



Uniting for a better future

Nayuchi Area Development Program in Malawi



A World Vision Australia Case Study



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What is an Area Development Program?

In the early 1990s, World Vision began employing Area Development Programs (ADPs) as the preferred approach to poverty reduction – as vehicles for child-focused, community-based development.

While it is difficult to define an ADP, they all have certain common characteristics.

They operate in contiguous geographical areas, large enough to have some micro-regional impact, yet small enough to make a major impact on selected communities. Initially implemented in rural areas, ADPs have been adapted to urban settings. Typically, an ADP may encompass a rural municipality or an urban district with a population of between 20,000 and 40,000 people.

ADP activities vary according to the context and the expressed needs of the community. They may focus on clean water, education, agriculture, preparing for natural disasters, health or leadership skills. Activities that enhance the community's ability to advocate for policy change are also often included.

One of the strengths of ADPs is their longevity. Unlike many development programs, ADPs typically run for 10 to 15 years. Before starting an ADP, World Vision staff will spend some two years working with the community to

identify their current capacity and their needs, and then together they will plan the most appropriate intervention. Progress towards meeting the ADP's goals is evaluated every five years, and its design and future is then reassessed.

ADPs are specifically designed to be sustainable. Community organisations, families and individuals share in project leadership and activities from the start. If the program is managed well, communities are equipped and motivated to continue in these roles when World Vision leaves.

Employing diverse funding sources for different ADP activities enhances World Vision's ability to fund these longer-term programs. Child sponsorship is the principal funding source. The community selects some 2,000 to 4,000 children to be sponsored, usually from the poorest families. Contributions from the sponsors of these children are pooled to fund activities that are designed to benefit children, families and the community for generations.

This publication documents the experiences in one such ADP to demonstrate World Vision's approach to addressing poverty and its causes. After introducing the local geographic and cultural context, the publication describes the way in which World Vision works and then provides examples of the results of that work.

Message from the National Director of World Vision Malawi

Several years ago, someone shared a story that I have never forgotten.

The story was about a very successful wheat farmer in the United States. He had a large farm and employed some 50 workers. The farmer and his wife had only one child, a 12-year-old boy.

One day, the daily routine on the farm was interrupted when the parents discovered that their boy had been missing for several hours. They asked all the workers to look for their missing son. Although they called out the boy's name and searched everywhere, the workers and the parents drew a blank. Everyone became more frantic as the minutes turned to hours and as the hours turned to days.

On day three, one of the workers suggested they literally comb through each of the six large and overgrown wheat plots on the farm, holding hands. Within an hour of adopting this new approach to the search, the group of searchers stumbled on the body of the boy, lying in a tall wheat plot. He had been bitten by a poisonous snake and died.

As this story replays in my mind, a few points stand out and some questions remain.

Firstly, it is good to recognise a need in time and share the need. Secondly, there is strength in numbers. The third point underlines the need to be strategic in responding to an issue.

Some questions remain: did the boy lie dying and waiting for help for some hours – or even a day? If the searchers had

decided to hold hands on the very first day could they have saved the boy's life?

Similarly, HIV and AIDS is a life and death issue that threatens to undo all the gains we have made in socio-economic development and all endeavours by governments and organisations like World Vision. What is "development" if the intended beneficiaries suffer and die in the face of this pandemic?

Given this, I am very pleased that World Vision Malawi has emerged as an organisation that took strategic action early and effectively checked the spread of the HIV and AIDS pandemic in Nayuchi ADP.

It is also heartening that over the past five years, solid indications of declining HIV infection trends have emerged in the area. This has been achieved, in part, by uniting Christians and Muslims to respond to this disease.

As with the wheat farmer's lesson, it is good to recognise a need in time and to share the need. Also, that there is strength in numbers.

This booklet describes the achievements of Nayuchi ADP and also highlights its ongoing needs. It challenges not only World Vision but all stakeholders – like the government – to continuously scale up the response to HIV and poverty, especially in rural areas like Nayuchi.

