



Project News: United Nations Industrial Development Organization and Global Environment Facility 6

January 2022 — Issue #1



Project Update (January- December 2021)

UNJP/GAM/045/UID

Project Background

The Government of the Gambia requested UNIDO's support in the operationalization of the SE4All Action Agenda by promoting inclusive, environmentally sound and low-carbon development. The Global Environment Facility funds the project and its objective is to demonstrate the use of energy-efficient lighting and appliances as well as efficient cooking stoves.

The dissemination of energy-efficient lighting and appliances will effectively contribute to national efforts in reducing the pressure on the environment. Furthermore, the promotion of efficient cookstoves will effectively reduce the demand for firewood and charcoal, therefore, reducing the deforestation rate in the country. The project has undertaken several activities highlighted below.

FAO installs Solar light poles in community gardens

Quite often, women who work in vegetable gardens work late into the evening watering and tending to their plants. In some cases, it is usually dark by the time they leave the garden to go home. To ensure the safety of these women, FAO installed 32 solar lights in eight community gardens in the Lower River, Central and Upper River regions. The lights were installed through the project.

The project funded by Global Environment Facility (GEF) and UNIDO also aims to demonstrate the use of energy-efficient lighting and appliances as well as efficient cooking stoves. The light systems are intended to mainstream

energy-efficient solutions in community gardens to ensure the safety of women working in gardens late in the evening as well as reduce the possibility of theft during the night. The lights are installed around key infrastructures within the gardens such as poultry houses, toilet facilities and multipurpose centres.



FAO Staff and beneficiaries stand near Solar light poles in the village

FAO builds kitchens with improved cooking stoves for rural schools

The school feeding program is a joint initiative by the Gambia Government and World Food Program (WFP) that supplies healthy and nutritious meals for schoolchildren.

The objectives are to increase primary school enrolment of boys and girls in rural areas and to increase attendance and retention at schools while improving children's concentration and participation in the education process by relieving short term hunger. Stakeholders have described the school feeding programme as a success as it has helped increase enrolment and retention of students in schools.



Ongoing construction of school kitchen with improved cooking stoves

However, the school meals are cooked using firewood fetched from bushes and forests in the environment. To support the school feeding and promote environmental management, FAO is building kitchens with improved cooking stoves in schools. This initiative also includes activities related to awareness-raising for children and their parents on energy efficiency solutions and their benefits to the environment and the population.

The beneficiary schools include Limbanbulu Lower Basic School in Wuli West, Upper River Region (URR), Niore Bamba Lower Basis School in Upper Saloum, Central River Region – North (CRR-N) and Munyagen Lower Basic School in Jokadu, North Bank Region (NBR).

Construction of FTT fish smoking Kilns to improve food safety

Fish is a significant food for nutrition security and a vehicle for livelihood support in many coastal communities in the Gambia. However, despite its tremendous importance, the traditional way of smoking fish, that uses cartons, pose a serious health risk to fish processors. This is due to the inhalation of smoke during the smoking process. Consumers also risk exposure to polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), which have carcinogenic potential. It also has an environmental safety concern. Furthermore, despite being labour intensive, the output from such a traditional method is low.

opportunity to contribute to alleviating the challenges of fish smoking and drying operations of artisanal women fish processors in the Gambia. Its adoption will enable fish processors to meet food safety requirements (reduction of PAH) and to obtain superior and consistent quality and safe products, with good value for money; using less firewood.

Minimising post-harvest loss with Solar-powered fridges

In the rural Gambia, most food losses occur after harvesting and before the product reaches the consumer. This is in part due to a lack of adequate storage facilities or transportation to market areas. Post-harvest losses cause significant economic loss to farmers and in the end threaten food security. For a long, farmers have lamented on the loss they incur because they are not able to sell, process or store their harvests.

To address this challenge, FAO recently installed eight cold storage units (solar fridges) in community gardens in LRR, CRR and URR. The beneficiary communities are Njoben in Fuladu, Madina Lamin Kanteh in Niani, Dampha Kunda in Tumana, Darsilameh Mandinka in Sandu, Sutukung in Jarra East, Jerumekoto in Sami, Jappineh Jarra Central and Gui Jahanka, upper Saloum.

The initiative aims to mainstream energy-efficient solutions, reduce post-harvest losses and enhance food security in rural communities in the Gambia. It also seeks to increase the shelf life of vegetables and thus allowing farmers more time to bargain for better prices for their vegetables.

With the financial support of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and implementing support of the Government of the Gambia



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