



DRIVING
SUSTAINABLE
SOLUTIONS
IN A DYNAMIC
SOCIETY IN
UNCERTAIN
TIMES!

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ACRONYMS

ECCE	-	Early Childhood and Care Education
ECAFO	-	Enhancing Capacities of Farmer Organizations
CBO	-	Community Based Organisation
CSO	-	Civil Society Organisation
FO	-	Farmers Organizations
GOVN &CE	-	Governance& Citizens' Engagement
STD	-	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
STI	-	Sexually Transmitted Infections
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organisation
SRHR	-	Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights
UN	-	United Nations
YEE	-	Youth Economic Empowerment
YPP	-	Young Peer Provider



GLADYS MIRITI
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S
(CEO'S)

“
KES 78
Million down

overall value of our direct financial
investments in community
initiatives

It's always an exciting opportunity to serve as CEO of this noble foundation. I'm pleased to share with you the GRADIF-K 2021-2022 Impact Report which details our progress over the past two years, as well as give highlights of some of the amazing work and accomplishments which we have documented. Despite the myriads of challenges experienced in year 2020 implementation period, a lot has been accomplished in all projects because the GRADIF-Kenya teams comprising of staff members, Board of Directors, technical volunteers and collaborators among others, were not discouraged by the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic but kept focused. To ensure continuity, we devised coping mechanisms which have contributed to the realization of the accomplishments documented in this report.

Based on our learnings and opinions, the kind of work that we continue to push and the resultant impact observed in the communities we work in is not found in money or other physical things, but rather a positive mindset in local communities and a desire and commitment to using their energy and agency to influence development issues affecting them; in short,

shifting the power back to themselves. I am hugely encouraged by the progress we made against each goal area in the last strategic period. On the programmatic front, GRADIF-Kenya was able to reach over 400,000 people directly and indirectly in 8 Counties Kenya, working through and in partnerships with about 264 affiliated community grassroots organizations. The overall value of our direct financial investments in community initiatives during the year was KES 76 Million down from KES 98 Million in the previous reporting period. This include the direct materials support from our partners.

Although our focus in this report is celebrating key achievements, we must also acknowledge the major challenges we face in the reporting period: natural disasters, funding shortfalls and climate change that continued to deepen poverty in the communities we serve there by weakening their economic power to meet their households' basic needs as well as contribute to various development initiatives. In the reporting period, GRADIF-K experienced a decline in external projects funding necessitated by two large amounts funders phasing out their funding. This meant that we had to scale down some programmes. I am however happy to report that the staff and the board Members have been working hard in mobilizing resources from new partners and we are in the process of onboarding a few funding partners to support our work. The observation I continue to make is that decline in funding is not unique to GRADIF-K. There is a global trend that more and more funding organisations are taking an inward nationalistic approach in their funding which is negatively affecting developing organizations in the South. This is a challenge but can also be an opportunity for GRADIF-K to strengthen her local resource mobilization efforts, local philanthropy and assets building!

In the reporting period, GRADIF-K commissioned the development of a new strategic plan covering the period 2021-2025 with intention to drive positive and sustainable change within GRADIF-K as well as lead interactions with the communities that we work with across the counties and with other sector players. Previous period lessons learned from programmes implementations and operations have played a key role in informing the directions and programmes interventions of this strategy. A finalized Strategic Plan for 2021-2025 has been documented as a key output product in the period under review.

I look forward to serving as a voice for vulnerable people living in economic disadvantaged situations and adding value as a steward of the Plan and ensuring recognition for the work of GRADIF-K. I look forward to working with GRADIF-K teams and would like to thank all our supporters, funders, partners, staff, volunteers and campaigners for their cash and kind contributions.

All through the pages of this Report, I invite you to reflect on the huge range of GRADIF- K's interventions and realized outcomes and impacts in 2019-20, through its advocacy work, community empowerment, campaigns and development programs, to facilitating vulnerable people lift themselves out of resource lack, deprivation and find greater equity and justice.

Regards,
Gladys Miriti

GRADIF-K family acknowledges the generous support from various development agencies/ organizations, Private and Community foundations, the County Governments, the corporate sector, individuals of good will and other partners, who enabled us meet our objectives for 2019 & 2020. Through your financial and technical support GRADIF-K managed to reach out and equip more than 86,000 people directly and indirectly in Kiambu, Tharaka Nthi, Embu, ,Nyeri and Laikipia Counties with the tools and resources to flourish and thrive. We promoted holistic development of more than 18,500 children (0-8) years in Embu County. With your support, we expanded access to Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) services particularly for children below 8 years whose early Child hood development could have been compromised. We have supported more than 4,600 youths with Economic Empowerment and SRHR tools both technical and materials.

GRADIF-K table banking and self-help groups brought more financial services to members, mostly women and youth, in remote villages, harnessing the ancient practice of group savings to unleash new possibilities. Small-scale Famers Organizations (FOs) grew drought-resistant crops to better feed their families and communities, and they learned new farming techniques at farmer demonstration plots.

We have sensitized various community groups and individuals on Good governance practices and the benefits of citizens' participation in matters that affect their lives thereby spurring the debate around utilization of County Resources. Citizens/Public is now demanding transparency and accountability form leaders because they cannot be passive as critical decisions are made on their behalf. Thanks to Partners in this project

SUMMARY OF GRADIF-K PROGRAMMES /PROJECTS REACH/BENEFICIARIES DURING THE PERIOD COVERED BY THIS REPORT (2019&2020).

