The project was initiated to capacitate the unemployed youth, women and persons with disability (PWDs) in the Asutifi North District (ANDA) to operate their own enterprises. Unemployment is high in the District which has a population of 62,453, out of which 33.95% are youth, 51% are women and 1200 are PWDs.

The situation was worsened when over 2,992 hectares of farm lands in the District was acquired by Newmont Gold Mining Company for commercial mining purposes. Farmers, who make up 77.4% of the population lost their vocation and were rendered jobless.
With most of the youth in the area only having basic education qualification, they could not get employment with the mining company to support their families because they did not have the needed qualification. Poverty is high in the district, thereby, causing the youth to migrate into the cities to seek employment opportunities.

**Project Objectives**

The project seeks to harness local resources, knowledge, ideas, skills, and other comparative advantages to stimulate local economic growth and development with the aim of creating self-employment and job opportunities, reducing poverty, stemming internal migration, and promoting sustainable and inclusive development.

**Target Group**

The project aims to build capacity of 45 Women, youth (18-35 years) and Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), by providing them with entrepreneurial skills, and support them with seed capital to start their own enterprises. The 45 beneficiaries will be selected from the three zonal councils (Kenyais No.1, Kenyasi No.2, and Nototroso) who have been adversely affected by the mining operations in the district.

**Implemented Activities**

**Partners Meeting with the EU**

The EU organized a meeting for all project awardees and their project partners at the Round House, Accra, on February 13th, 2019.

The meeting sought to discuss and share ideas on project implementation strategies and best practices. CDD-Ghana and its partner, the Asutifi North District Assembly were represented by 3 people, one from the Asutifi North District Assembly, Mr. Kwaku Kyeremeh Ampaabeng, the District Budget Analyst, and two from CDD-Ghana, Ms Rahmat Ainoo, the Budget Analyst and Nana Kwabena Aborampah Mensah, Team Leader, Local and Urban Governance. Members shared briefs of the focus of their projects, aims and objectives and expected outcomes.

**Introductory and Buy-in Meetings with Stakeholders at the District**

Nana Kwabena Aborampah Mensah, Project Team Leader, and Mr. Johnson Oussale, CDD-Ghana's Video and Photographer visited the project district, Asutifi North District Assembly (ANDA) between February 18th 2019 and February 21st 2019.
To hold inception meeting with the leadership of the district and other relevant stakeholders to introduce the project to them and to secure their buy-in and support for the project.

To pay visit to the project communities to interact with selected business people and entrepreneurs in the communities.

The team also visited to assess potential sites for the construction of the Skills Training Centres and interacted with the paramount chiefs of the three zonal councils. Meetings with the paramount chiefs sought to discuss the need for them to release land for the project.

About 34 people attended the inception meeting including representatives of the Ahafo Rural Bank, the District Police Command, CSOs, Newmont Ahafo Social Foundation, leadership of the district assembly, Nananom from the three paramountcies (Kenyasi No.1, Kenyasi No.2 and Ntotroso), leadership of youth and women groups in the district and PWD associations.

The visit sought to achieve two basic objectives;

- To hold inception meeting with the leadership of the district and other relevant stakeholders to introduce the project to them and to secure their buy-in and support for the project.
- To pay visit to the project communities to interact with selected business people and entrepreneurs in the communities.

The visit sought to achieve two basic objectives;

- Signing of MoU with ANDA and GADeF

The project is being implemented by CDD-Ghana in collaboration with the ANDA. The GADeF, a local based CBO is supporting the project, with specific responsibility to facilitate meetings and support recruitment of Research Assistants for the baseline survey, and support monitoring of project activities at the district. CDD-Ghana developed and signed MoU separately with ANDA and also with GADeF. The MoU spells out clear functions and roles of each of the two institutions.
Project Baseline Survey

As part of the preparatory activities to gather information that will help design project strategies, baseline survey was conducted in 39 communities selected from the three zonal councils – K1, K2 and Ntotroso.

The survey instrument, which was quantitatively, sought to gather basic data on living conditions of the community people. It also asked questions on factors of migration, dominant vocation and availability of jobs, and also gathered basic demographic data of respondents. In all, 650 people were interviewed. The main focus of the instrument was to find out preferred skills set that the youth, women and the PWDs will like to learn as their vocation in case they had the opportunity to be trained. 16 Field Research Assistants (FRAs), selected from the three zonal councils were trained on the survey instrument on July 24th, 2019, and deployed in the field for between 5 and 7 days each. The FRAs comprised of 11 males and 5 females. The draft baseline report was subjected to validation with the chiefs, youth, women, PWDs and the district assembly staff at Kenyasi No.2, on 28th August, 2019.

Subsequently, CDD-Ghana contracts department developed and signed contracts with the two contractors who won the bids. The contract agreements were signed on January 29th 2020. The contractors were expected to finish with the project within six months upon signing the contract.

Next Steps

Below are activities expected to be undertaken from February 2020 to January 2021.

- Complete the construction of the “Skills and Enterprise Villages”
- Procure the training materials including the teaching and learning tools, and the workshop equipment
- Advertise, assess and select the 45 project beneficiaries
- Develop project training manuals
- Commence training of the 45 beneficiaries

Construction of “Skills and Enterprise Villages”

The project team launched the “Local Competitive Tendering” for qualified contractors to bid for the construction of the “Skills and Enterprise Villages”, which will be used as the project training centres. The Tender was opened on 3rd January 2020 and closed on 17th January 2020 at 10am. Two out of the four companies who applied for the contract were selected after assessment by the Tender Evaluation and Assessment Committee of the ANDA.
“The Support LED policy to reduce rural poverty, and youth migration to the cities” project is being funded by the European Union

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