EMPOWERMENT OF HIV/AIDS WOMEN GROUP THROUGH MANGULUKENI FISH FARM

A CASE STUDY FROM NAMIBIA

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PART 1: Overview/status of Aquaculture in Namibia
PART 2: Case study: EMPOWERMENT OF HIV/AIDS WOMEN GROUP THROUGH MANGULUKENI FISH FARM
Year 2003-The Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN), through the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) introduced the Aquaculture policy

The policy called for “The promotion and development of responsible and sustainable aquaculture”

The purpose was to provide a legal/institutional framework for the Aquaculture Industry

- For food security
- Poverty reduction through employment and
- Attract foreign investment

In order to stimulate the interest (in fish farming), the GRN spearheaded Aquaculture pilot projects in different regions of the country
In the inland the interest was fresh water aquaculture (pilot projects - GRN)
- About 8 fish farms in the North and North eastern regions
- Under the management/technical custody of the MFMR
- Community members are the beneficiaries of the farm profits
- Integrated Aquaculture approach was adopted, growing fish and vegetables
- Species - Three spot tilapia (*Oreochromis andersonii*), The African Sharptooth catfish (*Clarias gariepinus*) and a variety of fruits and vegetables
At the coastal towns the interest was mostly into commercial ventures for export

- Oysters to South Africa and Asia
- Abalone to Asia and
- Seaweed to Asia
The GRN regards Aquaculture as a priority in its mid-term and long-term planning to address food shortage and poverty.

Aquaculture campaign was made more significant in the North and North eastern regions where the majority of the population is concentrated.
Aquaculture in Namibia is still in the infant phases

The aquaculture industry is still faced with lack of
- Capital
- Training
- Expertise

However the response to GRN was served
- Communities have started benefiting through fish (food) and monetary income
- Commercial farmers are stocking ponds and dams on their farms
- Feasibility study and site assessment requests are on the increase
- Communities are coming up with own aquaculture projects
- The following case study was borne as a result of the government initiative
PART 2: CASE STUDY

The case study: EMPOWERMENT OF HIV/AIDS WOMEN GROUP THROUGH MANGULUKENI FISH FARM

Project was the idea of the Oshikuku HIV/AIDS Support Group (OSG)

OSG was established in 2007 to provide support to HIV infected and affected people of Oshikuku

The group was intended to provide counselling while participating in some group project

The idea of a fish farm was incepted through these process

The project was to serve as a means of generating income as well as to provide an interactive environment to the group members
The project was named 'Mangulukeni Fish Farming Project,' meaning to "be free" in the local language.

This project name calls on the members of the group as well as the larger community to be free:

- to share their experiences with one another,
- of the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS and
- to live a positive life.

To serve as a means to generate income while addressing both economic and psychosocial challenges
The project was implemented in 2007 with the technical guidance of the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR).

The project is comprised of 11 members, 1 male and 10 female and supports 92 people, 46 of whom are children.

First harvest was in 2008 and the second in 2009.
Members were familiarised with the running of a fish farm during a visit to existing GRN fish farm.

Members were advised to farm with the three spot tilapia (*Oreochromis andersonii*)

4000 tilapia fingerlings at an average weight of 2.9 g was stocked.

An average weight of 80 g per fish was recorded during the harvesting.
This level of growth and production was clearly not economically viable and sustainable.

Lucrative market for fish sales exist in the local Oshikuku area

Chairperson and Treasurer of the support group are elected on a rotational basis
Operations of the Project cont.

- Pond care taking is detailed on a monthly schedule.
- Leadership and management roles are shared amongst the group members.
- This practice is empowering, allowing each group member to gain leadership and management experiences.
The women had to harvest their pond 6 months later, due to flood.

This was due to catfish entering the tilapia pond during the floods of 2009.

The first harvest yield of 2009 was less than expected due to catfish predation that entered the ponds through flood.

The fish harvested did not reach the desired market size and this led to low returns.
CHALLENGES

- The income generated from harvests not sufficient for running costs
- Funding is a crucial problem.
- Training
Opportunities and benefits derived from the project include:

- An opportunity for income generation;
- An important source of protein
- The fostering of business, management and leadership skills and;
- Development of a sense of belonging, ownership and accomplishment, through involvement in a group project

Spill-over benefits to the family members

Working together at ponds allow members additional time to interact and share daily experiences
The project also demonstrates the influence women have in their families and society at large.

The members are enjoying a shared sense of

- accomplishment,
- independence,
- self-worth and also
- encouragement for the younger generation.
CONCLUSION

- Despite these shortcomings and challenges the project have already generated positive impacts such as
  - Increased awareness of HIV/AIDS
  - Decreased in the stigma associated HIV/AIDS
  - Positive outlook on life to group members and community at large
- The socio-economic lesson learned from the case study:
  - Embodies the opportunities and hopes
  - Demonstrated the influence of women in community
  - Aquaculture as a tool for empowerment for the vulnerable groups e.g. women and children
A project proposal has recently been submitted to FAO Office in Windhoek for support via its TELEFOOD fund.

The project is planned to produce 3 to 4 tons of fish in its first year of the sought funding.

This figure is expected to increase each year.

The goal: short term and long term *profitability and self-sustainability*.

New proposed project plan:
- to be *implemented* by FAO representative (If approved)
- To be *coordinated* by MFMR
- To be *monitored* through annual site visits and regular reports.
THANK YOU FOR LISTENING