Name of the Project	Name of the Project No of Beneficiaries (Directly & Indirectly)
Democracy, Governance and Citizens engagement	240,000
Health, Youth& Adolescents Sexual Reproductive Health & Rights (SRHR) information and Services	118,200
YOUTH Economic Empowerment support project	54,500
Women Social-Economic Empowerment Project.	82,600
Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)	120,224
Food security and Livelihoods	48,278
Environmental Conservation & Climate Change Adaption Porgramme	28,620
Covid-19, Prevention Awareness response, recovery measures and build community resilience through local resource mobilization and Local Philanthropy	136,500

GRADIF-K IS DEEPLY GRATEFUL TO THE FOLLOWING PARTNERS WHO CONTINUED TO SUPPORT US IN 2021-2022 PERIOD:

2016-2020	Segal Family Foundation	Expansion of reproductive health programming
2017-2022	Kindernorthilfe (KNH)	Capacity empowerment of duty bearers to provide quality and sustainable ECCE services for children aged 0-8 years in Mbeere North Sub-county
2019-2022	Institute of Economic Affairs	Increasing utilization of Auditors General Report
2019-2022	URAIA Trust	Enhanced Citizens' Awareness for Responsive Governance in Tharaka Nithi County
2019-2022	Preston Werner Ventures	Youth Empowerment
2020-2022	Global Fund For Community Foundations (GFCF)	Covid-19 Response and build community resilience through local resource mobilization and Local Philanthropy
Continuous	Board Members	Supporting providing financial, technical & Governance
Continuous	Local Community, Private Sector and Individuals of Good will	Provides support in kind and cash
Continuous	Friends of GRADIF-K Including the Media	Supporting with financial, technical/Advocacy/Dissemination and Materials
Continuous	County Governments f supported Counties	Provided support in kind

GRADIF-K managed to reach out and equip more than

386,000

people directly and indirectly in Kiambu, Tharaka Nthi, Embu, Nyeri and Laikipia Counties

VISION

GRADIF-K Vision is to see an empowered society actively engaging in sustainable development.

MISSION

The Mission of GRADIF-K is to facilitate the empowerment of grass root marginalized and vulnerable communities through Community mobilization and Sensitization, Capacity Development, Advocacy and influencing relevant policies, Partnerships, Collaboration and Networking so that they can actively engage in sustainable development guided by equal opportunities for all.

VALUES

We consider it important to adhere to critical values as the driver to achieving our proposed strategy. We have hence adopted the following as our corporate shared values.

- **Positive Change:** We are committed to sustainable positive change in our communities.
- **Nondiscrimination and respect for others:** We value others and believe they can given the opportunity. GRADIF-K promotes respect for all regardless of gender, nationality economic status, ethnicity and other diversity considerations.
- **Integrity:** We believe and promote honesty and accountability.
- **Teamwork:** We value working together for positive change.
- **Commitment:** We are committed to performing tasks accurately and in a timely manner.

GRADIF-K THEORY OF CHANGE

GRADIF-K holds very strongly that systemic and enduring change is possible when communities and development stakeholders are empowered with appropriate information and resources to initiate and drive their own development agenda, actively participating in addressing challenges affecting them through working with governments, development partners, other actors and above all tapping and utilizing locally available resources and practicing community philanthropy to access basic rights, services and to sustain their initiatives.

In this section, we provide a brief description of the program, implemented interventions and results/Impacts.

COVID-19 RESPONSES & RECOVERY INITIATIVES

Following the declaration of Covid-19 as a global pandemic and the strengthening of measures intended to contain the spread of the infection and the adverse impact on the economy which is already being felt. GRADIF-Kenya got financial support from the Global Fund for Community Foundation (GFCF) to support the Match resource by supporting our communities with relief food and covid 19 preventive measures such as wearing masks, washing hands and observing social distance. GRADIF-K established mechanisms to support the adherence to MOH guidelines to combat the spread of the pandemic through containment activities, including public awareness campaigns, screening, encouraging people to go for testing and other rapid response measures.



Figure 1; COVID 19 awareness creation, relief food distribution in Tharaka Nithi

GRADIF-KENYA COVID-19 RESPONSE & RECOVERY INITIATIVES AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION EFFORTS.

- Our local communities need transparent, accurate and updates that relay the state of preparedness and the precautionary measures being taken to curb the spread of Covid-19 by using bulk SMS.
- Through our network groups we partnered with CHW and volunteers with support from the department of Health to conduct campaigns and distribution of masks to at-risk groups; especially conductors, drivers and boda boda riders who are at high risk to spread the

- disease to our local areas.
- GRADIF-Kenya is targeted generous well-wishers and community outreach programs in local areas to reach many people when provided directly to a local community.
- We received financial support from the Global Fund for Community Foundation (GFCF) to support the Match resource Challenge directed to various community groups and organizations which commendable resources were raised both in kind and cash to purchase and distribute foodstuffs and related covid-19 response materials to vulnerable members of the targeted community groups.
- We worked with county governments on continuous monitoring of the pandemic and in putting in place effective Covid-19 recovery mechanisms..
- We advocated for water tanks from county government as the locals cannot access clean water for hand washing.
- Using local language, we developed friendly and easily consumable IEC materials/ comedies on Covid-19 and circulated them throughout social platforms.
- GRADIF-K's social economic groups conducted songs to spread messages on MOH guidelines to their members and wider community.
- On education digital learning presents a lot of challenges since the government has not established proper infrastructure in the education sector. Some of the students cannot access internet for online learning where they fear some of their classmate who are accessing these online learning are a head of them. We are advising them that these classes can also be accessed from radio shows.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH RIGHTS (SRHR) FOR ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH

During the reporting period, GRADIF-Kenya Partnered with the Planned Parenthood Global (PP Global) and the Segal Family Foundation (SFF) to implement a Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) project through application of the Youth Peer Provider (YPP) Model and utilization of Community Health Workers/Volunteers (CHW/V).

PROJECT GOAL: Increased Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) Information and Services among Adolescents and Youth as well as Family Planning services for persons in child bearing ages in Tharaka Nithi County in Kenya.

Project objectives:

- 1) Create awareness of Sexual Reproductive and Health Rights (SRHR) among adolescents and youth (10-24 years) in Tharaka Nithi County
- 2) To Strengthen the capacity of GRADIF-K to offer youth friendly SRHR services to adolescents and youths aged 10-24 years in Tharaka Nithi County
- 3) Increase access to and utilization of SRH information and services amongst the adolescents and youth of (10-24years) in Tharaka Nithi County

- 4) Strengthen the community capacities to adequately address Gender Based Violence (GBV) especially the Female Genital Mutilation for young girls..

