



Advocacy Initiative for Development (AID)

...transforming lives and communities in Africa!



AID is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization registered in the State of Washington, U.S.A EIN #: 33-1221581

AID is also registered as a National NGO in Sierra Leone Reg. #: NNGO/266

Notes: AID's Communication on Engagement (COE) for the UN Global Compact Initiative

13th November 2018

A statement by the Founder & President of AID expressing continued support for the UN Global Compact and renewing our organization's ongoing commitment to the initiative.

I am pleased to confirm the Advocacy Initiative for Development's continued support for the ten principles of the UN Global Compact with respect to human rights, labor, environment, and anti-corruption. With this commitment, we express our intent to continue to advance these principles within our scope of influence, and will continually make a clear statement of this commitment to our stakeholders and the general public.

We also renew our pledge to take part in the activities of the UN Global Compact where appropriate and feasible – through, for instance, participation in Country/Local Networks; involvement in specialized initiatives and workstreams; engagement in partnership projects; and reviewing and providing commentary to participating companies on their Communications on Progress.

Sincerely yours,

.....
Mr. Sylvanus Murray
Founder & President



During the period under review, our organization successfully implemented a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) project on Waste Management and Plastic Recycling in Sierra Leone, a program which clearly demonstrates practical actions taken by AID to support the UN Global Compact principles and to continually engage with the initiative.

Project Report on Waste Management & Plastic Recycling

“Converting Waste to Wealth.”



PROJECT TITLE: PROVIDING SKILLS TRAINING ON WASTE MANAGEMENT AND PLASTIC RECYCLING

PROJECT DURATION: December 2017 - May 2018

NAME OF IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION: Advocacy Initiative for Development (AID-SL)

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Brief Background

The UNDP implemented a project in 2017 on Waste Management in eight communities in Western Urban area. The thrust of the project was to support communities collect plastic wastes in their respective communities to contribute in increasing sanitation, and discourage street flooding as a result of the blockage they cause to drainages. AID-SL piggy-backed on this previous UNDP

project by working in four among the eight most successfully implemented communities of Old Wharf and Culvert – in the East end part of Freetown; and Cockle Bay and Funkia in the West end parts of Freetown.

Introduction:

This project, titled: ‘Skills Training on Waste Management and Plastic Recycling’ is geared towards working with community leaders, women and youths to productively manage wastes in their communities. A total of fifteen participants – twelve women and three male youths were carefully selected in each of the four communities. These carefully chosen participants were deemed to have worked exemplarily in the former UNDP project; and therefore considered necessary to continue working with them on this project.

The project aimed at honing these participants’ skills through theoretical and practical trainings on the production of floor dialettes, and briquettes – bio-charcoal. Beneficiaries of these communities were not only trained to recycle/manage these wastes and provided them with start-up kits; but have also been linked-up with financial service institutions from which they will derive financial support to sustainably create and autonomously run their micro waste management enterprises.

The project was desirous of providing economic livelihood for the immediate/direct training beneficiaries, and those in the food chain – those collecting and selling the needed wastes as raw materials, and those who will later be employed from these communities to work in the micro waste management enterprises that are being set up. The project is also contributing to making these communities habitable and climate change resilient – thereby mitigating the harmful effects of climate change disasters in the country.

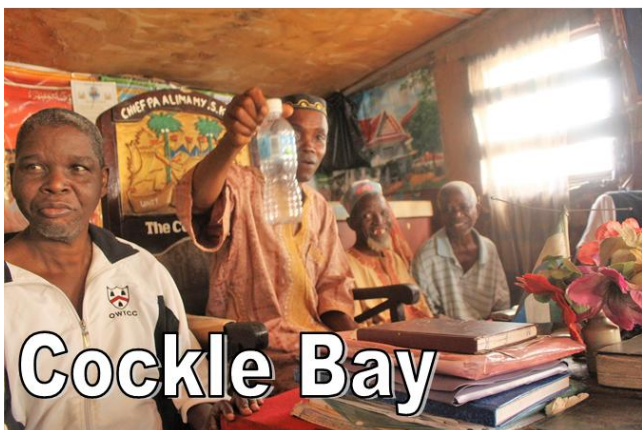
Internal context:

Sierra Leone happens to be one of the most vulnerable climate changes affected countries in the world. Poorly constructed roads and drainages triggers destructive flooding during the peak of the rainy season. Citizens’ vulnerability is further compounded by the rampant dumping of plastic wastes all over bigger cities; and when there is heavy downpour of rains, the gutters are flooded leading to catastrophic consequences especially for poor people living in slum communities. In addition to environment and disaster risks, deprived slum communities face economic stagnation especially acute in this post Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) period. The 2016 human development report recorded 53% income poverty and 77% multi-dimensional poverty in Sierra Leone. Poverty is concentrated among urban slums and rural communities.

