



## REPUBLIQUE DE COTE D'IVOIRE UNION – DISCIPLINE - TRAVAIL

### **SUCCESS STORIES FROM NGO FEMDEV SINCE 2006 TO DATE**

#### **VISION**

FEMDEV envisages a world where women and youth are equipped as drivers of sustainable development.

#### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Its mission is to strengthen the economic, spiritual and social capacities of women and youth to transform them into development agents who fight poverty in communities.

#### **ACHIEVEMENTS**

Since its inception, FEMDEV:

- Created women and youth support groups in villages like Bingerville, Koumassi, Abobo dume, Issia, Guiglo and Aboisso to offer psycho social, spiritual and economic support to women and youth. Women in Abidjan chapter helped those members in Aboisso chapter to sell their agricultural product known as gari (cassava flour) to fight against poverty and food insecurity.
- Gave small grants in 2007 to more than 10 women to do income generating activities to improve their economic status, open personal accounts and manage their income generating businesses.
- Began partnership in 2009 with NGOs such as “New Life project” Cote d’Ivoire and “Ma Contribution” in training men and women on the fight against HIV/AIDS given that Cote d’Ivoire had the highest HIV prevalence rate of 4.7% in West Africa then.
- Regularly distributed rice, oil, tomato paste, sardines, magi cubes and clothes/shoes to the less privileged such as displaced people, orphans, and widows several times yearly.
- Assisted more than 15 people in getting gainful employment in different disciplines in Abidjan in the area of project coordination, logistics, driving and office management.

## CAPACITY BUILDING

In its fight against poverty, FEMDEV organised several skill acquisition or capacity building training for men and women on:



### 1. Development training

- Six persons were trained on communication for behavioural change (BCC) in the fight against HIV and AIDS organized by Geneva Global in 2010.
- Twenty-five women were trained on how to do Prevention program against HIV and Aids, counselling and voluntary counselling and testing (VCT) in 2010. Subsequently, 10 women held sensitization campaign in Samo and Yaou, in Sud Comoe region and impacted over 50 people who accepted to do their tests to know their HIV status.
- A 6-month finance training on Accounting was done in FEMDEV office for the treasurer, the assistant treasurer and internal auditor.
- Ten women were trained in 2010 on how to provide care and support to prisoners in collaboration with Prison Fellowship International. Subsequently, more than 10 psychosocial visits with relief materials, clothes and books were made to the prisoners in Grand-Bassam and Adzope. Other visits were made in 2011 and 2014 in the Abidjan prison known as MACA.
- Two members of FEMDEV were trained on environmental care by TEAR Fund-UK in September 2011 and on Community mobilization against poverty in January 2012.



Three women including two out-of-school girls were trained in Computer (Word and Excel) in December 2011.

### 2. Income generating activities

- soap making

- tie & die
- beads making
- fish farming
- chicken raising

Several members participated in fish farming training in collaboration with Life Touch International on January 5-7, 2012, with the aim of helping people establish their own fish farms. But due to extreme poverty and lack of funding in FEMDEV, none of the participants was able to start a fish farm.

- Eight people were trained on poultry farming in October 15-18, 2012 with the aim of helping them establish their own poultry farms. Participants are aspiring to get sponsorship to enable them to start their own poultry farms.



FEMDEV has organised more than 60 capacity building seminars for women, men and out-of-school youth on humanitarian work and sustainable development. This includes life skill education, round table discussions on health/hygiene/environment, confidence building, outreaches to orphans and widows and literacy programs. Several

people can now read and write.

### 3. VISIT TO ORPHANAGES

Below is a visit on August 2, 2014 to an orphanage in Yopougon in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire that



houses 58 children out of which 33 of them are handicapped. FEMDEV's founding president celebrated her birthday with the kids and used the occasion to present gifts to the director of the orphanage. We ate a hot lunch donated by one of FEMDEV partners. That day alone, the orphanage received cartons of soft drinks, detergents, washing liquids, biscuits and many other things donated by friends and partners of FEMDEV. It was a treat for the workers who also ate

and drank with us but the kids enjoyed dancing with Micky Mouse and the celebrant herself. During our visit around the premises, we noted many dilapidated sections that need repairs, so we went away with a challenge to go back there and assist them with repairs. Other orphanages visited in Cote d'Ivoire include Dabou orphanage for handicapped children, pouponnerie Marie Therese Houphouet boigny, Orphelinat des garçons in Bingerville.

#### **4. VISIT TO PRISONS**

FEMDEV gets a permanent permit or “Laissez passer” yearly from the government ministry of Justice to enable us to enlarge our intervention in the prisons towards their social integration when they are released.