To achieve the project set objectives GRADIF-K planned and undertook various activities which laid down concrete foundation that supported project implementation process. Three staff participated in an YPP workshop organized by PP Global to strengthen their capacity to offer youth friendly Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) information and services to adolescents and youths aged 10-24 years. An inception meeting with key stakeholders in Tharaka Nithi County on the designs and related details of the SRHR/YPP Project was conducted, identified and recruited 10 Youth Peer Providers (YPPs) from the two sub counties by use of YPP model, conducted a basic baseline survey to establish the status of SRHR Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) among the youths and adolescents in Tharaka Nithi County and the mapping and identification of 10 youth friendly health service providers and targeted 5 schools where outreaches was carried out.

YPP implemented the following activities: Youths and YPP exchange learning visit Report at Dandelion Africa Organization, SRHR activities for youths out of school, SRHR debate forum at three mapped schools, presentation of a concept paper on FGM at Reproductive Health Network Conference held in Eldoret and Youth Peer Provider review meeting.



Figure 2; Youth Peer provider (YPP) TOTs conducting Youth & Adolescents SRHR outreach Sensitizations

During the reporting period, the project realized the following outcomes:

- About 55,000 Adolescents and Youth are responsible and able to make informed decisions due improved knowledge and skills on SRHR among adolescents and youth in Tharaka Nithi County.
- 2645 Adolescents and Youth are accessing of quality SRH information and services easily
- There is reduced teenage pregnancies and mortality due to unsafe abortion.
- Holistically well-balanced youth and women able to fit in the society.
- There is Strengthened networking among SRHR actors and service providers
- Increased uptake of Family planning services for adults in child bearing ages
- Reduced incidences of Gender Based Violence and child abuse e.g Reduced cases of FGM reported to relevant authorities.
- Increased number of adolescent girls enrolled in schools both secondary and colleges
- Increased number of SHR stakeholders providing services to adolescents
- Decline in retrogressive cultural practices e.g. FGM.
- Increased Utilization of maternal health care services by young mothers
- Emergence of Youth Friendly SRHR Centres in public hospital
- Reduced School dropout rates due to teenage pregnancies percentage or numbers
- Reduced morbidity and mortality rates due to crude abortions
- Improved services from Strategic partnerships with various actors in the county
- Increased resource allocation by the county Government for SRHR&FP services
- Reduced Number of children per couple: Child Birth rate in the county etc.

SUCCESS STORIES

- Condom use increased among youths hence a slight decrease on STDS and Abortion cases. For instance, one of the YPPs revealed a youth confessed how condom use prevented a male high school student from contracting STI. He is sexually active and by use of condoms he is safe from STIs. Some youths also said that initially they could not identify health centers that are youth friendly but through the SRHR project they know youth friendly centres.
- Continuous training against early marriages has contributed to reduction of early marriages at Kajuki area –Igambang’ombe ward. Parents were also enlightened on the dangers associated with early marriages.
- Success stories from Chief. “The outreaches have been so helpful. Youths are informed on SRHR and those in need of treatment are treated at youth friendly clinic which GRADIF-K has been working with during outreaches”.



Figure 3: P Youth Peer Provider (YPPP) Trainer facilitating a life skills session in one of the GRADIF-K targeted Primary schools

YOUTH ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME

What do we mean by economic empowerment?

Economic empowerment involves both the ability to succeed and advance financially and the power to make and act on economic decisions. To succeed and advance economically, youth and women need the skills and resources to compete in markets, as well as fair and equal access to economic institutions. To have the power and agency to benefit from economic activities, young people need to know how to choose from various options, control resources and profits, etc. Youth unemployment and lack of opportunities has significant social repercussions and can prevent young people from fully enjoying their rights. Beyond the individual level, it affects the prosperity, stability and equality within a society and a country's sustainable development.

The youth employment challenge is enormous. But it is not insurmountable. GRADIF-K has a vision of a world where young women and men everywhere can earn a fair income while working in conditions of security, justice, dignity and equality. Getting young people into decent jobs is not just essential for their future, but for the future of our local communities, our countries and our global society. Decent jobs for youth are essential to realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Investing in youth employment requires a collaborative approach to prioritizing job creation while helping youth to overcome specific disadvantages, such as skills mismatch and discrimination.

The program aims at increasing employment and earning opportunities for targeted youth by addressing key constraints and market failures that limit the demand for the employment and hamper youth productivity once in employment. The program addresses high level of poverty, unemployment, underemployment, idleness, marginalization, and Lack of equity in Job opportunities among the youth in the counties.

Programme outcomes

The project has reached 2520 youth and women with various activities exceeded its target of supporting 2400 youth and women. 2520 youth and women received training package in life skills, financial literacy and entrepreneurship followed by coaching and consultancies in business development; 2000 youth and women attended awareness sessions on the importance of youth and women economic and social empowerment and entrepreneurship, and 1500 youth women have been financed with interest free loans and started up kit/developed their small business with creating job opportunities for about 1284 youth.

Outcome 1: The project provided package of training in life skills, financial literacy, and entrepreneurship and mentorship activities to 2520 women. The achievement exceeded the planned target of provision of training for 2400 youth and women. The life skills module includes self-awareness, positive thinking, planning, time management, stress management, relationships, initiatives and responsibility, effective communications, and leadership. The training on Life Skills has enhanced the self-confidence of youth and women, and boosted their potential confidence and capabilities to involve in the economic and social activities in their communities.

The Entrepreneurship module includes subjects on small and medium business management, marketing, accounting, business plan development, in addition to other themes such as market exploration, market study, risks identification, set up business, sales development, reaching potential customers, planning for the unexpected circumstances including conflict, and expand the business scale. The training on entrepreneurship enriched the entrepreneurial skills and



Figure 4; a Youth apprentice attending to a client

The Financial Literacy/Education module included five main subjects: savings, budget management, banking, debt management, and financial negotiations. This curricula empowered the beneficiaries to shift from reactive to proactive financial decision making and provides them with the attitudes, knowledge, skills, and self-efficacy that they need to adopt good financial management practices in terms of earning, spending, saving, borrowing, and investing. Ultimately, it enabled youth with the confidence and ability to take greater advantage of the financial services – formal and informal – that are available to them, giving them a sense of control in their day to day lives.

