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ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Dear KV-HELP Friends and Supporters,

The consequences of COVID-19 and changes in rainfall patterns affected our work. KV-HELP staff worked part of the year without salaries and engaged in agricultural activities. Most groups could not issue loans for rice cultivation, which led to low harvests, further delays in repaying 2020 loans and a complete stop in saving activities. In partnership with Kazi StartFunding, KV-HELP continued to help a few group members with coaching and monitoring their income generating projects.

We are grateful for all your support and hope we can jointly move forward.

Iddy Mayumana, Executive Director of KV-HELP

The Organization

Kilombero Valley Health and Livelihood Promotion (KV-HELP) is a local NGO working in Southern Tanzania. Its history reaches back to 2008, when a malaria intervention project started to support women self-help groups in their livelihood activities, in order to improve their access to health care. The NGO was registered in 2012 to continue and expand these activities. Today, KV-HELP works with a vast network of women groups to improve knowledge and skills for sustaining and promoting healthy livelihoods in their families and communities.

Modules



The Approach

The KV-HELP office in Ifakara is a reliable and permanent contact point for women. As an outreach program, staff members offer a Mobile Village Academy and provide hands-on-training and practical support to women self-help groups.

The KV-HELP Mobile Village Academy has developed a unique modular approach integrating three key components of healthy livelihoods: 1) Saving & Lending, 2) Food Security & Microenterprise, and 3) Health Protection & Health Promotion.

Activities

After the Saving4Health project ended in 2020, the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and diverse measures taken to control it have negatively impacted on the work of the KV-HELP and the women groups. The Tanzanian government suspended most public activities, closed schools and discouraged people's movements. KV-HELP team members had to work from their homes and were restricted in terms of field visits. The Mobile Village Academy was reduced to conversations by mobile phone, to provide moral and practical advice and to follow up on developments in the field. The groups had to stop their regular meetings. Many members lost their income, for instance if they sold garden produce in public places, prepared snacks for passengers in public transport, public servants or school children, or ran a small roadside restaurant.

Unpredictable rainfall patterns further added to the financial constraints because women's income from farming and especially rice cultivation dwindled. In 2020, the rice plants received too little, in 2021 too much rain to grow well. Bad harvests forced the KV-HELP team as well as the members of the women groups to spend more money on buying food.

News from the women groups were discouraging. Most groups that had started a third saving cycle in July 2020 could not continue. Due to delayed repayment of loans, the Business Funds were depleted. Low financial capacity affected early 2021 investments in rice cultivation, which led to low harvests in July 2021 and, in turn, further delays in loan repayment until the end of the year.

The KV-HELP team also faced financial constraints. During the first six months of 2021, a small grant allowed the staff to develop new project ideas and search for partners and funders, assisted by three volunteers, but not to conduct the village tour. The team then had to work without salary and engage in farming to earn an income.

Reviewing the strategy and designing the website

In spite of these difficulties and with considerable technical and financial support from the R. Geigy-Foundation, KV-HELP reviewed its strategy, further sharpened its integrated approach and developed its future orientation. The results of these considerations were summarized and visualized on a website that went online in 2021.

In addition to this effort to present the NGO towards a broader public and possible attract potential funders, the team also engaged in a few very local initiatives.

Organizing start-up grants for small business activities



Members of Neema selling snacks in Igota (Foto I. Mayumana)

Over the past decade, KV-HELP has facilitated grants and supported various non-farm initiatives of women group members. As reported in 2020 report, KV-HELP and Kazi StartFunding (<https://www.kazi-funding.org/>), a new Swiss-Tanzanian initiative, continued to support the ventures of our women groups members. KV-HELP carefully, coached the women on how they should manage the loan funds and ensuring that the loan was paid back.

Four out of five women managed to implement their project successfully and paid back their loans over the next 9 months. It remained an open question whether these repayments were made through money generated from the supported businesses or other family ventures (including other loans). The woman who was not successful used the loan (Tsh 500,000) for a small restaurant, paid back TSh 125,000, and then travelled to Kilosa district because of family problems, before completing the payment with another TSh 375,000.

Networking with partners for fundraising

In addition to organizing these small grant projects with Kazi StartFunding, KV-HELP made an effort to raise funds with other partners and prepare project proposals. Responding to the changing circumstances on the ground, KV-HELP explored various project ideas that called for collaboration with partners who had extensive knowledge and experience in specific areas, such as digital saving groups, digital participation in health interventions, innovative poultry farming and improvements in adolescent health. The team therefore consulted experts from the Ifakara Innovation Hub (IIH), Saint Francis University College of Health and Applied Sciences (SFUCHAS), Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) and Tanzania Training Center for International Health (TTCIH).

The following project idea was developed into a full proposal and submitted to the Fund for Innovation for Development (FID):

‘MaMa-KuKu’ – empowering women entrepreneurship (pilot phase)

The pilot project aimed to promote commercialized chicken farming for eggs production as a reliable source of income for vulnerable and poor Tanzanians. Key activities were:

1. To construct a small poultry farmhouse per woman group, capable of accommodating 60 layer chicken;
2. To conduct training on entrepreneurship, financial management, poultry farming, gender skills and health protection and promotion with the focus on non-communicable diseases;
3. To assist groups in procuring, vaccinating and raising chicken until they start laying eggs and can be distributed to households on loan;
4. To help groups to procure and supply best quality nutritious chicken feeds on credit;
5. To support groups in collecting loan payments for chicken and feeds in instalments from households (who earn money from selling eggs).

The proposal was rejected because 1) it was not clear how the design compared with other initiatives in the field; 2) the design was expensive to scale up in the future; 3) there were high risks in terms of paying back investment costs; and 4) the organization lacked adequate experience.

KV HELP Profile

Vision

To see a Tanzanian society living a health promoting lifestyle in a context of a rapidly increasing double burden of infectious and non-communicable diseases, with KV-HELP being one of the pioneering Organizations contributing to this achievement.

Mission

To work toward the goal of healthy livelihoods in Tanzania through an innovative approach that integrates development actions across health, education, agriculture/livestock and financial/entrepreneurial sectors.

Goal and objectives

For the purpose of strengthening household resilience toward health emergencies, KV-HELP aims to promote and test development methodologies that empower individuals and self-help-groups in the communities to promote healthy livelihoods. Specifically, the organization will address the following objectives:

Governing Board

Dr. Emmy Metta (Acting Chairperson), Mr. Said Mpasuka (Treasurer), Dr. Dominic Mboya, Mr. Christopher Mshana, Mr. Honorathy Urassa, Mr. Alto Mbikiye and Mr. Iddy Mayumana (Board Secretary and Executive Director). Prof. Dr. Brigit Obrist is an invited member of the Board. All of them (except the Board Secretary) work on a voluntary basis.

Location, address, contact

The head office of the organization is in Ifakara town, Kilombero district in Morogoro Region, Mainland Tanzania. Its physical address is:

Along the Compound of former CCM District Headquarters

P. O. Box 43

Ifakara – Kilombero Morogoro, Tanzania

Email: kilomberovalleyhelp@gmail.com

Website: <https://www.kv-help.or.tz/>

Contact person: Iddy Mayumana, mobile: +255 684 491 866, email: imayumana@yahoo.com.

Partners and funding

KV-HELP operates within a social learning network formed by local, regional, national and international NGOs and collaborates with authorities on the village, ward and district levels. In addition to voluntary work and financial contributions from the Board members, KV-HELP obtained a small grant in 2021 from the R. Geigy-Foundation, Basel, Switzerland (Total USD nearly 13,000).