



**REPORT OF THE EVALUATION OF THE
SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE FOR
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
(SAPED) PROGRAMME**

**IMPLEMENTED BY
SEND A COW UGANDA (SACU)
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SAPED PROGRAMME

This is an evaluation report of the Sustainable Agriculture for People with Disabilities (SAPED) programme that was implemented by Send a Cow Uganda (SACU) from 1999 to 2006. The project main focus was to work with disabled people with the aim of improving their livelihoods and to support their participation in mainstream activities.

The report has three main sections. Section one provides information on the general background to the project, developments in the agriculture sector in Uganda, objectives of the SAPED project and evaluation methodology. In section two, the central focus is on the evaluation findings. The findings have been reported against the objectives of the SAPED Project. Section three deals with the conclusion in terms of impact created, effectiveness, sustainability, relevance and lessons learnt.

In order to assess the impact of SAC's work with disabled people and to evaluate the impact of the Comic Relief grant, SAC UK in collaboration with SAC Uganda commissioned an evaluation to assess the impact of the programme and the challenges that it faced during the implementation. Participatory evaluation methods were used including structured questions and questionnaires. A number of reports were also read by the consultants to get a wider input of information from various stakeholders.

Over 508 people participated in the evaluation exercise through focused group discussions, questionnaire administration and use of other participatory methods. Of the 508 people, 63% were females while 37% were males. It is our considered analysis and opinion that in general terms, the project had significant impact on the lives of people with disabilities.

The project enabled disabled people to own livestock from which the family managed to get milk, meat, cash and manure, thus improving the family's standard of living and enabling members of the community to access fresh milk and vegetables and basic items such as, soap, salt, sugar, tea leaves and are paying for school fees. The communities now see disabled people as resourceful and contributing to the development of the community. The project also brought harmony to the households.

It has been very effective in mainstreaming disability issues. This is reflected by the way integrated groups work. Disabled people are now being seen as community players and not dependants and beggars. The project has also enabled people to understand the need for protecting the environment. Groups are promoting the use of organic farming and use energy saving stoves so that they can conserve the environment.

The project managed to integrate people with disabilities into its mainstream activities, thus fostering the acceptance of disabled people as equal members of the society, working alongside their able bodied counterparts. SACU provided adequate training and assessment of facilities before the animals were given out and this resulted in reduced diseases and losses of animals. The distribution of cows, goats, pigs and chickens certainly helped a lot of households to improve their standards of living. Farmers used the knowledge acquired through training in crop farming to improve food security in their households.

The programme managed to reach out to disabled people through different approaches; supported them as groups of disabled people as well as disabled people within the mainstream groups. The families began to see value in disabled people and this has helped to make disabled people visible in various communities. It was quite evident to see clean homesteads of disabled people surrounded with backyard gardens blossoming with a variety of vegetables. The



project created unity between disabled people and their able bodied counter part and this has helped people with disabilities to be confident and be part of the wider community.

The training activities that were organised under the SAPED helped to create good leadership in groups, both in those that are integrated and separate groups of disabled people. There is however a need to continue to train on leadership, management and principles of democracy to ensure that groups are able to change their leadership in terms of their constitutions.

The use of the extension staff has been useful, but the weakness has been that there was no specific individual to lead the implementation of the SAPED project. The extension workers played a link between the head office and regional offices and the farmers and have been instrumental in the formation of groups. However, there is too much reliance on the head office and regional offices when it comes to decision making this has led to delays in pass-ons and in dealing with group challenges.

It is however important to note that some groups and individuals improved their economic status through crop farming and animal rearing. The SAPED project made headway in addressing issues of poverty amongst farmers, particularly disabled farmers, by increasing their assets base and also enabling access to food, cash and some indirect benefits like access to clothes, recognition by family members and the wider community.

While the above findings reveal the strength of the project, there were issues that the evaluation team noted that did not go well. Top on the list was the implementing staff of SACU who were at the centre of ensuring implementation of the project is effectively and efficiently done lacked knowledge on disability issues and this led to some groups not performing well. Training of staff in disability issues could have helped the staff to achieve better impact. The inclusion of disabled people in the staff establishment could have also helped to improve understanding of disability and hence improve the impact of the programme.

The planning of SACU activities are mainly done in the office without the participation of the groups. There is a need for the beneficiaries to be involved in the planning process so that they get to understand the goals of the project.

Internal monitoring and evaluation activities were not used effectively to assess the impact of the project and re-orient the farmers or groups towards even more positive results. In some groups mobility was a challenge, with others the level of poverty was high and people quickly disposed of their original animals while in some cases sold off-springs to satisfy immediate needs.

Though Uganda has many policies and laws on disability, the advocacy activities were not visible in the SAPED programme. The lack of a government national structure in the implementation of policies has negatively affected advocacy activities. SACU is not well networked, and this is limiting the impact of the organisation and the potential benefits that can go to the farmers. There is potential to network with organisations of disabled people, mainstream development agencies, such as Heifer International, Action on Disability and Development and World Vision, and the government.

Animals have not been able to multiply as frequent as was expected due to lack of bulls and in the case of artificial insemination this has proved to be a big let down as government storage facilities are not good and are inadequate. Continued insecurity, particularly in the North also affected people's ability to manage their livestock.

In some instances disabled people are brought forward so that the family can get the benefit of a cow, goat or pig. Where animals were issued to a household because there is a disabled person, it is not clear how the benefits eventually reach a disabled person. There is need to develop a system that ensures that benefits go to disabled people.



The sustainability of the project will depend on SACU's readiness to continue supporting disability work, ensuring that such engagement is premised on organisational policy not on project design only. Where there is no policy that affirms the involvement of disabled people, there are likely to be excluded.