1100 Youth were placed for technical and vocational and on-the-job training offered through an apprenticeship with a master craftsman who offered both training and an internship. Examples of trades include Welding and Metal Fabrication, Hairdressing, Motor Vehicle Mechanics, Photography, etc.

Outcome 2: The best 1514 business plans out of 2000 applicants were selected by a specialized panel consists of entrepreneurship experts. A designed evaluation form used to evaluate the feasibility of the business plans includes four parts about the technical, marketing, financial and the well-organized business plan written, where the business plan should be logic and applicable and there is demand for the service/project in the market, and also should be distinguished with creativity and innovation, with taking into consideration the grades of attendance, participation, behavior for each participant during attending the training. The 1514 winners received the interest free loans.

The loan ranged from 5,000 to 10, 000. The loan covered the needs of the operational cost for the first three months of the enterprises such as place renting, water and fuel for the electricity, in addition to other operational materials needed for operating the enterprises. Most of the loan amount was given in kind except transferring some cash amount to the accounts of the beneficiaries to assist them in covering the cost of extracting work permits and to cover other expenses such as transportation and communication needed for establishing their enterprises. The selected youth received extensive coaching and consultancies in business development and financial record keeping. They were also provided with legal consultancies related to the enterprises in terms of the labor law and required work permits, taxations, etc that facilitated their process to establishing/developing their businesses. Accordingly, Seven (850) new small businesses have been established and six (554) were developed (grow the existing business). The type of small businesses includes Tailoring centers, pastries, hairdressing and beauty Salon, medical lab, women café, handicrafts, handmaid accessories, incense and soap making, and trading of cloths.



Figure 5; A youth entrepreneur in her business attending to customers

Coaching:

The aim of the coaching sessions was to provide technical support to the targeted youth entrepreneurs to develop their small businesses through providing consultancies on how to marketing their products and services, increase the percentage of selling, attracting customers, and bringing new ideas for business development. The communication between the coaches and entrepreneurs is considered to be a good experience and it has positive outcomes as mentioned below:

- Sharing information, knowledge, and culture has boosted the relationship between the entrepreneurs. Sound business ideas were suggested to the youth to improve their businesses and make it distinguished through having special logos and brands, and using social media, flayers, discounts, promotional items for promoting their products and services.

- A Facebook and whatsapp page has been established by for communication purpose between the entrepreneurs and mentors, this has enhanced sharing of information, challenges and intervention to raised challenges.

Outcome 3: monthly entrepreneurship awareness sessions delivered to 1560 (865 youth/in Tharaka Nithi and 695 youth/women in Embu) who were selected according to a set criteria for the purpose of targeting them again for more extensive training, mentorship, and other activities in the phase II of the project for sustainability and improvement. The sessions focused on the concepts of small businesses and analysis of the risks accompanied with; the roles of youth in running small business to overcome poverty and improve the livelihood conditions especially during the current difficult economic situation due to the COVID; innovation; and gender related issues. Attendants of the awareness sessions expressed positively about the importance of such sessions among youth and they were so enthusiastic to be enrolled in any such economic empowerment activities to assist them in getting dignity life through having small businesses.



Figure 6; Red Eagles Youth Group Receiving water tanks and seedlings

Outcome 4: A workshop on youth's economic role to discuss opportunities and challenges; shared experiences and lessons learned; and come-up with plausible recommendations to enhance and support the role of youth and women economically and socially. 40 people from local and INGOs, microfinance banks, private sector, government offices, GRADIF-K, and 30 youth/women supported by this project participated in the workshop and shared their experiences and challenges and added good momentum to the workshop. They described in detail the challenges they have been facing due to the deteriorated economic situations in general and also the difficulties of the procedures of the micro-finance institutions - mainly the strict requirement of guarantees - that hindered too many youth and women to take loans for establishing enterprises. The workshop included open working group discussions to identify the challenges and the roles of the government, micro-finance institutions, private sectors, and civil society to support youth economically especially during the current situation of war. The following are set of recommendations from the workshop:

- Establish effective network that consists of the concerned institutions to share information and facilitate coordination for providing the required services such as technical and vocational training, mentorship, loans, and fund guarantees to support the beneficiaries

in building their capacities and encouraging small businesses. In addition, the network needs to support entrepreneurs to link them with markets and other that have stakes in the market.

- Development of friendly finance products for youth should be promoted.
- Build the capacity of the microfinance institutions' staff in gender sensitivity and customers' service especially towards youth..
- Provision of business' incubations for women and youth to access the information, share knowledge, and developing their businesses.
- Raise social awareness to support the role and participation of youth in the community.
- Conduct regular workshops to discuss the emerging challenges and working to address/mitigate the challenges.

Outcome 5: Youths and women were trained agri-business and value addition to access markets and agricultural resources. During the reporting period, GRADIF-K trained and linked the youths and women groups with online platforms like Mkulima Young, Farm LINK Soko and M-Farm. GRADIF-K is engaging Tharaka Nithi County government to see if it can also purchase surplus produce at fair prices.

GRADIF-K identified youth and women groups and linked them with the County ministry of Agriculture to access appropriate technologies, equipment and inputs, such as information and communications technology, machinery, seeds, and fertilizer in order increase their productivity and output

During the period 2019-2020, GRADIF-K's realized the following results/impacts:

- 58% of youth trained in entrepreneurial skills are engaged in various self-employment initiatives and providing for their immediate households.
- 60% of youth placed for technical vocational skills training are employed in formal and informal sectors.
- 65% of youth and women who received seed capital have initiated various livelihoods initiatives.
- 68% of the youth groups have been linked up and accessing various services from private and public financial institutions, devolved Government funds, CSOs, County Governments
- 175 youth groups trained in Agribusiness are engaged in various agribusinesses related livelihoods and utilizing out to the skills gained.
- 42 Women groups formed, are engaged in Table banking as the key sources of funds for their livelihoods initiatives. Due to the initiative the women are providing basic needs to the heir children and taking them to school.
- 35% of trained person living with disability are engaged in self-employment
- There are reduced crime rates and alcohol and drug abuse among the youth evidenced by the data received form the law enforcement bodies.
- Behavioral change among the youth evidenced by reduced school dropout data from MOE
- 286 of formed and supported women/youth groups are engaged in various livelihoods generation activities.
- There are increased community development projects initiated by youth and women.
- Number of additional jobs created by young entrepreneurs
- Reduced idleness as youth/single mother will be constructively engaged
- Reduction in alcohol, drugs and substance abuse



Figure 7; a table banking group in session

- Improved living standards due to diversified livelihoods and increased incomes.
- Single mother are meeting the basic needs and taking their children to school
- There is reduced crime rates among the youth as will be evidenced by the data received from the law enforcement bodies.
- There will be improved health and nutritional statuses of the participating youths' at household levels
- Improved security due to reduced crime committed by young people
- Reduced gender based violence especially directed to women.
- Formation of additional youth groups to tap on social capital.