SYNOPSIS OF ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED:

Activity One: Organizing Partnership and Planning Meetings

Four Partnership and Planning meetings were held with stakeholders at Old Wharf, Culvert, Cockle Bay and Funkia communities in the Western Urban before full implementation commenced. A total of 60 stakeholders in these communities did not only give their total buy-in, but also actively engaged in the reviewing and adoption of the project implementation plans.



Activity Two: official launching of project

Over 100 stakeholders from within the project communities, including the funding agency representatives participated in the official launching of the project. The launching was characterized by issuing of solidarity statements; and promises were made by diverse speakers to fully cooperate and provide support to see a successful implementation.



Culvert



Old Wharf



Funkia



Cockle Bay

Activity Three: Construction of Training and Manufacturing Sites

Four training and manufacturing sites for Recycling wastes were built in the four project communities. These training sites were adequately equipped with hardware and materials that ensured holistic learning and manufacturing processes.



Activity Four: Training

Intensive trainings that comprise both theoretical and practical sessions were conducted for 60 persons (male and female) in Old Wharf, Culvert, Cockle Bay and Funkia communities to produce briquettes from waste wood stream and recycle plastic for the production of floor dialects. They additionally got trained on how to manufacture local energy saving stoves that uses briquettes.



Activity Five: Provision of Start-up Kits

To guarantee the livelihood of the sixty trained beneficiaries, which also neatly ties in with the sustainability of the project, 60 beneficiaries in these four communities were provided with start-up kits to be producing briquettes and floor dialects.



Activity Six: organizing Certification & Exhibition Ceremony

To climax the project, beneficiaries in the four project communities were given Certificates for actively participating in the trainings on waste management. During the Certification ceremony and exhibition, not only was the communities' full support and participation appreciated, but invited dignitaries from Government, civil society, the private sector made pledges to support waste management endeavours in the localities. Various items produced by all beneficiaries were publicly exhibited during the ceremony.



SUMMARY OF KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- ✓ Sixty community members benefitted from trainings on Waste Management
- ✓ Sixty community members received start-up kits towards the end of the project to continue manufacturing
- ✓ *Four training and manufacturing sites (one for each community) were constructed and fully equipped*
- ✓ *Community ownership of the project was ensured*
- ✓ *All community members that participated in the trainings were given certificates which made them feel that they were appreciated*
- ✓ *AID-SL during the Certification ceremony exposed/introduced beneficiaries to many prospective funders (some of whom made promises to support their newly established waste management factories)*
- ✓ *In addition to the start-up kits, materials for manufacturing were also provided to the communities to kick-start production after the project ended.*
- ✓ Contributed in making the four project communities cleaner and climate change – flooding resistant
- ✓ Contributed to increasing the economic lot of the training beneficiaries, and those other community member who served as wastes collector vendors.

TANGIBLE AND ANTICIPATED IMPACT:

- ✓ Improved health and safety conditions of members of the four project communities, as a result of the reduction of plastic wastes that blocks gutters/drainages causing untold hazards.
- ✓ Increased economic livelihood of community members – via serving as plastic collector vendors, and also producers of briquettes and floor dialects.
- ✓ Increased cleanliness of the four project communities as a result of the intense collection of plastic wastes
- ✓ A total of 4,100 (60 directly, and 4,040 indirectly) people benefitted from the project.

CHALLENGES:

- Some of the raw materials like plastics are in abundance in Freetown; but others like saw dust, peanut shells, carpenter shavings etc were difficult to timely obtain in the significant required quantity.
- There was difficulty in transporting the training and manufacturing equipment to training sites.
- It was discovered that the bio-charcoal product could not be used in the widely-used local stoves. The additional huge financial resources needed to work on this necessary complimentary component were unavailable.
- Managing participants' expectations has been a small concern. Some of the participants after realising that the UNDP was funding the project, expected to be receiving money directly from the implementing organizations for participating. For example, some participants expected the trainer to give them money to purchase carpenter shavings/groundnut shells, rice husk etc – which they know to some extent they can get for free.
- Obtaining the appropriate lands in the communities was challenging. It took more time than expected to obtain the lands in the communities for the practical sessions. Though the first training was scheduled to take place at Old Wharf, then proceed to Culvert, and then to Cockle Bay before going to Funkia, due to the minor difficulties experienced in obtaining the appropriate land space particularly in Cockle Bay compelled the project team to slightly alter its calendar.
- Resource constraint did not allow the community beneficiaries to be properly trained to produce the energy-saving stoves. Adequate skills in producing these stoves would have rightly complemented the production of the bio-charcoal
- The 2018 public elections affected the project in some ways. Due to the elections schedules, AID-SL was forced to truncate the time for the training – thereby leaving very little or no time to officially link beneficiaries with funders before the project timeframe expired.

