

## BENIN ACTIVITY REPORT

Q2, 2015

### A. OVERVIEW

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **Epicenters partnership reinforcement with sanitary zones – Sanitary Zones** (Zogbodomey, Zakpota, Aplahoué, Klouékanmè, Nikki, Djougou, Dali, Tchaourou and Savalou) and **Social advancement Centers – centre de promotion social-**



THP-Benin Country Director Pascal Djohossou presenting a distinction award to the Health Centers Coordinator of Tchaourou sanitary zone

(Adjohoun, Djakotomey, Athiémé, Aplahoué, Klouékanmè, Dassa,

Zakpota and Zogbodomey) for (I) a better management of Health units and (II) a better management of nutritional and sanitary follow-up activities

- **Health Units operation and management reinforcement:** (I) recruitment of two (02) qualified nurses for Ouissi and Guinagourou health units, (II) assignment of a contract state nurse by the sanitary zone of Klouékanmè (remunerated by the government) to the health unit of Klouékanmè's epicenter and (III) set up and training of Guinagourou epicenter Health Management Body
- **Leadership exercise reinforcement in 07 epicenters** (Kissamey, Avlamè, Akpadanou, Dasso, Zakpota, Bétérou and Guinagourou): a total of 4451 people including 2845 women were directly impacted by these leadership reinforcement sessions. About 2000 others were indirectly impacted.

- **Support to soya producers with certified seeds in the epicenters of Avlamè and Lahotan**

A total of 2 000 kg of certified soybeans were placed at the disposal of the epicenters' producers of Avlamè and Lahotan under credit input form. They are 39 producers (including 13 women) in Avlamè and 567 women members of 07 groups + 02 men in Lahotan

- **Training of the farmers in improved technique of soya beans production at Avlamè epicenter:** a total of 57 soya producers from the 07 villages of the epicenter were formed on this technique by FUPRO - Benin (Benin Union Federation of Producers) which undertook to have adopted at a larger scale a technology developed by FSA (Faculty of Agricultural Sciences of Abomey-Calavi University) called "inoculation".

A demonstration site was installed by village, meaning on the whole 08 sites with a 0.5 hectares surface each one. On each site, the technique is applied to 0.25 ha and the second half serves for the local practice which is used as proof. The aim of this practice is on the one hand to train in a practical way the producers and on the other hand to be able to have comparative data to evaluate the performances of the inoculation.

- **Set up of young entrepreneurs clubs in Secondary schools in Kissamey, Akpadanou and Wawata epicenters** with the purpose to promote entrepreneurial activities of youth to contribute to their financial empowerment. A total of 740 young people including 453 boys and 287 girls participated in these entrepreneurs'



Group photo of attendees of the youth training session on entrepreneurship at Daringa epicenter

clubs.

- **Organization of the 4th edition of the Three Moringa Tree (TMT) Days Campaign activities:** This year the TMT Days involved:
  - 16 local and international partners including Dutch Embassy, ICCO, Plan International Benin, Care Benin/Togo, BORNEFonden, BUPDOS (Benin Office of Development Projects and Social Work), Partners for Development...,
  - Some official services and institutions mainly DANA (Direction de l'Alimentation et de la Nutrition Appliquée) and the UAC (Université d'Abomey-Calavi) which inputs are valuable for the success of the campaign. In addition, we have a great mobilization and a strong implication of the communities' partners of the epicenters who has planned to plant more than 40 000 seedlings in 13 epicenters (Kissamey, Dékpo, Gohomey, Klouékanmè, Kpinnou, Akpadanou, Wawata, Dasso, Lahotan, Zakpota, Ouissi, Avlamè and Tré). Many other partners have planned also to provide seedlings for planting operation in their respective intervention areas.
- **Participation of 02 enterprises managed by partners of Wawata and Tré epicenters in the multi sectorial and international fair of Ouagadougou from May, the 28<sup>th</sup> to June, the 7<sup>th</sup> of 2015.**

This intends to improve THP-Benin visibility and help enterprises to promote their products.

- **Reinforcement of capacities of community partners of the epicenters of Zakpota and Dasso** on literacy: a total of 540 people (including 418 women) in Zakpota and of 210 (among which 158 women) in Dasso actually followed the courses this quarter.