Most significant story of Fred, a program beneficiary;

Fred' story: I want to open my own electronics accessory shop!

Fred comes from a small village in Tharaka Nithi. It takes him long hours in trucks and buses to reach the closest city. She comes from a poor family, and due to a lack of resources, he had no choice but to drop out of school before he even started secondary school. Fred was depressed because he couldn't go to school anymore, and felt like a burden to his family. Luckily, Fred had a loving uncle, Jones, who always supported him and could not accept that he quit his education. He convinced Fred to work as a farmhelp for his grandfather in order to save money for school fees. And so Fred started working to save enough money to start school again soon.

6 month later, Fred commenced his education where he left it: his uncle helped him to register in a vocational school where she could learn useful skills in electronics. Fred was finally taking control of his future again and was happier than ever. Sadly, during his second year at the vocational school, Fred's uncle Jones passed away. This tragedy left Fred miserable and depressed. He had lost the most supportive person in his life, and his best motivation. Freds' parents

finally convinced him to work harder than ever, because it would make his late uncle proud. It was shortly after this that Fred learned about GRADIF-K's youth economic empowerment project coming to her school. The project supported vulnerable youth in the area acquire marketable and employable skills, jobs and learn how to create business opportunities for themselves.



Figure 8; youth apprentice in his barbershop attending to a client

Highly interested by the opportunities this project could offer, Fred applied to be a part of it and was included in the programme that included life skills education, vocational and apprenticeship training, mentorship, startup capital and business development services.

After finishing the programme, Fred started applying for jobs, with help from GRADIF-K. While he was terrified of spending months searching for employment, he was immediately hired in one of the biggest electronics shops in the city as a customer service executive. He now earns enough to be independent as well as to help his parents. On top of that, he is saving money every month with a clear goal in mind: 'I want to open my own electronics accessory shop!' he says determinedly

AGRICULTURE AND LIVELIHOOD PROGRAM

Economic livelihoods : Food security ,Agribusiness and Entrepreneurship

During the implementation of Agriculture and livelihood project funded by Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) Kajuki Igambang'ombe Constituency came together to form a self-help a group Kajuki traders self- help group and later Igambang'ombe Multipurpose Society .



The formation of a co-operative came in handy with increased benefits as farmers were not only able to access credit facilities, but were also in a position to access trainings from GRADIF-K a thing that enabled them have quality produce with the required tonnage to secure stable markets.



Figure 10; IMCOS Packaging their product

Upon accessing credit, and consulting widely, sorghum was first considered as its one cereal that can be grown in a wide range of soils and climatic conditions especially the arid regions where other cereals cannot make it without substantial irrigation. The other reason that cereals like Green grams, Cowpeas and Sorghum was considered and was highly welcome was that it could be used both as a grain and forage for the animals.

Out of their great efforts, the co-operative was able to attract different government sectors and nongovernmental organizations that aims at alleviating poverty at the grass root level for support. The co-operative attributes much of its success to GRADIF-K saying that it was the only N.G.O. that was able to walk with them since identifying them in 2014 by mobilizing more members for them to join the co-operative, Supplying farmers with certified seeds from cowpeas, sorghum, green grams among others.

GRADIF-Kenya also provided 6 groups with a computer to enhance efficiency when it comes to keying in raw data. To ensure proper co-ordination in the group GRADIF-K offered training to the co-operative members, the officials and the leaders where some became the T.O.T's – trainers of trainers such that any new member of the group is trained on various leadership issues, latest farming, harvesting and value addition techniques and how to prepare a business plan.

WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

In the heart of Tunyai Tharaka Constituency in Tharaka Nithi County is a group of women singing and dancing. In spite of the din, the high powered voices can't be ignored. These are voices of a women group called Mithigine Network celebrating a bumper harvests at their collection centre in Gakiuma Tunyai. But the key thing that cannot escape one's mind is how the group has managed such a bumper harvest amidst the dry desertic region.



"It is out of the different challenges we were facing as farmers that we decided to unite and find a solution to our farming challenges. To start with they formed six groups each with a minimum of 10-12 members a total of 89. Their main objective was to first acquire high quality certified seeds, seeds approved by the government for quality production. To achieve this, they partnered with seed growers companies and GRADIF-Kenya trained them on farming techniques and GRADIF-Kenya came in handy and trained us on soil conservation, varieties crops adapted to the region, right use of farm inputs, conservation agriculture, group formation, how to develop a proposal among other key issues in farming.



With this, the group members' number doubled to accommodate 562 active members and in turn transforming into a network. For proper management, the network subdivided into 2 where 1 group was to deal with cereals and the other on horticulture produce.

Their groups have remained intact since formation out of the much training conducted by GRADIF-Kenya. The knowledge they have acquired in the groups has even made some members trainers of trainers, such that any new member who joins the group directly acquires the info from the already existing members which plays a greater role in increasing our membership. The groups have also grown to be independent in that they have established financial freedom by not only linking up with the financiers but by also establishing their own financial plans where members can save and access soft loans and sometimes table banking.



By taking farming to the next level, network has attracted the likes of the youth who previously had viewed farming as a 'dirty job' to viewing it as a form of employment as it has not only generated income for them but also made them responsible members in the society. Today the group is able to acquire quality farm inputs by purchasing them in large quantities at subsidized prices and later subdividing the inputs as per the requirements in the groups. Loans are also acquired by the group members to the different financiers through group guarantee mechanisms.

