



Government of Uganda – UNDP Anyara Millennium Villages Project



Context

The Millennium Villages Project is a post–conflict recovery intervention aimed at realizing the MDGs. It started in September 2008 and is expected to be completed in December 2013. The project seeks to contribute to the enhancement of local economies of beneficiary communities in order that they may move from the poverty trap characterized by chronic hunger, diseases, income poverty and poor access to clean water, health care, essential medicines, electricity, sanitation, communication and transport, with limited income opportunities to a health educated community that has these facilities and is active in the modern economy.

The project contributes to two UNDAF outcomes;

Outcome 1: Increased opportunities for people, especially the most vulnerable to access and utilize quality basic services and realize sustainable employment, income generation and food security.

Outcome 5: People affected by conflict and disaster especially women, children and other vulnerable groups effectively participate in and benefit from planning, timely implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes.

The expected Country Programme outcome contribution is:

- IDPs, ex- combatants and host communities assisted to return/ resettled in areas where security prevails

- Local economic development programmes developed and implemented to improve people's livelihoods;

Target Beneficiaries: 6,659 beneficiaries, 1217 household in Anyara parish

Development context in the district of Kaberamaido

Anyara Millennium Villages Project in Kaberamaido district is a post-conflict recovery intervention aimed at realizing the MDGs.

Kaberamaido District in Eastern Uganda consists of two rural counties of Kaberamaido and Kalaki and one Town council (Kaberamaido Town Council). There are 8 sub-counties and the total population of Kaberamaido District is 174,522(2002 PHC Report Kaberamaido). Now peaceful, the district is considered post conflict with recent periods of insurgency and cattle rustling which led to loss of lives, displacement and depletion of the number of animals and other valuable property.

Poverty prevalence in Kaberamaido is at 77% compared to the national average of 31 % (*UBOS mapping of the poor 2004*). Malaria is the leading disease burden in Kaberamaido district contributing to over 80% of reported morbidity. HIV/AIDS remains a key challenge.

In education, the pupil teacher ratio stands at 1:72 while the desired minimum standard is 1:55. In addition, the pupil to classroom ratio is 1:83 while the minimum standard is 1:55. Kaberamaido district still needs approximately 332 trained teachers to meet the increasing number of children joining school every year.

According to district records, safe water coverage in Kaberamaido district stands at 62.5% (*MIS, Kaberamaido*), which is below the national average of 65%. The functionality rate of the installed water facilities is at 57% in Anyara Sub-county. The latrine coverage according to the district report is very low and 67% of the households have no latrines in Kaberamaido district.

Arising from the aforementioned experiences the District apparently faces several social and economic challenges the most critical being: food insecurity attributed to weather vagaries and poor production methods, low household incomes, poor access to socio-economic services, poor skills among the population especially in entrepreneurship, and rising cases of land conflicts coupled with increasing land fragmentation that emanates from the rapid District population increase recorded at 4.2%.

Project Purpose

Empower communities to lift themselves out of the poverty trap and attain the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

Objective

To Increase opportunities for people especially the most vulnerable to access and utilize quality basic services and realize sustainable employment income generation and food security.

Narrative on Project Progress

1. Agriculture Sector

Climate: The climate of Kaberamaido District is marked by wet and dry seasons modified by the large swamp area surrounding it. The rainy seasons have a marked minimum in June, and marked peaks in April - May and August - October. However, this year, the rainfall pattern has become unreliable and unpredictable thus, affecting agricultural activities like crop cultivation and livestock rearing.

Over 95% of the Anyara Community relies on subsistence agriculture for their livelihoods. Sorghum and millet and cassava are the main food and cash crops grown. However, overdependence on starch with little nutritional diversification has escalated food and nutritional insecurity among the community as cereals contains high level of carbohydrates and starch but low levels of proteins.

Anyara parish has vast unopened land that has fallowed for many years due to displacement, despite the fairly fertile land, prolonged dry spell and mono cropping has led to decreased soil fertility, coupled with increased prevalence of pests and diseases. Although there is no nutritional survey conducted recently in the area, malnutrition especially among women and children is highly prevalent. The project objectives, therefore, are to increase and sustain production of major crops and livestock, avail nutritious foods to communities, and diversify farmers' incomes, thus addressing MDG1.

Two (2MT) of Maize DK 8301 and 2MT of beans K132 of improved early maturing and high yielding crop varieties which are well suited to Anyara conditions; were selected and distributed to 50 farmers groups to be planted in during the second rain season July- Nov traditionally.