▪ **Advocacy toward local and political authorities in 15 epicenters of THP-Benin**



Awareness raising session on women's rights at Ouissi epicenter

on the issue of women and youth engagement in politics decision making in their locality. Fruitful dialogues from the advocacy actions drove to a solid engagement from political and local leaders to support women and youth to access to

political decision making bodies. 940 people (including 124 women) participated in these dialogues.

With the purpose to reinforce the capacities of women and youth in governance, two (02) learning visits were organized to support women and young leaders of the epicenters. They were potential candidates of local elections and eligible on decision making position. These visits took place:

- in Bohicon town hall for the southern epicenters (Kpinnou, Gohomey, Dékpo, Kissamey, Klouékanmè, Avlamè, Zakpota, Akpadanou and of Wawata)
- and (II) in Parakou Town hall for the central and northern epicenters (Tré, Ouissi, Daringa, Bétérou, Gbé gourou and of Guinagourou).

▪ ***Production of radio and television broadcasts in local***



Local authorities participating in awareness raising session on women's rights at Daringa epicenter

*languages*, A total of fifteen (15) broadcasts were carried out on local radios to impact community partners in different epicenters (Akpadanou, Avlamè, Bétérou, Daringa, Dékpo, Gbé gourou, Guinagourou, Gohomey, Kissamey, Klouékanmè, Kpinnou, Ouissi, Tré, Wawata, Zakpota). The themes developed during women trainings were used as basis for the radio broadcast. These issues carried out with trained women and their husband/neighbor was broadcast on the days and dates chosen by and with the population's partners of the epicenters.

Apart from local radio broadcast, two (02) television debates were also carried out in two channels:

The first was a live on ORTB (Office des Radios et Television du Benin) on Wednesday, June 24, 2015 (around 10 and 11pm) and focused on the theme "women and youth participation in decision making bodies and governance in Benin: actors express themselves". Five people including His Excellency the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Netherlands in Benin and THP-Benin National Director participated in.

The second one was realized (on Friday, June 26, 2015) on a private television channel CANAL3 broadcast on July 1st, 2015 between 9 and 10pm. The theme is "Youth participation in decision-making bodies and governance in Benin: actors express themselves" .Four guests including 02 representatives of THP- Benin participated in the aforementioned debate. The other participants were representatives of PASCIB (Plateform of Stakeholders in Civil Society in Benin) and PFID (Platform for the Participation of Women in Instances of Decision Making).

▪ **External quality assessment in the epicenter of Bétérou. This study involved independent consultants and supported by THP Netherlands, the THP Global Office and THP-Benin. It** was mainly conducted by Dutch and Burkinabe Consultants. The study used the working method called "PADEV method" and consisted in a qualitative assessment of major changes in the locality

of Bétérou over the past 10 years and especially the identification of key interventions and donors who have induced changes noted. To do this, it was organized 02 workshops with different groups (youth, men, women, local leaders and members of the epicenter management bodies). They were randomly selected within the partner community to the epicenter of Bétérou. A separate workshop was organized with similar groups in village which is not Hunger Project partner (Village of the borough Alafiarou).

The aim of this study was to see whether the changes noted in Bétérou community were induced by the programs implemented by THP-Benin and to collect the appreciation/ perception of the community on different institutions (Government and other development structures) which intervene in their locality.

### **CHALLENGES**



Workshop with leaders of the sanitary zones that worked with THP-Benin

While implementing the Program activities THP-Benin took up some challenges which are summarized hereafter:

- Health and Nutrition Program challenge was to bring together the sanitary zones coordinating doctors

(coordonnateurs de zones sanitaires) involved in the follow-up of health

units, the Ministry of Health, and THP-Benin. The holding of this activity could not be predicted in advance regarding the various professional schedules of participants.

- WEP program main challenge during this quarter was the implementation in time of all activities planned under the Project / Component «women and young leadership & governance in the epicenters of THP -Benin ". Those activities could not be implemented without the involvement of youth and partners (PASCIB-PFID)
- Finally the cooperation of donor families and the availability of competent authorities have been acquired and the process is being launched to obtain in time a land title to permanently secure the land assets of the epicenters of Kissamey, Avlamè and Bétérou (those targeted to reach the self-reliance status in 2016). This was not obvious because of the political and administrative contingencies of the country (electoral period).

