farm produce, with that figure expected to increase as more harvests and sales are made. The group's success is also spilling over into their community. Over 13,919 community members, representing 2,254 households are benefiting directly from the group's training and counselling while all their produce is also being purchased by the community. As a result of their impact, three more Nutrition Counseling groups have been formed in the neighbouring Kisangasa Ward, with the Mgera group offering technical extension services.

Bouyed by their success, the group is in the process of being registered with the Village Community Bank (VICOPA) which is a collective financial support bank for small-scale entrepreneur groups. Once this is completed the group plans to expand their production acreage as well as establish a hotel for alternative income generation besides providing better nutritional food to the community.



Waziri Abalo, a member of Mgera Nutrition Counseling Group demonstrating the cooking of nutrient dense locally available foods

“We had all the nutritious foods, but we didn't know their nutritional benefits. However through trainings and cooking demonstrations the community now understands that healthy living is within their reach.”
says Waziri.

Photo By Douglas Waudo / Resource Facility

AusAID integration into DFAT

On Friday, 1 November 2013 AusAID formally became part of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). The integration brings together the Australian Government's foreign, development and trade policies and programs in a coherent, efficient and effective manner, in pursuit of Australia's national interests. AusAID is now known as DFAT and the Australian aid program is administered by DFAT on behalf of the Australian Government. Some important things to know about this change with regard to AACES:

- The AusAID Africa branch in Canberra will be fully integrated with DFAT Africa staff on 6 January 2014 becoming the DFAT Africa Branch. All Africa program staff based in Canberra are expected to be co-located in the DFAT Barton building in early 2014.
- All firstname.surname@ausaid.gov.au email addresses should now be sent to firstname.surname@dfat.gov.au although arrangements are in place to forward emails sent to the old address for the time being. Changes to other contact details will be forwarded to partners once confirmed.
- As part of the integration of the aid program into DFAT, the Australian Aid Identifier—used to brand and identify all Australian Government development activities—has been updated from capital AID to lower case Aid. The revised version has been posted by Kate Brow on Yammer with links to the DFAT- Aid website. The new version of the Australian Aid Identifier should be used for branding any **new** communications materials or products from 1 November 2013. Existing branding doesn't need to be changed at this time.
- If there is a need to acknowledge an entity in text, either DFAT or the Australian Government should be used. Particular care should be taken in using the phrase “Australian aid” or “the Australian aid program” because this does not signify a donor entity, it is a program administered by DFAT on behalf of Australia and the Australian Government. **Please contact Kate if you have any questions related to branding.**
- The website address for DFAT - Aid is: <http://aid.dfat.gov.au/Pages/home.aspx>



They say too much work without play makes Jack a dull boy. Well, AACES partners having a short play time in form of an ‘energizer’ during the gender workshop in Nairobi, Kenya on 20 November, 2013.

Photo By Douglas Waudu / Resource Facility

AACES Partners Field Visit in Kenya and Tanzania

Marie Stopes International and World Vision in Kenya as well as Caritas in Tanzania conducted field visits aimed at learning and sharing experiences. The field visits were organised to coincide with the Gender Workshop and Program Steering Committee meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya.

The Marie Stopes International and World Vision trip to Kwale County in Kenya was an opportunity for AACES partners to visit health facilities supported by Marie Stopes, interact with project beneficiaries as well as share experiences and approaches on how World Vision is promoting nutrition through the integration of agricultural activities such as poultry, cattle and crop farming. The partners were also able to get an insight into the work and role of community health workers and social franchise clinics, and how important they are to the health system, particularly in promoting better health for marginalised communities.

Partners who participated in the Caritas trip in Tanzania visited communities in Karatu District in Arusha region. They observed how Caritas is working with marginalised communities to increase agricultural productivity as well as access safe water, sanitation and hygiene. AACES partners also got the opportunity to interact with community members who shared their experiences and outcomes of the Strength Based Approach.

“It was an opportunity for us to reflect on our own practice and gain input from participants. For instance, we were encouraged to think about how we could report back to communities on findings/results from project activities”.

Margy Dowling, Program Advisor, World Vision Australia.



AACES partners interacting with community members in Karatu District, Tanzania.

Photo By Douglas Waudo / Resource Facility

EVENTS

- **16 January 2014**
Kenyan partners meeting at DFAT Offices in Nairobi to plan for the AACES 2012-13 Annual Report Launch in Nairobi.
- **25 February 2014**
Launch of the AACES 2012-13 Annual Report in Nairobi
- **8 March 2014**
International Women's Day
- **22 March 2014** World Water Day
- **21-24 May 2014**
AACES Annual Reflection Workshop and Program Steering Meeting to be held in Kampala, Uganda
- **25 May 2014** - Africa Day

PROVERB FROM GHANA

**If you have not
been on someone
else's farm, you
cannot say that
you are the only
true farmer.**

Yammer Exciting Features

Complete your Profile. Your career will thank you

Yammer is a great tool for finding and connecting with experts across AACES. Bring out your skills and expertise through your profile. This will make it easier for partners to identify resources and make connections within AACES for training and knowledge sharing activities. Yammer helps you to make connections, enabling you to know more about the people you work with across the AACES family, which essentially makes working together better.

Here is a guide on how you can update your profile:

1. Go to your profile page and click the **Edit Profile** button in the top right corner.
2. First, complete your bio. People struggle with striking the right balance between personal and professional information. *Pro tip: Say in your bio what you would say when introducing yourself to a new team member.*
3. Add information such as your organisation, department, location (country and city), expertise and education. *Pro Tip: Add why they should care.*
4. You can also add your manager and direct reports to your org chart, so colleagues viewing your profile gain an understanding of the team you work on.

Add a profile photo

Adding a profile picture is just as important as completing your profile information. Make a great first impression and show off your personality. When everyone has a profile photo, it will make it easier to recognise and connect with others during AACES meetings.



- **Changes the way you work** – Yammer has a full range of features to help you communicate openly, so you can discover more, share information and connect with anyone across AACES.
- **Enables you work better together in groups** – Cut back on meetings and email chains. Work together in a Yammer Group – a flexible, collaborative workspace for teams to get work done. Discuss project and meeting deadlines, share latest files, gather feedback and more.
- **Share your knowledge** – Yammer gives you a voice to share your knowledge and skills with others so you can make the most out of what you know. Complete your profile so partners can discover who you are, who you work with and how you can work together.

Just for Laughs – Happy Holidays Everyone!



FOR INQUIRIES OR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT US AT:

THE RESOURCE FACILITY

Ernest Etti
e.etti@acbf-pact.org

Christine Atieno
c.atieno@acbf-pact.org

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