We need more than unity to deal with this pandemic. We literally need to hold hands to save people's lives.

Mulugeta Abebe
National Director World Vision Malawi

"World Vision Malawi has emerged as an organisation that took strategic action early and effectively checked the spread of the HIV and AIDS pandemic in Nayuchi ADP."



Machinga – a land of mixed blessings

“As with typical African societies, traditional dances and celebrations mark the initiation to adulthood.”

Nayuchi ADP is located in Machinga District, an area with 366,000 people in southern Malawi. It shares a border with Mozambique and is predominantly a farming community, growing crops like tobacco, rice, groundnuts, cassava, maize, sorghum and millet. Sixty percent of the community earn a living from subsistence farming, which leaves them little or no produce to sell. Fishing in the lakes is also an important source of income for some households. Maize and rice are the main staple grains.

The district's main water source is the Shire River, an outlet of Lake Malawi. Nearby, the creeks flow into Lake Chilwa and Lake Chiuta, which are recognised for their stunning biodiversity and are considered wetlands of international importance. They are separated by a range running from west to east. A road and a railway join the nearby town of Liwonde to the eastern seaport of Nacala in neighbouring Mozambique.

Diverse ethnic groups live in the Nayuchi area. The Yao and Lomwe, who originated from Mozambique, form the largest groups, and smaller groups include the Mang'anja, Chewa and Ngoni. Sixty-five percent are Muslims and the remainder are mostly Christian.

Traditional celebrations

Nayuchi is a matrilineal society. When a couple is married, the new family establishes a home at the wife's village, where the wife's uncle plays a major role. The uncle is the contact person between the bride and groom's families, and he decides what the groom's family should offer the bride's family. Women hold local leadership positions, like village chief.

As with typical African societies, traditional dances and celebrations are important cultural events and mark the initiation to adulthood. These celebrations usually take place after harvest when there is plenty of food. One important cultural event is circumcision for boys. This activity culminates in a day of celebrations when the boys return from a three-week initiation camp that also signifies their coming of age. The community celebrates with dances and gifts for both the boys and their counsellors.

Poverty in Nayuchi

Malawi is a poor country but the socio-economic indicators for rural areas such as Machinga District are worse than the national indicators. According to the National Statistical Office Projection for 2007, the infant mortality rate was approximately 98 deaths per 1,000 live births compared to a national rate of 76, while the under-five mortality was 164 per 1,000 compared to a national rate of 133. Life expectancy at birth has barely changed in the past 30 years and sits at age 40 for men and age 44 for women¹.

In 2003, HIV prevalence in the Machinga District was approximately 16.4 percent of the adult population, which was higher than the national rate of 14.2 percent in that year². The regular flow of people along the nearby road and railway line is one reason for the higher than average HIV prevalence in this area.

With its diverse ethnic and religious mix, rich biodiversity, strong community bonds, alongside development challenges, Nayuchi is a land of mixed blessings.





Participation – taking the first step

“Development is cooperation.”
- Nayuchi community member



World Vision first began discussions with the Nayuchi community 10 years ago, when a group of World Vision staff from Australia and Malawi visited the community members.

Their first talks were simply about what kind of “development” the community aspired to. The staff initially asked community members “What is development?” Some of the responses were:

“Development must start with the family. I must take care of myself and my children.”

“I need to have adequate food in my home. After other needs of my family have been met, then perhaps I can assist with schooling.”

“Development is relationships.”

“Development is cooperation.”

“There would be plates in the house – that would be an indication of development – meaning you have food.”

It also became clear that women were disadvantaged. Comments included:

“Women do not speak out because if they make a mistake they are shouted at by the men.”

“You are talking of development as starting from the home, but what is development if the home has no food? If your husband just drinks, you can’t have any development!”



The community was very interested in development and wanted to discuss their future vision. It was clear, however, that some leaders expected World Vision simply to “deliver” development rather than it being a process of community participation and empowerment.