### INNOVATIONS

- One of the innovations during this quarter regarding Health and Nutrition Program was the assignment of a governmental health agent for the health unit of Klouékanmè epicenter, as issued by the DDS (Departmental Authority of Health) Mono-Couffo. This success was effective thanks to the incessant advocacy of THP Benin toward the Sanitary Zones and DDS.

The second innovation relates to the use of mobile phones to collect demands from epicenters partners regarding their needs in seedlings for the 4th edition of the TMT Days under preparation. Youth were involved in implementing this mechanism of collecting demands which was benefic in terms of less time and cost devoted to it. The innovation on Social mobilization and education program was the initiative to train students during their holidays in the epicenters of Kissamey, Avlamè and Bétérou to better promote a literate environment in these epicenters. As stated above, this initiative has two (02) specific objectives which are:

- students are mentored to produce texts of different literacy sorts to select and edit for local languages promotion;
- students, (daughters and sons of neo-literate members) are able to communicate with their parents in local language in order to induce communication through writing between parents living in the villages and students who have moved to town

## **B. LESSON LEARNED**

One of the lessons learned by THP-Benin in this quarter was again the importance of organizing discussion sessions between actors involved in the same fields of activity to share and to pioneer ways to work in synergy and to use efficiently available resources. This was stressed by the discussion workshop with Health Ministry, sanitary zones and Hunger Project Benin. Indeed, it is during this workshop that the majority of the sanitary zones understood their roles and took consequent actions to support health units toward self-reliance status.

Moreover, the series of actions that led to successfully plant Moringa plants in the epicenters, helped to note two important lessons:

- Use of mobile with the youth engagement could be extended to other programs/actions taking into account the results that we got from TMT Days preparation with village partners' demands collection. Indeed, the use of mobile phone (message and / or call) by committees of young people during the relay points of the requirements in seedlings by epicenter, made it possible to apprehend the importance of this tool (portable) in the context of Community Development through its quick and instantaneous nature to serve for the record. Furthermore, maximizing time and hence efficiency and effectiveness.

## **C. ADVOCACY & ALLIANCES**



▪ **THP-Benin Participation in the workshop on the stakes and challenges of nutrition on the economic growth**

A workshop was held on June 2, 2015, and was organized at INFOSEC by a platform named Agriprofocus Benin on the issues and challenges of nutrition on economic growth. About thirty platform's members participated in this workshop, dedicated to foster exchanges between stakeholders on the issues and challenges of nutrition on the level of economic growth. The workshop is also dedicated to induce a more heightened interest of Civil Society Organizations and decision makers for more synergistic actions on food and nutritional security of households in Benin. Two communications were presented: (i) information on the nutritional and food situation in Benin and the ongoing reforms at the institutional level (ii) the concept of "window of opportunity in 1000 first days of life". The second was presented by The Hunger Project Benin. After the presentations, experiences sharing allowed us to have more information on the various actions taken in Benin related to nutrition, Agriprofocus platform and to nutritional actors.

The recommendations from the workshop are as follow:

- Diversify these kinds of workshop very enriching and involve more actors in the field and decision makers who can give further impulses to the actions already undertaken;
- Organize fairs on positive deviances foods ;
- Publish communications on Agriprofocus Benin website.

▪ **THP-Benin preliminary meeting participation for the launching of the 4th edition of moringa campaign**

While preparing the 4th edition of Moringa campaign launching, two preliminary meetings took place on 17<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2015. Many institutions participated in these meetings namely: FAO, CRS, Agriprofocus, BORNEFonden, Terre des

Hommes, DANA, FSA, PASCIB, Bioversity International, Partners For Development, CARE Togo/Benin, Peace Corps, BUBDOS, FUPRO.... The aim of these meetings was to share the road map of the campaign and to get inputs from the various partners who have agreed to work closely in synergy to promote Moringa on the arena of partners who aim to eradicate malnutrition in Benin.

