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THE RISE FOUNDATION AND VISIONS IN ACTION (VIA) PARTNERSHIP PROJECT ENTITLED:

SPILLWAY CONSTRUCTION IN LIBERIA: PROMOTING A FOOD SECURITY AND WATER MANAGEMENT MECHANISM FOR RURAL FARMERS IMPLEMENTED BY VIA IN CONSULTATION WITH SDC, WFP AND MOA

Introduction

During the month of February 2013, a partnership arrangement was reached between **THE RISE FOUNDATION** and **VISIONS IN ACTION (VIA)** and a Partnership agreement was later signed for VIA to implement a spillway construction project to be funded by THE RISE FOUNDATION. The project is aimed at promoting a food security and water management mechanism for rural farmers. This funding directly or indirectly complements assisting partners' (WFP, SDC and MOA) efforts. The project agreement commenced on April 1, 2013 and ends May 31, 2013. Kpodo Farmer Group in Zayglay Town, Nimba County is the farmer group site selected for this project.

The name of the Zayglay farmer group is Kpodo, which means 'TOGETHERNESS'. The group has 55 members (F – 38, M – 17). It is a low income farmer group. Members are largely vulnerable (widows, elderly and other food deficient householders). Their swamp is owned by community members themselves who are involved in the rehabilitation and cultivation of the scheme. Most of the upland in Zayglay is covered with rubber and the portion left has been depleted for rice production. The swamp / lowland is the dependable place for high yield rice production. This is what makes this project relevant to the farmers especially in Zayglay.

This Project implementation report covers the following. Sensitization of Partners and Beneficiaries

- . Selection of construction Engineer / Team
- . Arrangement for wood to construct the spillway
- . Actual construction work
- . Project impact
- . Challenges
- . Recommendations

Sensitization of Partners and Beneficiaries

Sensitization in this project was necessary for both NGO and governmental partners and for beneficiaries. The partners were informed of the upcoming RISE intervention and it was agreed by all partners that VIA would construct a RISE-funded spillway. Everyone expressed appreciation for RISE initiative.

Selection of construction Engineer / Team

The selection of the construction Engineer / Team was done in consultation with the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC), a partner of VIA that is responsible for technical advice on wooden spillways and technical layout in Nimba and Lofa Counties. Hallie Karwolo, the construction Engineer was selected based on an SDC-ranking of best spillway constructors.

Arrangement for wood to construct the spill way

The Zayglay scheme is a plain swamp without trees to saw. The contractor had to negotiate for trees owned by non-group members. These trees were paid for and the crops damaged during the process were also compensated for.

Actual construction work

The actual work started on April 3, 2013 with negotiation for the wood followed by sawing, transporting of the pieces, digging Foundation, re-shaping of the head dike, construction of the spillway, backfilling and Bio-engineering. About 8 laborers (2 skilled & 6 unskilled) were involved in the work for 2 weeks. After the spillway construction, structure maintenance training was provided for lead farmers and other members of the group to the spill way up to date and functioning.

Project impact

The RISE-funded spillway has encouraged Zayglay farmers to cultivate the downstream of their swamp. The water level increased by the spillway runs through the irrigation canal (both supply canal in the middle and the Peripheral canal at the swamp margin). This structure is expected to aid the supply of water in at least three (3) hectares of low / swamp for the total beneficiaries of 55. The 3 hectares is expected to produce at least 9 tons of lowland rice at 3 tons per Hectare for one cropping. And this irrigation structure will enable farmers to have double cropping when properly timed.

Challenges

- . The Zayglay swamp / lowland is fairly a rain fed type that receives stable water supply in May. It is largely gentle slope land that the first spillway level taken caused flooding up stream towards the motor road. The final level taken now have reduced the flooding effect upstream at the same time distributing water into the irrigation canals.
- . The Zayglay Farmers lacked the trees in the scheme to saw for spillway construction. Trees had to purchase or compensated for.
- . There are other farmer groups that are engaged in swamp rehabilitation but don't have the fund to build spillways. More funding would be a blessing for other communities.

Recommendations

- . More fund be provided by RISE Foundation for the construction of spill ways in other schemes not covered by RISE and WFP fund in Liberia.
- . Additional funds should be available to compensate or purchase trees where necessary like in the case of Zayglay.

See photos below:



Crops damaged and paid for (cacao, kola, plantain)



Sawed tree spot



Transportation of timber to construction site



Construction of spillway



Update view of Zayglay spillway downstream



Sensitization meeting attendance in Zayglay warehouse



View of the completed spillway in Kpodo Swamp, Zayglay Town, Nimba County, Liberia.

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