The discussion also made clear that cultural forces could inhibit empowerment, especially for women. This was identified as a crucial area for development.

These initial observations and perceptions provided insights into the community’s situation and attitudes. They reflected the reality at that time and they provided a starting point.

Before the World Vision staff left the Nayuchi community on that first visit, they explained their approach: the value of partnership as a pathway to sustainable development and the need for all stakeholders to participate.

This case study shows how the ADP program staff “walked the talk” and engaged the community. It also shows some of the changes that have occurred.

These signposts mark out the journey of development that both the Nayuchi community and World Vision have walked along for the past decade.



“I was elected chief when World Vision had already started working in the community. I accepted my role because I had already been enlightened on gender issues. I simply could not have accepted a male-dominated role. I discuss all matters with my council, which is made up of men, without any problems. Other women envy me.

“The first noticeable thing is people’s change in attitude towards development and general thinking. We didn’t know that people could be trained in farming. We were just doing whatever we thought fit. But now people have been trained in crop and livestock production and received support like seed stock.

“In the past it was not possible to meet and discuss development issues in the community because of a lack of knowledge and bad attitudes. These days we meet regularly and those who attend share their insights and skills. This is helping the community to develop. New skills and knowledge have enabled us to sustain efforts to independently improve our livelihoods.”

- Mrs Ngunga, Village Chief



Sustainable change – building on community strengths

“Young people have worked hard to increase awareness and practice of child rights.”

Long-term development depends on community ownership. World Vision's approach is to encourage broad participation so that when the organisation leaves, the community will continue to work together to build on the initiatives they have developed with the organisation's support.

To encourage sustainable progress in Nayuchi, World Vision ADP staff worked with a broad cross-section of the community including Muslim and Christian community leaders, traditional chiefs of various ranks, and representatives from community-based organisations, schools, health clinics and youth.

Community-based organisations (CBOs) representing traditional village boundaries have been established as agents for change and development in their area. They focus on areas such as health, water and sanitation, HIV and AIDS, agriculture and food security, education, forestry and disaster mitigation.

Close partnerships have also been fostered with local government, especially to support the work of the District AIDS Coordinating Committee.



The young people in Nayuchi have been a particular focus of the organisation's work. When World Vision started its program in Nayuchi, young people were quick to point out their needs and showed a great interest in participating in the ADP's activities. Their enthusiasm led to the establishment of an ADP Youth Committee to ensure young people's needs were included and their voices heard.

Young people in the ADP have worked to raise awareness of a range of issues including child sexual exploitation and unsafe circumcision practices for young boys.

For example, fishermen in Lake Chilwa are known to take advantage of girls from a low socio-economic background by offering them food or other rewards for sexual favours. In response, the ADP's youth committee has worked with World Vision to campaign for girls to return to their education. In the last year alone, 158 girls, who had dropped out of school, and 315 long-term absentees returned to class.

The youth committee has also campaigned for the introduction of hospital-based circumcision and has convinced the elders to adopt this method. They believe that it will reduce the incidence of infectious diseases among boys.

To increase youth involvement in community decision-making, two former World Vision sponsored children, Benjamin Kalako and Gladys Namacha, have also participated in Malawi's National Children's Parliament. Through their representation they have expressed the hopes and fears of Nayuchi's youth to the entire country.



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Education for a better future

“The community has had its first ever group of secondary school graduates.”

Poor access to education is linked to poverty. From childhood to adulthood, World Vision has worked with the Nayuchi community to improve this access. Now, 2,292 children including 1,806 orphans are accessing pre-school education, the community has had its first ever group of secondary school graduates, and more than 300 adults have passed national literacy exams.

The issue

The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights identifies primary education as a basic human right which should be compulsory and free. In 1994 the Malawi Government fulfilled this aspiration by abolishing fees for primary education.