During the meetings, representatives of the organizations mentioned above committed themselves to participate in the implementation of some activities in their respective intervention area. The launching campaign is planned for next quarter.

### **THP-Benin's participation in a communication training workshop**

The Food Security Program Officer attended a capacity building workshop from 15 to 17 June 2015 in Ouagadougou. The goal of this training was to share with participants, good practices, tools and resources necessary for communication to achieve the objective of improving the visibility of The Hunger Project. The various themes developed are:

- The importance of communication;
  - The definition of communication objectives;
  - Analysis of targets audiences;
  - Communication channels;
  - Development of a communication plan
- **THP-Benin participation in the National Forum on First 1000 days of life: the challenges of chronic malnutrition in Benin**

The forum was organized by (CAN) “National Council of Food and Nutrition” and was held from 11 to 13 June 2015 at “Palais des Congres”, Cotonou with the support of some United Nations Agencies (UNICEF, FAO, WFP, WHO) and the World Bank. It was designed to be a



A young woman and a small child receive health consultation at the clinic in Wawata epicenter

melting pot on ongoing actions and should lead to consensual main interventions that could accelerate the process of improving the nutritional status of women and children in Benin in order to achieve the objectives for sustainable development, specifically, the global targets by 2030. In terms of goals, the forum aimed at:

- Making a high national leverage advocacy on nutrition in general and especially for the eradication of chronic hunger;
- bringing up to date for SUN Benin, a common framework of results for the fight against chronic malnutrition;
- Working out a common framework of follow-up & evaluation for the attack of the world target of chronic malnutrition.

The main acquired points from this forum are:

- a better awareness of the situation of stunting growth in Benin and its impacts on sustainable development;
- a good knowledge of world engagements (CNI2, 2014) and regional engagement (Malabo’s declaration on the eradication of hunger and malnutrition and the initiative of zero hunger of CEDEAO),

- an awakening of the multi sectorial of stunting growth, the contribution of various sectors, opportunities and challenges in the implementation of the interventions in the various fields,
- an outline of a common framework of results and follow-up evaluation for the attack of the world target of chronic malnutrition.

▪ **Participation in the workshop of support to the dynamism of Early Warning System (EWS) of Benin**

The national workshop on “**enhancement and dynamism of Early Warning System (EWS)**” of Benin was held on May 28th and 29th 2015, in Sun Beach Hotel, Cotonou. It was organized by the National Office for Food Security (ONASA) with the support of the CILSS (Comité permanent inter-État de lutte contre la sécheresse au Sahel). The overall objective of the meeting is to support the implementation process of an operational EWS, able to provide useful information in time for better decision making.

In a specific way, it was about:

- Exchanging on the operation of EWS’ Benin and identify constraints to its operationalization;
- Establishing a diagnosis of the existing information systems in Benin in connection with the EWS;
- Developing indicators for early warning on food and nutrition insecurity;
- Establishing a consensual roadmap for EWS revitalization process.

Were Present at the workshop, representatives of technical departments under the authority of Ministry in charge of Agriculture and the one in charge of Water. Among the other participants, we could mention farmers’ organizations, NGOs, National

Institute for Statistics, and technical and financial partners (FAO, PAM) and the Media.

At the end of the workshop enriched with communications, discussions and work group, a number of actions were selected. May especially be mentioned:

- Taking of a draft ordinance on the establishment, responsibilities, organization and functioning of the EWS;
  - Organizing a workshop on the anchor issue and the financing of EWS Benin involving key actors;
  - Getting the support from technical and financial partners (PAM, FAO, CILSS ...) EWS for its operability
  - Improving the quality of data needed for the EWS' operation
- **Participation of the Youth program Officer on a dining session in the Dutch Ambassador residence on May 29<sup>th</sup>.**

This dining session gathered two young Dutch, ambassadors of the project “Building Bridges” and young Beninese leaders. The aim of this session is to raise awareness among youth leaders, the widening gap for actions undertaken by youth in North compared to those undertaken by youth in the South. For this purpose, youth from the North and the South are called to work together to fill the gap in order to contribute to development in Africa. It is then required to act courageously as the two young Dutch who came from Amsterdam to Benin, cycling. These two young people carried messages for their African brothers asking them to come together in order to overcome poverty and other problems that undermine Africa. In addition, the leitmotif of the meeting was to work for a shared vision in active solidarity.

