**Sinkunia Community Garden Project Plan**

**Organizational mission statement:**

Sinkunia Community Development Organization exists to support the successful settlement and integration of African immigrant youths and families in the community. The organization also supports community development initiatives in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

**Social, political, and economic background of the project:**

Sinkunia is a remote rural community in northern Sierra Leone. Yalunkas, Susu, Fulas and Mandingos are the main ethnic groups of the region. The primary occupation of all Yalunkas and most of the Susu is traditional agricultural practices. Fulas and Mandingos are in Cattle rearing and some form of commerce.

The community and the entire region have not benefited from any form of direct investment from successive governments. The lack of direct investment and economic incentives, therefore, have led to the mass movement of young and able bodied men and women in search of greener pastures in big cities. The old and elderly are left behind to fend for themselves through small-scale farming. This has led to further deterioration in the local economy. The deterioration is manifested in the absence of financial capital to invest in a large-scale nursery of the different cash crops that we, in-turn, would like to invest in, to expand the community garden. Presently, we have a paid gardener looking after the experimental cash crops on a regular basis. The gardener will pay close attention to the nurseries until they are mature enough for transplanting.

The Sinkunia community garden is consistent with the overall economic and social development of the target population and entire region. The project responds directly to efforts of the local and national governments to revamp the agricultural sector to produce enough food to feed the population. In the long term, harvest from the garden will contribute to food security by increasing the supply of a variety of healthy and nutritious food items in Sinkunia and surrounding communities. Additionally, proceeds from the harvest will be reinvested in the local economy. This investment will boost trade among community members and attract investors, leading to economic and social development.

**Project Description:**

The purpose of this project is to expand the existing community garden in order to deliver a variety of healthy and nutritious food items to the inhabitants of Sinkunia and surrounding communities. The Sinkunia Community Garden project will provide a variety of healthy and nutritious food items to the Sinkunia community in the short term, and lead to food security and sustainable development in the long term. It will empower local residents through stable employment and income generation.

Sinkunia is a remote rural community in northern Sierra Leone. Farming, gardening and livestock rearing are the foundational activities of the local economy. However, many of the farmers are poor and therefore, do not have access to bank or private loans because of lacking collaterals. This prevents farmers from embarking on large scale farming and or gardening, and as a result, relying on poor harvests from subsistence farming. This situation often leads to hunger and malnutrition among children, especially in the rainy season, which is the leanest period in the region. The community garden is a direct response to these problems. It will help address the community problems of extreme hunger and malnutrition by providing nutritious and healthy food supplies to those in dire need at a minimum or cost recovery rate. The strength of the project is that, it will be self-sustaining, thereby providing employment and stable income for community residents.

**Evaluation of success:**

Success of the project will be demonstrated in two fundamental ways. Firstly, success will be measured by the increase in overall health of the direct recipients of produce from the community garden. If the instance of malnutrition decreases as a result of greater access to and abundance of legumes and vegetables, the project will have succeeded in increasing the health and nutritional standards of the community.

In addition, success will be measured by an increase in income as a result of selling excess produce in local markets. If individuals working in the garden are able to produce marketable fresh foods and thereby gain greater access to financial resources, the project will have achieved its goals.

The overall impact of the project will be measured by improved living conditions of people in the region. It will also lead to healthy, viable and prosperous communities as well.

**Relationship with project beneficiaries:**

The Founder and Executive Director, Issa Kamara, hails from the north (Sinkunia community). He is a direct relative of most of the beneficiaries. Issa spent all his formative years and attained his primary education in the region. He is very familiar with the needs of the beneficiaries. Prior to fleeing the rebel crisis in Sierra Leone, Issa worked relentlessly to address some of the local needs. Upon arrival in Canada, he founded the Sinkunia society in 2007 to continue with his community development initiatives. The board is very supportive of his work and respects his knowledge of the local conditions. Issa visits his native community quite often. About four years ago, Issa spent three months in the community. During this time, he helped to organize the water well committee and worked on other local initiatives.

**Funding accountability plan:**

An accountability system is already in place for proper use, tracking, and recording of all our project expenditures. The Project Coordinator and Gardener will monitor the disbursement and proper use of the funds for the project. Receipts for all project expenses will be secured and provided to us via e-mail or faxed by the Project Coordinator.

In addition, we have worked with the Project Coordinator for 5 years now. He has been known to be reliable and dependable. Finally, pictures will be taken and the entire transplanting process videotaped for our records and funders.