



Small and medium sized businesses (SMEs) created

BACKGROUND

With an aim to reducing poverty, the JP devised a strategy of providing micro-credit loans and entrepreneurship training to a group of beneficiaries. It was not easy to convince the local community, particularly those from rural villages, of the benefits of a micro-credit and entrepreneurship programme. It was also challenging to find suitable beneficiaries. Finally, however, the JP was able to identify 90 suitable beneficiaries, 40% of whom were women, to receive micro-credit loans and help in establishing or upgrading their small and medium sized businesses (SMEs). The beneficiaries also participated in a Business Development Service programme and capacity building activities.

240 Jobs were created/secured through the services provided by the project.

PROCESS

Beneficiaries received training in marketing, entrepreneurship, and business development services, and participated in field assessments, surveys and meetings.

The SMEs were all owned by local community members, thus direct and regular contact with the community was essential. Through meetings, discussions, and consultations, the conditions surrounding the loaning of micro-credit were continually revisited to make sure the provided services met the needs of the community, and that the envisaged objectives were being achieved.



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Outcomes

As a result of the JP, the beneficiaries have now created and/or strengthened their SMEs. They are also now better able to independently maintain their respective businesses. The initiative is inherently sustainable, promoting a sense of entrepreneurship among community members while contributing to development in rural areas. Beneficiaries have increased their incomes and created jobs for other locals by expanding of their businesses. 240 Jobs were created/secured through the services provided by the project.

The programme's success garnered it a positive local reputation, and now many other villagers are approaching the JP to receive their own micro-credit loans. Some local NGOs plan to introduce similar programmes to other groups in the coming months.

Furthermore, the project has created a revolving fund which will be used to support the continuation of the programme beyond the life of the JP.