Equipped with the knowhow and financial empowerment the group members then embark on conservation agriculture that entails minimal or no cultivation and lots of mulching to conserve both the soil nutrients and reduce any form of water loss through evaporation. To also increase their chances of a bumper harvest, the groups also embarks on farming crops that are adapted to the region and especially cereals like sorghum, millet and pigeon peas contrally to other non-trained farmers in the region who opt to plant maize which they say is easy to sell only for the produce to dry up prematurely leading to food insecurity in the region.

When it comes to tending the crops, the right farming techniques are employed with the right input application as too much fertilizers can scorch the seeds or plants while too little means that the crops cannot grow to full potential. Some of the techniques employed by group members that have helped conserve soil moisture and enhanced productivity entail mulching, drip irrigation, ZALPIT technology among other technologies that have really helped her conserve the soil moisture and reap bountifully.



When it comes to harvesting and storage the knowledge the farmers have acquired on post-harvest handling from GRADIF-K comes in handy so as to ensure contaminated free produce. The moisture content of the cereals is checked by having one contracted member who goes round farmers stores checking on the harvests suitability before storage is done. Grading is also done before storage to ensure quality produce. The network's unity that the members attribute to GRADIF-K trainings include training on integrated farming, water harvesting, agribusiness, record keeping, agro forestry, fruit farming, land use planning and management among other skills has enabled them secure a concrete stable market by not only meeting the set standards but also meeting the required tonnage in terms of volumes. Currently the network has secured a contract with one of the Kenya's leading brewing company East African Breweries Limited, securing them a steady market and assuring them of a steady income. The network is still working towards securing contracts with other companies. To ensure competitiveness in the market, the network cleans some of its cereals and is planning to upgrade and add value to the cereals by making their own flour

Farming in the region has thus not just transformed the region but it has also transformed women lives by creating employment and enabling them educate their children, ensure a food secure society and improve their household structure and furnishings. A total of 227-MT of produce had been aggregated and sold through FOs by 562 farmers across all network.

BY TAKING FARMING TO THE NEXT LEVEL, NETWORK HAS ATTRACTED THE LIKES OF THE YOUTH WHO PREVIOUSLY HAD VIEWED FARMING AS A 'DIRTY JOB'

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT

During Implementation of Climate change project in Tharaka Nithi County there were signs of potential impacts of the project. The group members and farmers are beginning to gain fruits of their labour. The greenhouse project for example has started attracting visitors who are interested in learning so that they can go and implement in their farms.



The group has embraced the visitors and they have taken upon themselves to train other community members free of charge on how the technology works. A number of people have started implementing the technology in their farms. In assessing impact of the GRADIF-K project however, it was difficult to get clear numbers of the beneficiaries outside the group members.

The following are some of the outcomes and possible impacts of the project:

- There is increased community participation in natural resource management and biodiversity conservation interventions by gender.
- Improved conservation of the environment and biodiversity resulting to reduced negative climate change impact on the fauna and flora around Mt Kenya region. Enactment of friendly Climate Change policies at the county level. Diversification and sustainable livelihood and increased farm yields including tea yields.
- Strengthened integrated community development initiatives that addresses natural resources management and biodiversity conservation for realization of sustainable development
- Emergence of community centers of excellence in climate change adaptation and mitigation as well as in integrated community development initiatives.
- Diversification of alternative sources of livelihood which does not have negative impact on Climate Change including enhanced entrepreneurship.
- Active participation of community members and children in climate change mitigation initiatives in targeted villages and schools.
- Increased rainfall leading to adequate water in the existing rivers for both human and animal consumption.
- Good governance systems and enhanced capacities among CBOs and other community groups who are effectively designing and managing Climate Change and related community development projects/initiatives.
- Reduced incidences of climate change negative effects on the fauna and flora.
- Reduced massive destruction of environment around in Tharaka Nithi County through; farming along the forest, firewood harvesting, timber logging, grazing, bhang cultivation etc.

- Existence of strong Multilevel Network to advocate for Climate Change mitigation and Adaptation.



EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION (ECCE) PROGRAMME

GRADIF-Kenya recognizes the role played by Early Childhood Care, Development and Education (ECCDE) Programme in the development of the families, community and the Nation at large. The Overall Goal of the Programme is to ensure that "Children's Holistic Development (Cognitive/Mental, Physical, Social, Emotional/Psychological and Language development) in the first 8 years of their lives is enhanced through access to adequate, quality and sustainable ECCDE services in the targeted counties. The first five years of Life are very critical for positive child development and deserves more attention than they have received in the past. They are responsible for the formation of intelligence, personality and social behaviour. GRADIF-K implements ECCDE as an integral part of community development Initiatives. We back this project and its approaches on an African Proverb that says "It takes a village to raise a child!" It is widely held that a Child's wellbeing depends on the efforts of the entire community. This means that sustainable ECCDE initiatives should involve all members of the community. GRADIF-K believes that it is only through integrated quality ECCDE services that children are able to enjoy their rights as enshrined in the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and in the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC). GRADIF-K invests in ECCDE considering the current and future benefits to both the child, family, community and the nation at large. Working closely with other duty bearers, GRADIF-K directs all efforts towards promotion of the Holistic Child Development (HCD).

Despite all the above listed benefits of the ECCE Programme, it is not given the seriousness that it deserves by the Government, development agencies, private sector and other duty bearers.

In Tharaka Nithi and Embu County the situation is worse than the national average. Children 4 Years and above access to ECCE is still low. The areas also face extreme weather, poverty, scarcity of resources, retrogressive social cultural beliefs and practices and the marginalization of the populations

With funding from the Kindernothilfe, GRADIF-K has been working to support the community address some of the glaring challenges hindering the realization of Holistic Child development including sensitizing mobilizing and parents and communities on children's early stimulation, establishing ECCE Centres, child care, parenting groups and advocacy. To date, in one of the targeted counties ECCE Centre, 16 Model ECCE Centres have been established through the County Government and community initiatives.



Figure 11; Old Gachuriri ECCE Center-Newly constructed Gachuriri ECCE Center.

