



MAASAI WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT



**PARTNER: COMMUNITY RESEARCH AND
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Project Synopsis

This project aims to reduce the vulnerability of Maasai women using a twofold approach – challenging gender inequity, and increasing women's access to income generating opportunities. The overarching goal of the project is to promote a Maasai society where women have equal rights to own, access and use the productive resources available to them. Our local partner, CORDS, is a Maasai run NGO that is well placed to challenge social norms that disadvantage women. The project is a cluster of initiatives built around raising awareness, identifying community leaders, promoting initiatives designed to enhance women's ownership of and control over and access to productive assets, and facilitating access to capital, to build economic empowerment to reduce vulnerability. The project was implemented in three villages, through the establishment of a flour milling plant.

Evaluation Key Findings

- The project has empowered women to start businesses, gain employment, generate income, and reduce transportation costs.
- Barriers include the sustainability of the operation and the need for more funding to undertake other projects.
- The women were trained on how to run the flour milling plant and start small businesses. Men were also involved in the implementation process.
- The project had a detailed work plan that outlined the activities to be carried out, timelines, and responsibilities of the different stakeholders involved in the project.
- The project has had a positive impact on the lives of Maasai women in the target villages. They have gained economic independence, improved their living conditions, and become leaders in their homes and communities. They have demonstrated resourcefulness, resilience, and a willingness to diversify their businesses for long-term sustainability.
- CORDS has an effective reporting system and provides regular updates to all stakeholders. Reports include progress towards project objectives, challenges encountered, and recommendations for improvements. The project has a robust M&E system in place to track progress and measure effectiveness.
- The communication between CORDS and the local communities was effective and efficient.
- The project has led to an improvement in the well-being of the women and their families. They have become more self-reliant, and their businesses have generated profits, which are used for basic needs and improving their businesses further. The project has also empowered the women to fight for their rights and take on leadership roles.

A more detailed set of findings were made for each individual village.

Evaluator's Recommendations

Based on the evaluation findings, the following recommendations were made:

- Focus on addressing challenges: Prioritize efforts to address the challenges identified, such as improving access to healthcare, enhancing literacy levels, and dismantling cultural barriers that restrict women's participation in decision-making processes.

- Expand project reach: Extend the project's reach to more women in the community by actively identifying and engaging marginalized groups and remote areas.
- Foster sustainability: Develop a long-term plan for the project to ensure its sustainability beyond the project's end. This includes building the capacity of local organizations and empowering them to continue the work independently.

A more detailed set of recommendations were made for each individual village.

Evaluator's Conclusion

The findings indicate that the project has made significant strides in improving the lives of Maasai women, particularly in terms of increasing their income and helping them to provide for their families. However, the evaluation also identifies areas for improvement, including the need for greater community engagement and increased access to education and healthcare services.

The project has demonstrated remarkable achievements in empowering Maasai women economically, improving their livelihoods, and promoting community engagement. The project's strategic approach, including the establishment of flour milling plants, provision of training, and encouragement of women to form small businesses, has yielded positive outcomes and progress towards the desired goals.

The project's implementation was well-structured, incorporating crucial elements such as community engagement, effective work planning, finance and co-finance mechanisms, robust monitoring and evaluation systems, stakeholder engagement, and clear reporting and communication channels. These aspects have played a pivotal role in the overall success of the project, ensuring informed decision-making and effective utilization of resources.

Despite the significant achievements, the project also faces challenges related to its long-term sustainability. Financial risks, including inadequate funding and limited resources, pose potential threats to the continuation of the flour milling plants. To address these risks and ensure long-term sustainability, it is crucial to diversify the women's businesses beyond milling, engage in fundraising efforts, and establish proper governance and management structures. Additionally, careful management of environmental risks is necessary to minimize the project's impact on the natural environment.

By addressing these risks and leveraging the project's strengths, the empowerment of Maasai women can be further enhanced, leading to sustainable economic growth and improved well-being for the communities involved. The project's impact goes beyond economic empowerment, as it has also raised awareness about women's rights.