This positive incentive caused a sharp rise in school enrolment. It also created demand for new schools in areas where there were no primary schools. In 1994 there were only 10 under-developed primary schools and two secondary schools in the entire Nayuchi region. They were overcrowded, with a student-teacher ratio of 80 to one. Forty percent of school infrastructure was temporary and 11.8 percent of primary teachers were unqualified³.

When the ADP commenced in 1998, not one child from the ADP community had attended secondary school⁴. Children with special needs had no extra educational support. There were 706 disabled children in need, including those with hearing, physical and speech disabilities. Adult literacy levels were also very low, estimated at 33.5 percent for women and 43 percent for men⁵.

The intervention

Starting with young children, World Vision worked with the community to establish community-based childcare centres. With the benefit of early education, young

children can enter primary school with confidence and a strong grounding of elementary literacy and social skills.

Basic care and education for three-to-six year olds has been provided to some 2,292 children, including 1,806 orphans, across 38 new childcare centres. These centres were established and are operated by Orphan Care Committees. These committees were established by the community-based organisations, which World Vision supports.

Volunteers, who receive training from World Vision, supervise the children and give basic instruction. Children attend for several hours each day and learn basic literacy and social skills.

To improve access to elementary and secondary education, World Vision and the community have been involved in advocating for the government to build and staff new schools. While this has been a slow process, the successful request for a new school block at Jenga Junior Primary School shows the importance of continuing this effort.

To support the children most in need to continue their education, 99 disabled children have received direct support. For example, the ADP and the Malawi Council for the Handicapped helped one physically challenged child to secure a place at Soche Technical College where he now studies electrical installation. A particular focus of the organisation has been to raise awareness in the community of the importance of girl's education.

While working with the community to improve children's access to education, World Vision has also supported improved education access for adults. New adult literacy centres have been crucial to improving health and wellbeing in the entire community. The ADP now supports 22 adult literacy centres and has assisted

614 adult learners. The centres provide education in basic reading, writing and numeracy and are stocked with stationery, teaching and learning materials.

The results

Before the program began, no children in the ADP had sufficient grades to attend secondary school. In 2002, for the first time, four children were selected. In 2003 this figure rose to seven. From these small beginnings the number rose to 105 children attending secondary school in 2007. Some of these children are members of the ADP Youth Committee and contribute to key decisions on the ADP's development plans.

One sponsored child, Short Alexander, is now seen as a role model. “I and my best friend Abu Khanga are the first boys to have attained the Malawi School Certificate in our respective villages. Most young people admire us for these

achievements and our ability to work with the elders of the community,” says Short.

Before 1998, many families in Nayuchi did not send their daughters to school. Girls had little opportunity to attend school and up to 70 percent of women had never attended any formal education. During the project, however, a shift occurred in favour of girls' education and by 2003 at least 51.1 percent of girls were attending school⁶.

Since the establishment of new adult literacy centres, 386 people sat for the National Adult Literacy Exams and 91 percent passed. These people, who are using their new skills in daily activities like reading about farming and better managing their family budgets, have received certificates from the Malawi Gender and Community Services Ministry. Their newfound literacy skills have contributed to greater participation in the ADP's work.



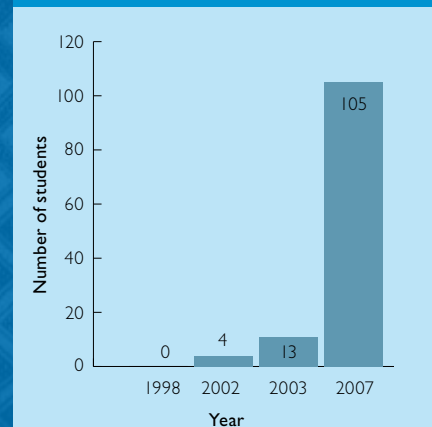
Belita Majiga's dream

“My children are looking healthy because we milk goats and use the milk for the children's porridge. This helps us save the money that we would have used to buy milk,” Sophia Majiga says.