Mbeere North Sub-County is one of the communities to have benefitted from the project. four years ago, the area didn't have enough ECCE Centres - young children would either stay at home or go to the tobacco fields with their parents. But with three newly constructed community ECCE Centres around 80% of children are now enjoying various ECCE services in these centres.



Figure 12; Children enrolled in an ECCE Centre in Embu County playing with peers during break time

The ambition is to ensure all children above 4 years in the targeted counties are enrolled in ECCE Centres, as program Coordinator Rebecca Ngaywa explains. "I am working with the ECCE Network members, community leaders, child protection groups, collaborators and parents to map household of small children who are not enrolled." she says. "All children have a right to enjoy early childhood development services for their holistic wellbeing and future learning.

The ECCE Programme represents the next generation of leaders, as it is the communities themselves, and not GRADIF-K, that manage the ECCE Centres. The communities also share responsibility for the establishment of the centres, for example through the provision of land and labour for their construction, while the county government manages allocated resources to support various activities including payment of ECCE teachers salaries/wages.

While capacity building and technical training at community level can represent a challenge, it is through the engagement and ownership of the communities that the project is poised to make a lasting change to the lives of children in Embu and Tharaka Nithi Counties and their communities.

GRADIF-Kenya has been instrumental in Mbeere North Embu County in building the capacity of duty bearers to provide quality ECCE service to children aged 0-8 in 2019/2020 the organisation employed different tactics in ensuring that community members understand the importance of ECCE. The different strategies that were applied in 2019/2020 entailed sensitizing community members via the community radio Wimwaro, educating community members on matters ECCE by holding talks, Q&A sessions with technocrats in the field of education, health and nutrition as well as in Child protection.



Figure 13; Civic education outreach session

GRADIF-K has continued to engage the community members through community health volunteers. This particular group of duty bearers has been very instrumental in referring and carrying out sensitization sessions for mothers and reaching families at the household level with children aged 0-4 years.

GRADIF-K encouraged community members to form an ECCE Network comprised of teachers, CHV's, Farmers and members of ECCE committees from different schools. This network has been very instrumental in lobbying and advocacy on the construction of ECCE centres as well as provision of quality ECCE services. Through their lobbying the county has been able to construct at least 2 ECCE centres from 2016.

This brief report will focus on the outcomes of the overall objectives and the sub objectives of the ECCE program as mentioned below:

- Facilitate establishment of 20 Model ECCE Centers in Mbeere North Sub-County by 2023
- Increase enrollment and access in ECCE programs' services (Education, Nutrition, Health and Development) for children below the age of 8 years by March 2023.
- Enhance the capacities of mothers, fathers and caregivers to strengthen interventions for Children 0-4 years. (This activity specifically targets children 0-4 years through age-appropriate programming approach)
- Existing community structures and local networks established and strengthened for the sustainability of ECCE Programme in Mbeere North Sub-County by 2022.
- Accomplishments/outputs
- Employment of 484 ECD Teachers on Permanent and Pensionable Terms at (certificate trained) & (diploma holders)
- 79 centres have 2 teachers each
- 42 centres have 1 teacher each
- 11 centres have no county employed teacher (new centers manned by BOM teachers)
- Employment of 5 ECD officers on Permanent and Pensionable Terms. (graduate
- Increased enrolment of ECDE children from 13,391 (Ner.47%) in 2014 to current 17,065(Ner. 71%) in 2019/2020.(4028/4375)
- Establishment of 2 new feeder ECDE centers in Mbeere North, these are areas where children walk more than 2km to school.
- Provision of teaching and learning materials in all public centers
- Capacity building of ECD Teachers in public and private schools and staff on Child protection, quality ECCE services and trainings on CBC

- Construction of 11 model ECD Centers, improving the learning environment
- Department has continuously assessed ECDE teachers at least once per year to monitor curriculum delivery
- Yearly increase in resource allocation by the County Government by 5% per year for establishment of 20 model
- 100% attendance of mothers for the Antenatal and post-natal clinic
- 56 children were identified assessed and referred to have various special needs in 2019/2020.
- 278 children born with impairments referred to the local hospital.
- 2320 children completed immunization
- Formation of the xxxMbeere North ECCE Network lobbying for the construction of ECCE centers.
- 8 radio programmes sensitizing community on care of children 0-4 and provision of quality ECCE services reaching over 50,000 community members.
- Formation of the Ishaara Area Advisory Council (AAC)
- 30 Trained Local enforcement authority, 60 ECCE teachers which has led to timely reporting of child abuse cases.



ECCE OUTCOMES REALISED IN ECCE PROGRAMME SO FAR:

- Increased annual enrolment of children in ECCE Centres by gender.
- Quality services delivery to children especially by teachers who are trained and Holistic development of children.
- Increased participation of women in development matters and women role modeling
- Reduced percentage of cases of child abuse and related gender based violence incidences reported to relevant institutions.
- More and priority attention directed to children 0-4 Years through their parents, caregivers and guardians
- Improved ECCE care and development environments both at home and in ECCE Centers
- Enhanced participation of parents in the developmental activities of their children as duty bearers due to increased awareness.
- Improved health and nutrition of children as evidenced by the monthly growth monitoring reports and those from the community health Centres.
- Intensified advocacy by the capacity strengthened ECCE Networks

DEMOCRACY, GOVERNANCE AND CITIZENS PARTICIPATION/ENGAGEMENT

'Democracy, Governance and Citizens engagement/Participation is a critical focus area in GRADIF-K Programs and interventions because it enhances their awareness and understanding of their Human Rights, Promote their participation in matters that affect their lives. Citizens Participation and Governance entails the involvement of citizens in a wide range of policy making activities and processes, including the determination of levels of service, planning, budget priorities, establishment of performance standards and in social accountability. It also entails citizens' active participation in Counties planning and Participation Processes and enhance the Governance systems including the governance of Public resources.

Public participation is at a core of devolution and is a key determinant of the success of devolution and National Governments' plans and policies. This aspect is anchored in the constitution of Kenya, 2010. Public participation is anchored in the Public Participation Act of every county government. The public is supposed to be involved in making decisions in all the matters that touch on their holistic well-being.