At the end of the dinner, commitments have been made by young leaders from Benin who promises with great enthusiasm to work in order to bring Africa from rut and especially Benin. To attain this goal, young people are called to be role model and

have a proven leadership to reverse the trend of fraud, disrespect, etc. because future depends on the quality of today's youth.

- **Participation of Zone Centre Officer** in a preparative meeting on April 24 for the constitution of a Regional Offices platform for International NGOs based in Bohicon. The key issue of this meeting was the need to get together to optimize resources especially in the areas of joint intervention. It was decided at the end of this session that discussions will continue in an upcoming meeting. Date and venue are to be determined.
- **Participation of 02 enterprises assisted by THP-Benin** Multi sectorial International Fair of Ouagadougou held from 28 May to 7 June 2014 in the framework of the partnership developed by THP-Benin with institutions involved in the promotion of entrepreneurship in Benin. In this context, a memorandum of agreement was signed between THP- Benin and FNPEEJ.
- **Participation of THP-Benin in a retraining session on gender organized by the Royal Embassy of the Netherlands for of its team and partner institutions for better integrating gender into their projects / Food security programs.**

This session took place from 22 to 24 April 2015 in the premises of the Embassy in Cotonou. 18 participants (s) were presents; 09 women and 09 men. 02 participants (s) from THP-Benin: WEP program officer and food security program officer attended this session.

It is expected from the participant (s) at the end of the session better capacities to analyze and appreciate the inclusion of gender as well as the direct and indirect effects of the interventions on gender relations in funded programs. Moreover, they will be able to explain and identify different approaches and gender mainstreaming strategies in their respective projects. This session was particularly dimmed on gender concepts, gender analysis tools and gender strategies. The workshop was concluded with a final assessment and the provision of links for further capacity building.

## E. HUMAN RESOURCES & TRAVEL

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|--|---|
| <p><b>Staff Exchanges</b></p> <p><i>Please list any arrivals and departures and has brief</i></p>  | <p>None</p>   |
| <p><b>Extended Absences</b></p> <p><i>Please list the Senior TEAM Management's vacation dates, as well as any other staff members' length-term</i></p> | <p>None</p>   |
| <p><b>Development staff</b></p> <p><i>Please list any staff member trainings and professional</i></p>  | <p>Training of the Food Security Program Officer on Communication in Ouagadougou from 14 to 18 June 2015</p>  |
| <p><b>Epicenter Visits</b></p> <p><i>Please list the epicenters and the number of staff visits in brackets next to them.</i></p>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Akpadanou (18)</li> <li>• Avlamè (18)</li> <li>• Bétérou (13)</li> <li>• Daringa (09)</li> <li>• Dékpo (09)</li> <li>• Gbégourou (11)</li> <li>• Guinagourou (10)</li> <li>• Tré (21)</li> </ul> |

## F. Next Quarter Priorities

- Strengthen the capacity of farmers to be better prepared to face climate change effects and to improve agricultural yields;
- Strengthen WASH intervention through capacities building of facilitators in prioritized epicenters (Kissamey, Avlamè and Bétérou);
- Equip and make fully functional nutritional unit of Gohomey epicenter as well as Dasso, Wawata and Adjido (Zakpota) health units;
- Organize the International Youth Day 2015 in collaboration with ABPF (Agence Béninoise pour la Promotion Familiale);
- Train young entrepreneurs on trade negotiation skills and marketing;
- Support status formalization of the prioritized epicenters (those targeted to reach self-reliance in 2016);
- Continue capacity building on “role models mums’ clubs”(clubs des mamans modèles) in prioritized epicenters;
- Write and publish an article summarizing THP Benin's experiences in financing value chains and innovative strategy for the financing of agriculture in Benin;
- Achieve the collection phase of the evaluation of outcomes data in Akpadanou, Dékpo and Ouissi. Epicenters.
- Launch and run the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of Three Moringa Tree Days Campaign.