

## Report: Staff Strategic Planning Meeting

### Lifelong Vocational Skills and Financial Literacy Project

at Sisofo Guest House

5 August 2014



Present: Mr. Shaka Ceesay, Mr. Bakary B. Dabor, Mr. James Moriwa, Ms. Vanessa Fischer, Ms. Frida Groll

#### Project Overview

The meeting was held on 5 August to give an overview of the project, talk about the progress of planning and discuss open questions. The meeting was opened by Mr Shaka Ceesay who outlined the agenda for the day. Following, an overview of the project was given guided by the project proposal.



The project will directly benefit 25 women, though it is hoped that indirect beneficiaries will extend that number. It consists in trainings in tie and dye (African colouring clothes), tailoring and financial literacy and is scheduled for a period of six months. For this time period the project is funded by VGIF (Virginia Gildersleeve International Fund) with the amount of 7445 USD. After those

six months the project is hoped to become self-sustainable and carry on, benefitting more women. Some ideas include building partnerships with hotels, restaurants and schools. School uniforms and bedding or tablecloths could be manufactured by the women and the project sustained through the thereby generated income.

The effects of the project should consist in self reliant and economically independent women who have the skills to build up their own businesses and thereby create job opportunities for others and serve as examples for their community. Furthermore the project should be explorative and investigative in nature, seeing how similar projects can impact communities. It is also seen to be a chance for building networks among civil society organizations who are engaged in similar projects.

Currently 25 women have already been selected, while it was reported that there are many more women interested in participating. At some stage during the training process it is planned to create two women associations that will compete among each other.

### **Project administration**

In terms of administrating the project it was agreed that everyone is an administrator and coordinator since no person is paid for the coordination of the project. Every Friday there will be update meetings or reports so as to make sure everyone has the same information about the progress of the project. The ones not directly involved in the project implementation serve as a stand-by force and share roles and responsibilities.

To simplify the documentation of financial expenditures there will be vouchers that carry the logos of CI and the funder (VGIF). CI should be constantly updated on expenditures.

The project will continuously be documented on CI's Facebook page and through oral presentations. At the end of the six months an all encompassing project report will be circulated.

Monitoring and evaluation of the project will be carried out by CI staff through regular visits of the training sessions and selective interviews, focus group discussions and questionnaires. Progress indicators are to be evaluated by the participants themselves during the orientation meeting to involve everyone in the process and make it more participatory in nature.

### **Possible challenges and opportunities**

In a next step it was talked about challenges and opportunities of the project and how to meet them. As opportunities and strengths the following were identified.

1. staff and volunteers available to do the work
2. finance and resources to run the project
3. mobilization
4. partnership
5. clear agenda

The possible threats and challenges included the raining season. It was suggested to prepare for this challenge distributing umbrellas to the participants. Another possible threat consists in time constraints that the participants as well as the staff members might have. It was agreed to care for this through a flexible timetable that accommodates different schedules and through time consciousness among the staff members. It was also said to ask the participants about their responsibilities and their preferences in terms of time for the workshops. The idea at the moment is to schedule trainings on three days per week for two or three hours each day. The details have to be discussed among the trainers and participants. A further challenge is posed by the possible absence of electricity. This should be prepared for buying two manual as well as two automated sewing machines and three electrical as well as three coal irons. The last imagined threat was seen in unforeseen expenses. The approach to meet this challenge is to come up with a strategy to approach other, local funders so as to not delay the project.

### **The way forward**

In the last part of the meeting a way forward was outlined and the different steps were prioritized. The first priority was the signing of the MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) with Mr. Alaji Adama Bahoum, the councilor of Bakau–New Town which still happened the same day.

The next step is the procurement of materials, which also started the same day. The painting of the venue is to take place on the 6 of August. A meeting between all the trainers should be scheduled to coordinate the



training plans and discuss how much time will be needed for each training. After that a detailed timetable and manual guides will have to be mapped out.

As soon as all the preparations are completed the orientation with the participants and the official opening ceremony can be scheduled. During the opening ceremony uniform T-Shirts will be handed out. As this expense is not planned for in the proposal, funding for the T-Shirts will be organized by Vanessa and Frida. Due to a delay in the project schedule trainings will have to start as soon as possible.

## Annex 1- procurement list

- locks for doors
- glass to fix the doors
- banner for launching ceremony
- chairs for ceremony
- aprons, maybe from khaki material
- T-Shirts
- 3 electrical irons, 3 coal irons
- 2 automated, 2 mechanical sewing machines
- umbrellas
- table
- bail of bazir
- Drum Sodium Hydrosulphate
- Caustic Soda
- powdered dye
- firewood
- hand gloves
- packet clips
- nose masks
- packets of thread
- packets of needles
- empty metal drums
- sticks to tappa
- stationery
- training manuals

## Annex 2- contact details

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