

LETTER FROM THE HUNGER PROJECT – BENIN

Dear Partners, Investors and Friends from the Netherlands,

I'm thrilled to share this brief update on some recent achievements on the ground, in the epicenters.

The Moringa campaign, one of our initiative which brought many stakeholders in went successfully. This year, the campaign was launched on July 4th, 2014 at Akpadanou Epicenter. Involved stakeholders are the National Council for Nutrition (CAN), International NGOs namely Care, Plan, National Association of Farmers (FUPRO), the National Alliance of Benin Communes (ANCB) and many other national NGOs. The focus was again, as last year, on promoting Moringa to take advantage of the 1000 days' window of opportunity. In the long run, one of the specific aspects to be mentioned in the link with the campaign this year is to promote business around Moringa. A study on the Value Chain of Moringa will be implemented on the fourth quarter this year and the results of the study will be made available for entrepreneurs who have the will to more value Moringa products and particularly the leaves' powder. Fair & Sustainable Advisory Services (FSAS), Interchurch Organization for Development cooperation (ICCO), the Dutch Embassy and The Hunger Project Benin are partners in co-funding the study.

Tackling another subject, let's talk about the contract farming experience that The Hunger Project Benin has experienced on the cashew value chain. An agreement aiming to facilitate access to credits to farmers who committed themselves to deliver cashew nuts to a Dutch company firm called Afokantan Genese Business (AGB) was signed in the fourth quarter last year. The Hunger Project Benin has been involved through the Microfinance Program via the rural bank of Tre epicenter located in Dassa. The other partners involved in that experience are SNV who has the role to build Business to Business relationship, CRADIB and URPAZ/C (Zou and Collines Regional Association of cashew Producers) who play the role of mobilizing producers. The experience has been successful for:

- The Hunger Project in terms of rate of reimbursement to the rural bank (100%)
- AGB who got delivered 163 tons of cashew nuts
- SNV which created and facilitated Business to Business (B2B) contact
- Producers who could maintain nine hundred (900) hectare of plantations and obtain the best yield and sold the nuts at a profitable price.

Let's come to the challenges to be taken up relating to the epicenters' self-reliance status. In that regard, one of the most important issue is the epicenters own financial resources available to run different activities once The Hunger Project will step back. Up till now, about FCFA 25 million (about euros 38.000) is available for the epicenters for that purpose. This is part of the trend of progress which make us confident to bring three epicenters (Kissamey, Avlamè and Beterou) to self-reliance status in 2016.

The resource mobilization is not a challenge only at the epicenter level. We are aware, as national office that our effort in that direction should lead to more significant results. We are now appealing to the National Advisory Council members to be more involved than in the past in searching of funding opportunities and doors opening.

I'll report on any progress on those fields at anytime need be.

Kind regards to you all,

Pascal
Country Director The Hunger Project Benin