From monitoring visits, all groups planted maize and bean seed distributed. The bean seed sprouted very well with the on-set of the second rains in July and dry spell set in immediately that dried up the bean seed completely.

This year is reported to be a bad year for all pulses (beans, peas and green grams) that failed throughout the area. At least 30% of the farmers, reported to

have stored the seed for the next season- 2010. On the other hand, At least 65% of H/H targeted planted maize in the month of July/August and the crop is doing well in the gardens observed. Despite the unreliable rainfall pattern, improved agronomic practices of linear cultivation will produce twice the output that farmers have been producing through broadcasting on the same piece of land.

In the reporting period, farmers were trained in appropriate agronomic practices including appropriate spacing, planting of early maturing and disease –free seed, pest and disease control and timely planting at on set of rainy season. The training covered the management of horticultural crops like onions, tomatoes and cabbage.

For improved nutrition, vegetable seed comprising of tomato, onions and cabbage with each variety weighing 200gm was distributed to 15 groups in Anyara parish. 5 groups cultivated near the swamp and transplanted tomatoe and cabbage vegetable seed. The other beneficiaries are waiting till next season to plant. If well managed through pest control, it will provide food and income to 26 beneficiary households (5 beneficiary groups).

The project supported 50 farmers groups (20 H/H per group) with a pair of oxen, ox-plough, 2 hoes, 2 pangas, an axe and 15 wheel barrows. The agricultural tools are meant to complement on what the farmers already have in production. Before distribution the oxen were sprayed from tick- borne diseases, vaccinated from trypanosomiasis, and deworming which are reported to be the common diseases in the area before handing over to the farmer groups.

Challenges during implementation

- Unreliable rainfall patterns lead to crop failure and poor animal health
- High prevalence of plant pests and diseases causing poor yields and losses to farmers
- Lack of routine livestock treatment and advisory services. This led to loss of 2 bulls and many more reported sick.
- Managing community expectations in provision of agricultural tools, seeds and oxen.
- Few extension staff to train and advice farmers on modern farming practices.

2. Health Sector

The overall objective of the health sector is to improve delivery of basic health care, increase community awareness on key health issues, and encourage community to reduce the burden of common diseases. These objectives address the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs 4 &5 & 6).

Anyara HCIII provides health services to about 19,000 people in the catchments area. The health center staffing has improved from four staff when the project started to 8 staff one of whom is a laboratory technician.

The project procured essential drugs and medical supplies once in the month of June 2009; this caused a dramatic increase in daily average outpatient attendance from 90 to 300 in the months of June/July. The numbers started dropping again due to irregular government supplies. At least 130 patients visit the health unit per day for diagnostic laboratory services that focuses on malaria and TB detection, and diagnosis of common communicable diseases has been established. However, drugs are always in short supply, therefore the patients get referred to clinics to buy the drugs.

- Anyara sub-county has a population of 3,973 women of child bearing age and out of these, total number of births in a year is 954, in partnership with Partners, the local community has better access to health services that include; deliveries under skilled health workers. There has been an increase of deliveries from 19 to 26 because of provision of MaMa Kits to the expectant mothers who access antenatal care services and deliver at the Health center.
- Immunization coverage is reported to be over 90% due to out-reach services and National Child Days
- Access to voluntary counselling and testing of HIV, provision of family planning services
- The project will further rehabilitate the Out patient and maternity department constructed in 2003. This will go along way in promoting better service delivery and hygiene.
- The nearest hospital is Lwala hospital which is 28 km away from Anyara HCIII and upto 43 km from the furthest village of the parish.

Community Health

Bed net distribution

In a bid to curb the spread of malaria about 3,000 long lasting Insecticide treated bed nets were distributed to 1,500 H/H in the project area. Prior to the distribution, a sensitization meeting was conducted to agree on distribution criteria, utilization and its advantages on malaria prevention. Prior to the distribution, the Health committee members moved into the villages gathering information on household population, number of sleeping sites or houses in each household and distribution followed this criteria. At least 48 household visited in all the 25 villages of Anyara reported no serious attack of malaria especially to children below five since this distribution.

Margaret Amito, 43 years , a mother of 7 children said," ever since I got 2 bed nets , two of my little girls aged 4 and 5 years and the baby who sleep under the mosquito bed nets have not visited the health center because of the serious malaria attack." I believe as told during the sensitizations that, one treated bednet in the house can help kill the mosquito that transmits malaria. I would really appreciate if the two boys, aged 7 and 9 can also benefit."

