



NILE BASIN DISCOURSE

NBD success Stories: CSO support to local climate adaptation

Building Partnerships with local communities to adapt to climate change

Sudan has been identified as one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change. It suffers from limited water resources and cycles of the occurrence of drought that negatively affect the livelihood of many communities. According to the vulnerability zones mapping, Makahaya- located southwest of Umm Rawaba town in Kordfan - has been identified as the most vulnerable area in Sudan. Makahay has a total area of 380,000 square kilometres representing 24% of Sudan's total area. The population is 2,118 persons in 186 households whose lives depend on herding, farming, forestry and gum collection.

Problem

The local communities experience frequent drought cycles, extreme fluctuations in rain fall and floods. Other development challenges include poverty, high illiteracy rate, mismanagement of natural resources and conflict over resources between the farmers and herders. The community of this region were seeking support to identify the future scenarios of climate change impact on their livelihood. Thus, enabling them to develop local coping

strategies to adapt to climate change and ensure food security for their families.

The community received support through a project of Community based Adaptation in Africa (CBAA). The CBAA is a project being implemented by the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) in Kenya, and funded by IDRC/DFID Climate Change Adaptation in Africa (CCAA) programme. The project also has interventions in Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Malawi, Kenya, Zimbabwe and South Africa.



The Sudanese Environmental conservation Society (SECS) identified both the top down and bottom up approaches, and vulnerability assessments to tackle the local community adaptation to climate change. This has included individual interviews, focus group discussions

and participatory rural appraisal. Throughout the PRA, the community were able to identify the following as the most vulnerable sectors to climate change.

Water sector: decrease in the amount of rain fall had resulted in severe shortage and lack of drinking water and spread of water born disease.

In Agriculture: reduction in production, deterioration in rangelands and lack of food security.

In Energy : the deterioration of vegetation cover and an increase the time of women collecting fire wood from remote places

Outcomes

SECS supported the community to identify different adaptation options for each of the above sectors. For water sector: harvesting water for drinking, in Agriculture, this included improvement of local indigenous knowledge of early seeding, introduction of drought resistant, and production of winter crops such as vegetables, and in the energy sector, the introduction of petroleum liquid gas and improved stoves .

These options were implemented through capacity building activities for water harvesting, winter cropping, improved stone building and financial training on revolving funds.

In undertaking the project, the CBAA project also raised the community awareness on the impact of climate change and introduced different adaptation options that could be further replicated in other areas at the state level. The project has conducted training of the trainers to selected actors from the local

community who can contribute positively to the adaptation to climate change in their area and the surrounding areas.

The project has succeeded to build linkages with the government institutions such as the National Forest Cooperation which supported the community with a forest of 100 feddan of native trees. Moreover, the Ministry of Agriculture has now supported 100 farmers in the area in plough their lands before the onset of the rain fall.

Lessons learnt

The lessons learnt from this project have been numerous. They can however be captured in some testimonies from the members of the key stakeholders who had the following opinions;

"If vulnerable people and the decision makers understand the problem, its handling will become lot easier"

"We need to be creative even with limited resources through building partnerships with other ongoing projects and initiatives"

"Through cooperation and coordination between national institutions and the community, complementarily can be achieved"

"Building the social matrix of the community is very important to ensure that community can lead and sustain the adaptation activities being implemented"

The project advocated for cooperation between the local community and national government institutions to face the adverse impact of climate change through simple local adaptation measures in the water, agriculture and energy sectors. This has influenced the decision making process of the national government in Sudan to

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consider supporting the livelihood of the vulnerable community. The project has showed that collaboration and cooperation can significantly bridge the gap between the government and the local community. It has proven the ability of the NGO, to act as an intermediate between the Community and government to disseminate relevant information. The NGO has been able to reach the community, gain their trust, and benefit them directly. This lesson is very similar to NBD's "One Nile – One family" message in its effort to bridge the gap between the government and the people through the support of CSOs.