“Belita is my 15-year-old daughter. Because our family now has better income and our food is reliable she is continuing with her education. She plans to work in the medical field. She hopes to treat people in our community if they fall ill. Her friends Pilira and Dorothy dropped out of school after Grade 2 and got married. She doesn't want to follow that path until her dreams are fulfilled.

“The other noticeable change brought to our community is that not as many young girls are becoming pregnant.”

Nayuchi students attending secondary school





Dealing with HIV and AIDS – unity is strength

“In 2003, only 4.6 percent of adults had undergone voluntary HIV counselling and testing, three years later nearly a third of adults had been tested.”

The HIV and AIDS pandemic has had a devastating impact on Africa and the Nayuchi community in Malawi is no exception. To assist the community to deal with the spread of the disease, World Vision has worked with communities to reduce the stigma of living with HIV and AIDS and supported young men leading a campaign for safe circumcision practises. World Vision has worked closely with church leaders who have taken a strong leadership role in advocating HIV testing for all and the use of condoms. Since this work began in 2003, there has been a drop in HIV prevalence in Nayuchi from 16.4 percent in 2003 to 12 percent today⁷.

The issue

In Malawi, it is estimated that 11.9 percent of adults are living with HIV and AIDS. According to the 2008 UNAIDS Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic, this is approximately 840,000 people, including 91,000 children living with the infection.

In Machinga District, one in four children with HIV will die before the age of five – one of the highest rates in southern Africa. In 2003, when this project started, the district also had a higher than average rate of adult infection, with 16.4 percent of adults living with HIV or AIDS⁸.

There is one hospital and three health centres that provide primary healthcare in Machinga District, and the hospital staff estimate that 70 percent of patients have AIDS-related illnesses. The hospital began providing free anti-retroviral therapy in 2005. However, communities that live far from the hospital find it difficult to access these vital drugs.

HIV and AIDS affects all aspects of the community's wellbeing. It reduces productivity; more people stay at home to care for their chronically ill relatives;

skilled labour is lost due to a higher death rate; there are more orphans and time spent at funerals; there is more pressure on women to care for the ill and orphans; more money is spent on medicine and food; savings and assets are depleted; and development work becomes less effective.

One of the potential causes for rapid HIV transmission in the Nayuchi community which has been suggested in World Vision evaluations has been cultural practices and beliefs around sexual behaviour. Boys in Nayuchi go through an initiation ceremony, which includes circumcision. The ceremony is an important rite of passage, and has been practised for generations. Several scientific studies have shown that male circumcision reduces the chances of the HIV virus passing from a male to a female during sex, so it is possible that the practice has been helping to keep HIV rates from increasing further in the community⁹. However, circumcision has been practised in an unsafe way in Nayuchi, using a single unsterilised blade to circumcise many boys at once, leaving them susceptible to infections, including HIV. Project staff and young men have been working with community leaders to encourage them to alter the ceremony so that the circumcision operation can be carried out in the safe environment of a health clinic.

The intervention

The Machinga HIV Project, funded by the Australian Agency for International Development, was launched in 2003. The aim of the project has been to reduce the spread of HIV by promoting changed sexual behaviour; lessen the stigma attached to people living with HIV and AIDS and encourage voluntary HIV testing. An important focus of the project has been to encourage positive behaviour changes by working with religious and other leaders.





Dealing with HIV and AIDS – unity is strength

“Young boys have successfully campaigned for the introduction of hospital-based circumcision – a first for these villages.”

The HIV and AIDS pandemic has been the catalyst for religious leaders to come together to respond to the suffering of their congregations through a joint response to HIV and AIDS.

As part of this project, Muslim and Christian leaders were invited to reflect together on their stances towards HIV and AIDS and the epidemic and the values and behaviours suggested by their religion's precepts and scriptures. Both sets of leaders then requested, and were provided with, training to better understand the pandemic.