The distribution of bed nets was done concurrently with Aqua safe water purification tablets a packet to be shared between two households to about 1,412

household in Anyara parish. The community reported good usage of the tablets based on community sensitization by the District Health Inspector (EH).

Specific challenges

- Influx of patients from outside the project area – increases workload and high consumption of drugs
- Inadequate number of bed nets to significantly reduce malaria at household level.
- Long distance to health units and short supply of drugs
- Poor latrine coverage of 33%
- Poor motivation and retention of health staff in a rural setting
- Poor access to clean and safe water in some villages. One of the villages visited reported 165 H/H sharing one water source for both domestic and animals. The same is true for one primary school with water source 1 km away from the school compound.
- High prevalence of mental illness (100 patients on treatment for mental illness and epilepsy)

3. Education Sector

Despite the Universal Primary Education (UPE), there are children between 6 to 15 years who don't go to school according to the LC1's within the project area. This is estimated to be 15%.

Changes on Teaching and Learning during the reporting period

i) Quality of Teaching

Refresher training was conducted for 40 teachers (35 male and 5 female) were trained on thematic curriculum and child learner centered methodologies. The main aim was to build teachers capacity for quality education in areas of thematic curriculum, continuous assessment, joint scheming and development of School Improvement plans using school interactive methodologies. The training of teachers on life skills, child-centered methodologies, and hygiene and the provision of textbooks and other teaching materials has led to improvement in the following areas:

- **Quality of teaching**—teachers report that the better textbook ratio from none to 1:3 has significantly made teaching easier. The provision of teaching and learning materials has increased the knowledge of the pupils.
- **Classroom management**—teachers who have been trained report that they are better classroom managers and are better able to handle children.
- **Empowerment**—teachers report that through the refresher training they have gained new skills that empowered them and made them better teachers especially because of the training on child-centered methodologies and thematic curriculum.

ii) Quality of Learning

- **Availability of learning materials and textbooks**—this has boosted learning in that pupils are able to refer to the materials in their studies, which improves their performance for example the end of year Joint District Examinations for primary six, Anyara Main Primary school emerged the fourth best with no failures in the class.
- **Reduced dropout and absenteeism rates**—because of the provision of sanitary pads and panties for girls the girl child are in school as required. The completion rate has improved from 39% in 2008 to 49% in 2009. This is attributed to the continuous sensitization, posting of a minimum of 7 teachers per school and was further boosted by the school feeding program with food Aid form Office of the Prime Minister's office and parents' contribution. During the Food Aid support period, the pupils stay in school. The problem arises when the support period ends and the parents are not able to continue supporting the child for the remaining school period as was the case in second term (June to August). This is further worsened during the rainy season.

Overall Quality of Education

- **Increased school discipline**—teachers and head-teachers reported significant improvement in the discipline of teachers because of regular support supervision and follow up by the District Inspector and CCT. For example, a teacher was arrested for overdrinking on a working day and a School management meeting immediately to take disciplinary action.
- **Increase in girls' enrollment**—because of the sensitization of parents and communities on the importance of education in general and the importance of girls' education in particular more girls have enrolled at all levels and there is a significant decline in drop-out rates in the upper primary classes. This has increased the teacher pupil ratio from 1:70 in 2008 to 1: 72 pupils in 2009. (Nat 1:53)
- **Provision of duplicating machines and typewriters**—the provision of duplicating machines and typewriters in primary schools has made the preparation of examinations much easier and improved levels of teaching and learning.
- **Improved performance-** In 2008, out of the 71 pupils who sat PLE, there was only one first grade. This year, 102 pupils sat PLE (M- 58, F- 44) sat PLE. The lower classes provided with text books, and equipment for printed tests are expected to demonstrate better performance because the teachers do not have to write questions on the chalk board, reduce time wasting as pupils don't have to copy the questions on the answer sheets and gives pupils more time to understand and answer all questions

Challenges during Implementation

- Increased enrolment in schools but few teachers posted due to staff ceiling.
- Prolonged dry spell led to absenteeism of both pupils and teachers
- Long distance to school especially for P1, P2 and P3 children who delay to start school and cannot move unaccompanied.
- Lack of safe drinking water within the school compound
- Negative community attitude towards education of girl child.

Other interventions

- Food Aid to community and Schools
- School gardens by WFP

3. Community Sector

During the reporting period, community sensitization and regular meetings continued by the Community Sector Committees to orient the attitudes of communities towards development and the MV approach. The Sector Committee took lead in community mobilization, selection of beneficiaries and distribution of items delivered to the community.