LESSONS LEARNT:

- The inclusion of community stakeholders from the inception of the project helped to build trust and confidence amongst community and beneficiaries which positively impacted the lives of young persons by way of making themselves gainfully employed.
- The timeframe for the entire project was relatively short. Training the beneficiaries in the aforementioned skills areas; and successfully supporting them - to first help them establish

autonomous waste management enterprises, and then linking them up with funding partners in the given period, was a challenge. The national elections events forced AID-SL to adjust the training schedules to suit beneficiaries' availability; and consequently leaving very limited time to link beneficiaries up with funding partners before the project timeframe came to an end. Also, the elections in the country unfortunately diverted the attention of the prospective funding partners who AID-SL had contacted to link beneficiaries up with.

- It was also realized that though participants were trained to produce bio-charcoal – briquettes, the project did not capture the production of the appropriate energy-saving stoves in which the briquettes can only be used. It would have been prudent for the beneficiaries to have been trained to manufacture the energy-saving stoves before the project ends.
- Though the trainings were initially planned for four days per location – divided as two days for trainings, and two days for mentoring, it was realized that it would not be enough. The adding of additional weeks for training and mentoring gave participants ample time to learn better; while incurring huge unplanned expenditures.
- It was also realized that it would make sense doing both the theoretical and practical/mentoring consecutively, instead of doing all the theoretical trainings in all four locations first before returning to the same locations later to do the practical. Continuing with the practical sessions right after the theoretical sessions kept the momentum, which participants found to be exhilarating.
- To motivate community members to actively and fully participate in the trainings, since because most of them as breadwinners would otherwise be tempted to use their time fending for the families, the implementing partner – AID-SL had to provide them food and other basic incentives which were not budgeted for.

PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY:

The project was purposefully designed to be sustainable. It constructed waste management training and manufacturing mini-factories in each of the four communities; and provided start-up kits and materials to facilitate production even after the project would have ended. The factories are also equipped to train new community members on waste management – which if properly harnessed, would mean hundred if not thousands more would have their skills honed in managing wastes.

Tri-cycles were provided to each of the communities to aid transportation of raw materials to the sites; and also to ferry finished products to the market.

Linking training beneficiaries with funders was meant to ensure that communities have source of capital to start/amplify their waste management enterprises.

CONCLUSIONS:

- ✓ The project significantly increased the awareness of not only members of the project communities, but also those in other parts of the country to be getting rid of wastes for a safer and healthier environment.
- ✓ The trainings improved the knowledge of the beneficiaries on how to profitably manage wastes in their environment
- ✓ The project set the foundation for increased economic earnings of community beneficiaries through the production of floor dialects, briquettes in the factories
- ✓ The attention of local and national government, and the private sector was drawn to the necessity of supporting waste management initiatives not only in Freetown, but other parts of the country as well.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ✓ For the UNDP to provide additional funds for all four project communities to be later trained on how to manufacture the energy-saving stoves.
- ✓ For UNDP to continue finding alternative sources of funding to help these project communities establish and run their autonomous waste management businesses. The absence of such a support has the potential to gradually starve this initiative.
- ✓ To diversify waste management skills-set to guarantee sustainability, it will be critical for the UNDP to financially support the project beneficiaries' training on Aluminum Recycling, Financial Management and Marketing.
- ✓ For mentoring/coaching/monitoring to be periodically carried out in these communities to ensure that beneficiaries meet the project's intended objectives even after the project cycle would have ended.

SUCCESS STORIES:

Stories of Change

It is too early to judge. However, it must be pointed out that AID-SL conducted evaluation interviews with a couple of the project beneficiaries in all four communities after the trainings ended, who clearly noted that the trainings significantly increased their capacity to manage wastes in their communities.

They noted that their communities are now comparatively cleaner (due to the collection of plastics for use) than they were before the project started; they have learnt to work not just in silos but as a group/team (which most confessed they have not been exposed to before); and that the project indirectly fostered a sense of cohesion among the community beneficiaries.

For sustainability, the beneficiaries however noted that they are looking up to UNDP and AID-SL to capacitate them to produce the complimentary energy-saving stoves; for coaching/mentoring to be intermittently carried on to hone their skills on Marketing and Financial Management; and to be linked up with funding partners so that they can get additional support to run their autonomous waste management businesses.

- *A female trainee at the Funkia community (who prefers to remain anonymous), who is single and with two kids explained that before the project started, she was heartbroken because she could not find a way to gainfully/economically engage her life in the community. According to her, she alternatively engaged in unworthy lifestyles like constantly cussing and quarrelling with other community members; sleeping with 'strange men' just to enable her provide food and other basic needs for herself and her two children etc.*

She noted with happiness that this project has significantly improved her skills in managing wastes; and improved her relationship with other community members who she was once always fighting / quarrelling with. She confidently asserted that since the project has ended and she will soon be fully embarking on a commercial waste management enterprise, she hopes to personally meet the economic and social needs of her children, and herself – and consequently stop her economic dependence on men.