Religious leaders have now adopted a faith-based approach, have created their own manual and are at the forefront of the HIV and AIDS response. Their scripture reflections have encouraged them to work together in a multi-faith coalition, which has also strengthened secular HIV and AIDS committees.

As described by one religious leader: “What we are doing in the community is to encourage people to go for HIV testing and also for them to be faithful to each other as partners, as taught by Islam. We also tell people to use condoms, and I promote this as a religious leader.”

In addition to working with religious and community leaders, ADP staff work closely with the District AIDS Coordinating Committee (DACC), which reports directly to the National AIDS Commission and coordinates all HIV and AIDS activities for the Machinga District. Through the Machinga HIV Project, World Vision and the ADP have played a key role in the DACC, filling the role of chairperson for two years and collaborating with other stakeholders to reach everyone in the community with key messages. The Community AIDS Coordinating Committees, which fall under a traditional authority area or village chief, also participate in the DACC.

The project has helped district government and community organisations

to partner with traditional leaders, who influence the whole community. Community education has been provided, health workers have been trained to undertake HIV and AIDS education campaigns and condoms have been made available.

The results

According to the 2008 Nayuchi Health Centre statistics, HIV prevalence in the community has fallen from 16.4 percent in 2003 to 12 percent today¹⁰.

In 2003, only 4.6 percent of adults had undergone voluntary HIV counselling and testing and 47.6 percent did not know where they could get it. Only three years later, findings from the project's final evaluation report showed that nearly a third of adults had been tested and knew their HIV status¹¹.

The huge shift in awareness is partly attributed to the traditional leaders, who are now actively encouraging the community to change their behaviours. They are establishing a community-based action plan for change and have been the first to leap into voluntary testing.

One community member summed it up: “As role models, village chiefs lead people to undertake a HIV test. When we had the voluntary test in our village, the first people to get tested were the chief and her husband, and then our group. About 40 people were tested.”

For those tested and found to be HIV positive, the change was profound. According to one person living with HIV, “Knowing our HIV status has helped us a lot because we've had counselling and now we behave differently. This makes a difference.”

One significant hurdle to addressing HIV and AIDS has been reducing the stigma and discrimination against people living with the virus. Today, people in Nayuchi



talk openly about HIV and AIDS. Public perceptions of people living with HIV and AIDS have been seriously challenged by the emergence of a group who not only openly declared their HIV positive status, but who became role models for positive living. Young men have successfully campaigned for the introduction of hospital-based circumcision – a first for these villages.

Inter-faith dialogue

In mosques and churches, religious leaders now openly preach to their congregations about the dangers of HIV and AIDS. The response to HIV and AIDS has resulted in more collaboration and unity between the people of the two major religions in the district. HIV committees respect each other's prayer days by ensuring

that committee meetings are not held on Fridays or Sundays. During meetings, devotions are led by both faiths. Rallies are held for both religions, with sheikhs and pastors preaching from the same pulpit on the same day, with the theme of peace and coexistence as well as unity against a common threat.

In a community where everyone is devoutly religious, support from religious leaders has been critical to the project's success.

As a direct result of this project, the people in Machinga District now have better access to HIV testing and counselling, condoms, anti-retroviral drugs, and increased knowledge of HIV and AIDS treatment options. They are fighting stigma, living positively with HIV and caring for those affected by

the pandemic. The demand for these HIV and AIDS-related goods, services and information has increased and the number of people living with HIV and AIDS who are forming and joining support groups has grown.

The project's success has received national and international recognition and media exposure. The impact has been shared nationwide through programs on Malawi national radio and television. The National AIDS Commission recognises it as a model project because of its role in developing user-friendly, community-based HIV and AIDS prevention structures. A paper on this project was also presented at the 2008 International AIDS Conference in Mexico, enabling communities around the world to benefit from what has been learned.

6

Boosting food security

“Now 80 percent of households are producing enough food to sustain the family all year round.”

