

## **STRENGTHEN 100 VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLDS IN CALABAR**

### **Third Quarter Report 07/06/2019**

In this third quarter of the project under review, the project team's attention was focused on ensuring the beneficiaries demonstrated the knowledge acquired during the technical training. Twenty new caregivers were enrolled, trained and supervised to plant the improved inputs supplied to them.

Activities carried out during this period include:

- ❖ Project team strategic planning meeting.
- ❖ Distribution of inputs and planting
- ❖ Application of fertilizer, pesticides and weeding
- ❖ Enrollment of twenty caregivers for the second phase of the project
- ❖ Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the twenty newly enrolled Caregivers.
- ❖ Hands- on technical training
- ❖ Land inspection, evaluation, preparation and fertilization.
- ❖ Challenges and mitigation plan

In order to adopt best practices and learn new strategies, a review meeting was organized with the project team, key stakeholders and the consultant to share reports from monitoring visits in order to identify challenges and develop solutions. From the reports provided by the monitoring teams, weekly visits were paid to the beneficiaries' farm plots where issues such as non-compliance of a few beneficiaries to professional advice and the infestation of two farm plots with army worms (pests) were noticed. These issues as reported by the team were resolved by encouraging beneficiaries to comply with professional advice and tackling of the pest using recommended pesticides.

**FRIUITING OF CROPS:** From the field visits, it was observed that most of the crops (especially okra) in the initial batch had begun fruiting. This stage however required different nutrients which beneficiaries applied to the crops with the assistance of the consultant who educated the beneficiaries on the type of



nutrient to be provided to the plant, method of application and dosage.

### **PRE-ENROLLMENT AND ENROLLMENT OF NEW BENEFICIARIES:**

As the project entered a new phase, the enrollment of new beneficiaries was necessary. This was done in collaboration with Africa Child Foundation (ACF). A pre-enrollment meeting was held with the farmers with Mr. Justine Apebende, Ms. Asari Nakanda and Mr. Arikpo of ACF present. At the meeting, the beneficiaries were oriented on the project objectives and the various processes and

activities involved. Thereafter, twenty beneficiaries who met the criteria using the national OVC enrollment tool were enrolled into the program. The caregivers were then asked to prepare their plots for planting.

### **SIGNING OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BY THE NEWLY ENROLLED CAREGIVERS.**

As part of the requirement for the newly enrolled caregivers and to ensure that each project stakeholder was aware of and adheres to his/her responsibilities as well as to build a stronger relationship and commitment between the various stakeholders. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) stating clearly the responsibilities of each stakeholder for the completion and sustainability of the project was explained. Finally, the MoU was signed by each of the caregivers and copies filed. The process was an eye opener for some beneficiaries who testified of getting a better understanding of the processes and the entire project after reading through the MoU.

### **HANDS- ON TECHNICAL TRAINING, LAND PREPARATION AND PLANTING**

The need to build the capacity of the newly enrolled beneficiaries became a necessity



Hands-on training



Planting

as the caregivers were ready with their contributions to the project. They were therefore taken through a thorough technical training session. Training was done on land preparation, the use

of organic fertilizers, weed control, mixed cropping etc. The beneficiaries thereafter prepared their plots for planting.

### **CHALLENGES:**

The following are the challenges encountered this third quarter:

- ❖ Lack of commitment by some beneficiaries
- ❖ Non-compliance of some beneficiaries to technical instructions
- ❖ Lack of land
- ❖ poor cooperation by some community stakeholders

## MITIGATION PLAN

S/N	ISSUES IDENTIFIED	PLANNED ACTION	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	TIME FRAME
1	Lack of commitment by some farmers	Hands –on mentorship sessions	Asari Nakanda and Justine Apebende	June to July 2019
2	Non-compliance of some farmers to technical instructions	Regular farm visits	Asari and Consultant	June to July, 2019
3	Lack of land	Frequent engagement with community gate keepers	Justine Apebende and Asari Nakanda	1 <sup>st</sup> week of July, 2019
4	Poor cooperation by some community stakeholders	Advocacy visits	Justine Apebende and Asari Nakanda	3 <sup>rd</sup> week of June, 2019

## NEXT STEPS

In order for the project to achieve its target. Over the next quarter we plan to:

Support the processes of

- ❖ Harvesting and linking of the first twenty farmers to off takers
- ❖ Fertilizer application and pest control for the second batch of twenty caregivers
- ❖ Fund raising to support the enrollment of another batch of caregivers
- ❖ Formation of Saving and Internal Lending Community (SILC) to promote saving among our empowered caregivers

## CONCLUSION:

During this phase of the project, the focus was ensuring that the crops grew as expected, pests were prevented, fertilizer application was done at the appropriate time, weeding was carried out to prevent competition among crops and weeds for soil nutrients and records were properly kept. Also in this phase another set of twenty beneficiaries were enrolled into the project

In the next quarter the plan is to link the first set of beneficiaries whose crops have started fruiting to off-takers and form them into a Saving and Internal Lending Community (SILC) or Village Saving and Lending Association (VSLA). This is to promote a savings and investment culture and planning amongst them for business growth. Finally, we are really grateful to everyone who has contributed to this project, so far your support is transforming the lives of forty households it is our conviction that by the end of the project we would have transformed the socio-economic status of 100 households. Thank you for your continued support.

**PICTURE GALLERY**



Land preparation



After Clearing



Soil treatment



During Planting



Fruiting Okra



Fruiting maize