GRADIF-K Views Governance issues as crosscutting because they touch on all sectors of life. During the reporting period, GRADIF-K implemented Enhanced Citizens' Awareness for Responsive Governance project with funding from Uraia trust. The project goal was improved governance processes in Tharaka Nithi County. The following were the project outcomes;

1. Increased citizens and CSOs' participation and engagement in governance processes in Tharaka Nithi County.
2. Improved Service Delivery in Tharaka Nithi county
3. Increased participation of marginalized groups (Women, youth and PWD) in governance processes in Tharaka Nithi County.

During the reporting period, Citizens awareness and knowledge on the constitution through sustained and mass civic education realized the following outcomes;

- a) Increased number of citizen participating in public participation forum as citizens has appreciated the importance of public participation in the governance process at the county level.
- b) 286 trained citizens(190 males/96 females) exercised their civic duty by undertaking various 14 civic actions in form of demand letters, petitions, memorandum, meeting with duty bears, majority have been acted upon while others are on process of implementation. After the petitioning Mukothima ward administrator:
 - The markets are cleaner as solid waste is collected twice per week
 - The two health facilities which were not in operation; the complete dispensary was launched by the governor and the Ntoroni dispensary, which was incomplete has been allocated completion funds and due for completion in 2022.
 - Petitioned the assistant county commissioner and deputy county commissioner on unfair recruitment of youth in the National Hygiene Program (NHP) dubbed Kazi Mtaani. The community complaints were addressed whereby youth from the area were recruited in the program. The Assistant County commissioner who failed to address the petition was transferred.
 - The state of the roads in Mukothima/Nkondi were in dire need of repair hence making transportation challenges for the residents, despite numerous complaints and petitions the citizens demonstrated demanding better roads, due to the demonstration, the



Figure 14; Civic education outreach activities for business people

roads were graded and a bridge constructed to enable the citizens cross the river. Civic education has enabled the citizens of Nkondi/Mukothima ward enjoy their rights.

- c). Through the Community Score card, the Citizens assessed the health care services of Kibugua health facility. The Citizens presented their report to the county government for action and formed a ward committee to ensure that the implementation of their demands on health services is addressed in time.
- d). The CSO network petitioned the clerk of the county assembly of Tharaka Nithi County to Access information on the County assembly website and the emergency Covid 19 kitty budget. The Covid 19 budget was availed, while the assembly is working on updating its



website so that the citizens can access information on the website. The CSO network gave their recommendations on draft youth empowerment. Further, they engaged in Bridging Bridges Initiative forum and presented their memorandum on the draft bill.

- e) The project increased participation of marginalized groups like the women, youth and People with disabilities in governance processes in the County. The 25 (19 males/6 females) trained PWDs undertook four civic actions; writing petitions and meetings to demand for accountability and actions from various duty bearers. The People living with disabilities presented a petition to the National council of Persons cash transfer fund and disability cards. The NCPWD regional coordinator promised to forward the demands to the national office as some demands had to do with policy issues and other were affected by limited funds given by the NCPWD head office to support activities at the branches.
- f) The PWDs sought to find out from the MCA on how the disability funds are utilized and her role in safeguarding and representing the PWDs issues at the county assembly. The PWDs also held meetings with Nkondi ward administrator to bring to her attention on issues affecting the PWDs and sought a feedback on county plans for the disabled.



Figure 15; Persons with disability presenting a petition to the regional coordinator, National Council of persons with disability



Figure 16; Nkondi ward PWD representatives with the MCA (second right) representing PWD at the County Assembly

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Organization Development is an effort planned, organization-wide, and managed from the top, to increase organizational effectiveness and health through planned interventions in the organizations “processes”, using behavioral-science knowledge. In the period under review, GRADIF-K organizational development had the following objective;

- Improves the effectiveness of GRADIF-K interventions;
- Increases the scale and reach of GRADIF-K’s work, knowledge, and expertise;
- Increases the speed and timeliness of GRADIF-K support;
- Improves our responsiveness to the demands of GRADIF-K clients and communities.

Organizational development is a continuous process based on managing future change based on diagnosis, planning, and evaluation.

GRADIF-K is implementing Organizational development initiatives as a cross cutting issue/Intervention. During the period under review, GRADIF-K continued to strengthen both the Organizational and Institutional capacities of her affiliated CSOs and related Grass root structures who are the key holders of the development agenda. These include Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Young NGOs and Community Development Foundations, Youth groups, Women groups, Farmers Organizations (FOs), development Networks and other grassroots groups which we work with as well as strengthening GRADIF-K Organizational Capacity to design, implement and support



effective and sustainable programs for improvement of life of targeted populations. GRADIF-K is currently working with 234 diverse community structures (CSOs, groups, farmers' organizations among others) in all the targeted counties

Some of the key interventions and accomplishments include:

- Organized and held quarterly Board of Directors meetings where various organizational matters are discussed and resolutions made.
- Reviewed previous strategic plan, developed and launched 2021-2025 strategic plan
- Continued to conduct Organization Capacity Assessments (OCA) and Management Capacity Assessment (MCA) for CBOs and other groups applying for partner with GRADIF-K and development of capacity development programme for each of them.
- Continued capacity development of CBOs/CSOs and other grassroots groups on critical Organizational Development aspects including leadership, group dynamics, Governance & making of constitutions, collaboration & networking, record keeping, eligibility to access devolved funds, financial management including groups savings & table banking, monitoring & data management, business planning, entrepreneurship, cross learning, sustainability among others.
- Sustained capacity strengthening of Youth groups and women groups on proposal development and tendering processes to enable them access various for devolved funds and benefit from the 30% procurement allocation by the county government.
- Supporting CBOs and other groups in development, implementation and review of their Strategic Plans.
- Reviewed and shared report on GRADIF-K 5 years Strategic Plan (2012- 2017) to ensure, timely implementation and midterm review of the strategic plan.
- Organized and facilitated Board of Directors, staff and strategic partners retreats, supporting staff, board of directors and strategic partners to attend County, National, regional and international conferences and related capacity building forums and advocacy events.