To improve the availability of food, World Vision has provided training in the use of organic fertilisers, irrigation schemes and drought-resistant crop varieties. Animal husbandry has also been encouraged. Prior to the establishment of the project only 14 percent of households had enough food to sustain them. Now 80 percent of households are producing enough food to sustain the family all year round.

The issue

Most households rely on subsistence farming and 85 percent of people live in rural areas on landholdings of diminishing size. With unpredictable rains and infertile soils, households in Nayuchi have long been vulnerable to food shortages. In 1998, these small landholdings and infertile soils meant that only 14 percent of households were able to sustain themselves for 12 months with their own harvest while only seven percent had surplus to sell¹².

The agriculture project in Nayuchi ADP aimed to boost the number of families who could survive from their land.

The intervention

The project worked at several levels to increase the production of food and to support increased income generation for times of food shortages. This involved providing training and support to farmers to improve agricultural yield through better access to water and better quality soil, the introduction of drought-resistant crops, small-scale irrigation, and revolving loans for livestock purchase and animal husbandry. A vital element of the project was increasing the participation of women, whose role in the household is recognised as crucial to the effectiveness of any development intervention.

Organic fertilisers and small-scale irrigation

The project aimed to protect and improve soil fertility by promoting organic fertilisers and irrigation for winter cropping, as well as better techniques for growing vegetables and rearing animals. Women's education has been central to achieving these goals.

The irrigation scheme began with 20 children who grew sweet potatoes on a one hectare plot. Later, 75 adults joined them (including 52 women) and expanded the scheme to five hectares. Now, there are 1,485 farmers (including 817 women) who practise small-scale irrigation over 27 sites covering 774 hectares. The ADP has also educated farmers about soil fertility. Farmers have received training in how to make organic fertilisers by composting manure and waste crop residues. After a promising beginning, 3,885 farmers are now making and using organic fertiliser.

Drought-resistant crop varieties

Rice is one of the region's staple crops and many farmers grow their own rice. World Vision introduced improved rice seed varieties, and assisted farmers to adapt to the new varieties and improve their farming techniques. These new varieties are aromatic and early maturing which means farmers can harvest even in low rainfall years.

When the project began in 2001 there were 25 farmers supported. A revolving loan scheme has made the seed more widely available, with 475 farmers supported.

To combat drought, World Vision staff researched which new crops would grow well in the area and worked directly with households to promote their cultivation. Farmers' clubs have been established to share experiences and ideas. Many farmers



now grow new, drought-tolerant crops like cassava, sweet potato and sorghum.

Animal husbandry

Households have also been encouraged to rear goats for their milk and meat, and for their value as a source of income. Raising goats gives households an alternative income stream, which is especially important when crops fail. There are now 3,960 households engaged in producing goat livestock.

The results

In 1998, only 14 percent of households could sustain themselves (using their own harvest) for 12 months¹³. By 2003, this rate had increased to 33 percent, with 15 percent harvesting a surplus. Still, most households could not grow enough food for a year's supply. Now 80 percent of households produce enough food to sustain the family all year round. This is a real achievement and a testament

to the dedicated work of the Nayuchi community and the ADP staff.

With the introduction of drought-tolerant crops, many farmers were able to harvest even during the very low rainfall year in 2001.

As soil fertility has improved, farmers are reporting increasing yields. One farmer reported an increase of 150 kilograms to 750 kilograms of produce from the same 0.4 hectare plot.



Boosting food security

“One farmer reported an increase of 150 kilograms to 750 kilograms of produce from the same 0.4 hectare plot.”

Women are also now more involved on the land. In contrast to 1999, when women shied away from leadership positions in clubs or committees, they are now involved at all levels. Sixty-five percent of the participants in the agriculture project are women.