Our 12<sup>th</sup> visit to both the prison in Grand Bassam and the one in Yopougon took place in June 19, 2014 . This visit opened our eyes to the many needs of the prisoners. Thousands of these men and women are affected by hunger, psychological and health problems. Many are getting out of control for the prison workers to the extent that they can pounce on visitors and snatch their handbags if they are not well guarded. They all looked very emaciated and very hungry. Our team listened to the leaders who shared with us their greatest challenges and needs which include food, soap and slippers, among other things. We see a great need of rehabilitating the prisoners by training them on different types of skills such as computer, sewing and carpentry, among other things. These training can help them create income-generating projects after their reinsertion into the society.

Between 2015 to 2017, we made several visits to MACA prison in Yopougon with usual supplies of food and clothes to them. We installed a Christian TV station for their entertainment and spiritual nourishment.

In December 2018, FEMDEV, in collaboration with House of Restoration, Cote d'Ivoire installed a 260 strong Christian library worth more than 500.000 Francs CFA at MACA prison.

#### **5. Scholarship program**

Despite limited resources, FEMDEV started a scholarship program to support orphans and children of single parents who are quite many in Cote d'Ivoire. They have a right to education. A 15-year orphan benefited from this scheme in 2011. She was abandoned by her father after her mother became sick of epilepsy and later died. She received scholarship to do tailoring. Various youth of single parents and widows used to come to FEMDEV to collect school fees for their children's education. In 2010 and 2012, one out-of-school youth and one woman were sponsored to learn driving while two girls received school fees for their education. This program is was temporarily discontinued due to limited resources.





A group of girls in Abidjan were trained in hair dressing for 3 years and they now work in different establishments or their own hair dressing salons. One of them, Martine by name (3<sup>rd</sup> from left or right) was sent to another school in another part of Abidjan by the founding president of femdev. Today, she is manager of her own hair dressing salon in a place called Abobo, Abidjan.

. WIDOWS FORUM: Every year, Femdev organises a widows luncheon to which more than 40 widows are invited and served hot meals. Each widow went away with a gift of at least 5 kilos of rice or six yards of African wax.

### TESTIMONIALS FROM SOME BENEFICIARIES



Hortense, a widow that frequented FEMDEV to receive food and financial assistance lost an eye during an accident. Femdev helped her to buy and fix an artificial eye and also assisted her with clothes and food items as well as funds to begin income generating activity. Her children are in need of scholarship to complete their education. Through our partner, New Life Project, Canada partial scholarship was provided for the 18-year-old

daughter of this widow.



FEMDEV assisted Ms Hortense Koffi, (left) a single lady, with clothes and food items as well as funds to boost her income generating activity and rent.

FEMDEV assisted Nanan Aya, (right) a widow with seven children, with funds to boost her income generating activity. She now sells

clothes to take care of her children's school fees and her rent.



FEMDEV assisted Ms Sara Esme, a single mother with funds donated by New Life Project to boost her income generating activity. She sells food derivation from cassava known as Atieke, a very important staple food in Cote d'Ivoire. The funds given to her enabled her to purchase a fridge that enables her to conserve her goods. Her business has grown steadily ever since she got the grant.



Christianne, a young widow with three children lost her husband suddenly and life became difficult for her and the children. Due to lack of money to pay rent, she was forced to move to her mother-in-laws house with the children. But life was unbearable for her there. She managed a chicken roasting income generating business with assistance from FEMDEV. Her children fell sick very often due to the crowded family and negative relationship within the house. She felt it was time for her to move out and be in her own house. She used up all her capital to pay part of her rent and FEMDEV gave her part of the needed funds to get a small apartment where the children are healthy and happy. Christine has approached FEMDEV recently about her need to start another income generating project but due to financial challenges at Femdev, that need was not met.

#### **WAY FORWARD IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS**

- Prepare a 5- year strategic development plan for Femdev
- Encourage citizens of other countries to register FEMDEV in other west African countries and collaborate with other established partners to alleviate poverty and diseases especially among women and youth in pursuance of Millennium Development Goals (MDG);
- Build a training centre in Abidjan as well conduct leadership training in sustainable development for women and youth leaders from various NGOs;
- Continue to support communities in building nursery schools in places where the government has not built schools starting with the region of Grand Lahou.
- Promote “health for all” in schools, communities and markets through establishing socio-medical and listening centres to fight diseases and drug addiction among the vulnerable youth in collaboration with Teen challenge Cote d'Ivoire;
- Promote yearly mobile clinics through mobilizing medical personnel to donate their time and expertise in providing free consultations during mobile clinics.
- Promote radio campaigns on “strong families, healthy nation” to curb the problem of too many unwed mothers and children out of wedlock thereby creating disenfranchised homes in the community.

### **OUR IMMEDIATE NEEDS INCLUDE:**

- 5 computers and 2 printers
- 1 photocopier
- 1 vehicle (4 x 4 or a 14-seater van for missions)
- Literacy materials for our literacy programs
- Motorcycles for peer educators
- Clothes, shoes and cleaning agents for the orphanages
- School kits for school going children
- Books and Bibles for community libraries and listening centres
- Food kits (imperishable food items) for the less privileged people, orphans, prisoners and widows

### **CONTACT PERSON**

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