There has been a change in attitude through community sensitization through meetings and radio talk shows on the importance of education, sensitization of pupils to ensure continued attendance, avoidance of STD and early marriage and government and partner's commitment to lifting poor people out of poverty in order to attain the MDG's.

There has been an attitude change towards education, especially with regards to girls' education and child rights as reported by LC1's within the parish. For example, one of the girls who got pregnant while in school, sat for her Primary Leaving Examination in Anyara Moru Primary school. Whereas in the past years, she would automatically drop out of school and have no other opportunity to continue.

Environment Management

The Millennium Villages Project empowers community members to manage their agriculture and wood level, farms in ways that promote more trees. This year, the project procured and distributed 4,762 tree seedlings of fruit and woodlot to over 100 farmers and institutions.

Agro- forestry T.O.T training was conducted for 30(15 M and 15 F) farmers on 3 key themes that included Nursery establishment and maintenance; Plantation/

woodlot establishment and maintenance and Agro forestry systems. The farmers appreciated this as one of the best training they had ever had in the sub-county.

Challenges

- Harvesting wood for household cooking, distilling crude waragi, and use in construction and burning charcoal
- High burden of fuel wood collection from distant bushes especially women and girls who are vulnerable to reptiles (snakes)
- Poor land management practices e.g overgrazing, monocropping on same piece of land without fallowing and cultivation in the wetlands, further exposing soil surface to erosion.

Partnership and Collaboration

In pursuit of improved linkages to local government and its services to the community, a pre- planning meeting was held at the sub-county headquarters to discuss the critical gaps and identify potential partners to support in the sub-county in the next financial year. This fits within the MVP approach that combines critical cost- sharing and planning partnership with local/national government and rural communities and focuses on equity and inclusiveness ensuring that all members of the community have a stake and do not feel excluded in the project implementation.

Challenges

- Managing community expectations. Dependency on external assistance has undermined community's potential to take advantage of government programmes and maximize use of the available resources for their own development.
- Many community members do not participate in community planning meetings especially the vulnerable groups
- Coordination and Information sharing is limited among key actors operating at sub-county level. This creates a gap in integration of key intervention areas in the sub-county development Plan.
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Lessons learnt and good Practices

Good Practices

Working closely with the national systems at the district headquarters, and the sub-county level ensures that the project is integrated into ongoing systems. Partnerships and alliances with other development partners build on each other's strengths and contribute significantly to the success of the project.

Implementing an integrated multi-sector approach is crucial for success. Funding and Creative alliances are needed. For example, the World Food Program has a school-feeding program through which children are provided with lunch. This effort complements MVP work. The provision of lunch attracts children from the

camps to the school area.

Focusing on institutional capacity building—training teachers, provision of ICT equipment to district and sub-county, medical equipment and supplies to the health center, and providing textbooks, type writers and duplicating machine enhances the institutions' capacity. The impact of this focus will continue after the project is ended.

The use of a variety of media— exposure tour of district leadership, radio talk shows, for community sensitization, has to some extent enhanced the internalization of the MV project and made a significant contribution to changing the perception of parents, teachers, leaders, and communities towards the MVP approach of development

Lesson Learnt

The good practices in Ruhira includes among others carrying out health days, school feeding, group marketing; and having the village Doctor at HCII has gone a long way in improving on community health and drastically reduced child mortality among other things. More children are enrolled and stay in school which has led to improved performance over the years, the aspect group marketing is reported to be a great success for the women groups through the village bank.

Initial Strategy for Sustainability

The institutional capacity development approach being used in the project training of teachers, training of community sector committees, training of farmers, provision of computers, photocopiers, installation of solar system at the sub-county headquarters, provision of textbooks, duplication machines, and typewriters for schools is necessary but not sufficient for sustainability. There should have been an explicit scale up and exit strategy stipulating what was to be done within the project period to ensure sustainability and what is expected to happen in the 5 years of the project lifetime.

Some of the steps that have so far been taken to ensure continuation of the education strategies include

- Training of SMC /PTA mandated to ensure education policy implementation.
- Regular support supervision Heads of department to ensure that farmers and Teachers who are trained on modern agronomic practices and child-related methodologies respectively are most likely to continue using their skills even without additional funding.
- Community sensitization on the Millennium Village approach and the multi- disciplinary and community contribution in driving their own development through meetings, radio talk shows and drama into the communities' way of life and will have a long-lasting impact.

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