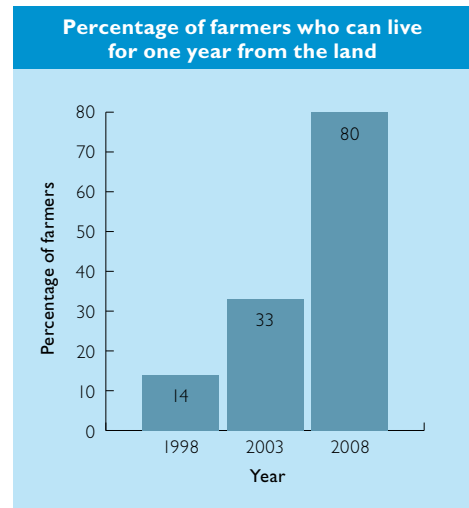
Since the project began, farmers have formed a cooperative, also known as a farmers' club, to share experiences and resources. As a result, eight farmers built iron-roofed houses, and one bought an ox cart, a motorcycle and two hammer mills. One farmer earned the equivalent of US\$673 from the sale of cassava tubers to other farmers.

Goats and guinea fowl have also provided a good source of alternative income. One group of 472 families earned a total of US\$2,120 after the sale of guinea fowl and goats.

Amon Busuman has benefited enormously from the gift of just two guinea fowls. “In 2002 my sponsored daughter received two guinea fowls, one male and one female, through a World Vision revolving scheme. I was trained in guinea fowl management before receiving the stock.

These two birds multiplied to 97 and I sold 65 of them, earning US\$106.40,” he said.

“After a family meeting we decided that we should buy a cow. The cow has also now multiplied to five. Thus, a humble seed stock of two guinea fowls is turning into a herd of cattle. From this herd, we are now getting manure which we are using for soil fertility, and this is helping my family produce better crop yields.”



“I’m a 58-year-old rice farmer. During the 1980s we would grow rice but could only sell it to the government. We faced long queues and it could take weeks before we sold our produce. Then, in the 1990s, the market opened up and paved the way for vendors from urban centres. These vendors inundated the community with dishonest weighing equipment and dictated prices, which were very low, so that farmers could not break even. When this started to happen we lived hand-to-mouth. We could hardly afford to buy the basics to sustain our families. “When World Vision came to our community, we assessed the situation together and found that unreliable and dishonest middlemen were perpetuating poverty. World Vision development facilitators organised us farmers and supported us with new rice varieties. They also trained us in marketing skills.

The best lesson I learnt with other farmers is the idea of holding produce to sell at a later time when the price improves. “This is working miracles for us farmers. We are now producing better yields and selling our produce to the best vendor at the right time. We are proud of our achievements. We now have decent accommodation, similar to and sometimes even better than what we used to see only in towns. We can buy not only bicycles but motorcycles as well. I bought a motorcycle just like my younger brother’s, an ox cart and a hammer mill in November 2007. This hammer mill has produced enough income to buy another one, which I bought two months ago in August 2008. I’m also able to lease more land to produce more maize and rice.”

- Laki Busuman, entrepreneur

7

Ten years, walking together

“Using indicators (such as changed attitudes, social practices and behaviours), we can see that this community has genuinely changed.”

Development is a complex process, involving all aspects of community life. It touches everyone from youth to traditional elders, women, children, the elderly, religious leaders, orphans and government staff who live in and serve the community.

The complex nature of development means it's often difficult to measure the lasting, positive changes in the community which are a result of World Vision's work. Some of the indicators and milestones we use include testimonials, and measured changes in agriculture, school attendance, health and other indicators.

These personal stories about change, combined with the measurable indicators described above, show clearly that the Nayuchi community has changed considerably in the 10 years World Vision has “walked” with the community.

When the program began, women were excluded from voicing their opinions in public forums, however now they are empowered to do so – helped by powerful roles models such as Mrs Ngunga, the village head. More children are going to school, especially secondary school. Most households now have enough food to eat, all year round. Using measurable and less measurable indicators (such as changed attitudes, social practices and behaviours), we can see that this community has genuinely changed.

The Nayuchi community is a good example of World Vision's community-to-community partnerships, where thoughtful and caring Australians “walk” with disadvantaged communities to create a better life for all – especially children.





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