



HITAJI DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE
2019
ANNUAL REPORT



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ABBREVIATIONS

BOD	Board of Director
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
FSA	Financial Service Association
HDI	Hitaji Development Initiative
HC	Health Care
HHs	Households
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental organization
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
UN	United Nations
USA	United states of America

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS	2
LIST OF FIGURES	3
1.INTRODUCTION	4
1.1 Geographical areas of operation:	4
1.2 Our approach	4
1.3 Organization programs	4
1.4 Strategic organization objectives	5
1.5 Intervention Scope	5
2.0 2019 ORGANISATION KEY ACTIVITIES AND UPDATES	5
2.1 Women group meetings and field activities	5
2.3 Education scholarship and school visits	7
2.4 Mentorship	8
2.5 HDI CEO visit to Kenya	10
3. ACHIEVEMENTS	13
4. CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED	13
5. RECOMMENDATIONS	13
6. ACTIVITIES FOR 2020	14

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Orlando women group during their routine meeting	6
Figure 2: Group leader sharing with members what she learnt during the FSA training	7
Figure 3: Hitaji volunteer having a one on one session with the students during school visit	8
Figure 4: Hitaji team facilitating a mentorship session to secondary school students	9
Figure 5: Mentors conducting a mentorship session to secondary school girls	10
Figure 6: Hitaji team exchanging ideas during the meeting with CEO	11
Figure 7: HDI CEO and a Board member from the USA posing for a photo with students drawn from the education sponsorship program	12
Figure 8: Asenath meeting with Rutgers Alumni	13

1. INTRODUCTION

Hitaji Development Initiative (HDI) is a registered non-profit organization working to address the challenges and needs that poor women and girls face in Migori and Rongo Counties, Kenya. The organization was founded in 2011 by Asenath Dande with the aim of empowering vulnerable poor groups socially and economically.

Over the past years, The NGO has grown in capacity with an increase in staff, partners, volunteers, programs and projects in the different parts of Migori County.

Since its founding the organization has impacted the lives of more than 750 women through training on small scale businesses and support with micro loans to carry out various businesses and activities ranging from farming, local trading, catering services and sewing of clothes to soap making.

The organization has also directly impacted the lives of more than 15 secondary students with school fee payment, school learning materials and other personal needs. Through the mentorship program the organization has impacted 100 secondary students directly and indirectly more than 2500 secondary students.

HDI works in collaboration with others to build communities resilience with hope to become self-sufficient, and to increase the pool of capable community members, able to transform the whole society out of extreme poverty, illiteracy and diseases, and to improve social amenities, welfare and economic livelihoods.

1.1 Geographical areas of operation:

Hitaji Development Initiative head office is in Migori town the Headquarters and works in Nyatike and Rongo sub counties of Migori County

1.2 Our approach

HDI considers coordination and cooperation as necessary tools for creating impact among vulnerable women and girls in rural communities. Therefore, we maintain partnerships with different stakeholders, being aware of the importance of everyone: local communities, local leaders, government ministries, other organizations and individuals from national and international.

1.3 Organization programs

Our work is divided into five area programs:-

1. Education and Mentorship
2. Food Security and Livelihoods
3. Economic empowerment
4. Healthcare support

1.4 Strategic organization objectives

- To promote basic and holistic transformational development services through agriculture, education, mentorship, economic empowerment and healthcare aimed at reducing extreme hunger, poverty, illiteracy and injustices.
- To ensure accessible secondary school education to vulnerable girls
- To build and empower women and youth employment and development of enterprise schemes
- To partner with local, national, regional, international charities, institutions, foundations, individuals, donors and UN agencies to achieve holistic transformation in sharing skills and knowledge pertaining to community welfare and development.

1.5 Intervention Scope

A total of 100 female students were registered in the organization's mentorship database and they were distributed across 18 secondary schools in Migori County. As for the Hitaji women groups, the number of registered groups were 10 with a total of 250 women.

2.0 2019 ORGANISATION KEY ACTIVITIES AND UPDATES

The following were the main activities for 2019:

1. Women group meetings and field activities;
2. Women group trainings and piloting of revolving fund;
3. Education scholarship and school visits;
4. Mentorship; and
5. HDI CEO visit to Kenya

2.1 Women group meetings and field activities

During the year Hitaji team offered support supervision and conducted field visits to 10 registered women groups. The group meetings provided a platform where the women carried out the following activities:-

- Table banking
- Merry-go-round activities
- Trainings on issues pertaining to healthcare, group dynamics, climate smart agriculture and leadership
- Social welfare activities

Figure 1: Olando women group during their routine meeting



2.2 Women group trainings and piloting of revolving fund

During the year 250 women were trained during their respective group meetings. Topics covered were tailored towards the groups' needs and challenges reported during their routine meetings. The main topics covered during the trainings were:-

- Record keeping
- Leadership and management
- Group dynamics
- Growing revolving fund
- Climate smart agriculture

In June, 2 women groups were selected for the piloting of the revolving fund through the Financial Service Model strategy. Before launching the revolving fund, Hitaji team trained 10 leaders from 3 groups on financial service association model. The training aimed at building the capacity of the leaders in running and managing the revolving fund effectively and efficiently.

Figure 2: Group leader sharing with members what she learnt during the FSA training



2.3 Education scholarship and school visits

Figure SEQ Figure * ARABIC 3: Hitaji volunteer having a one on one session with the students during school visit



Hitaji continued to support enrolled 8 secondary school girls and 2 college students with tuition, money for upkeep and other social amenities. On a Quarterly basis, Hitaji team visited the students in their respective schools and had one on one sessions to ascertain the challenges they might be facing and also monitor their performance.

2.4 Mentorship

Mentorship sessions were conducted in 18 secondary school with the support from trained mentors from Rongo University.

The mentorship entailed training the girls on career choices, social & cultural interactions, and health issues such as sexual reproductive health.

Figure 4: Hitaji team facilitating a mentorship session to secondary school students



During school holidays Hitaji conducted group mentorship sessions both at the organization headquarters and in schools. The sessions provided an opportunity for the mentors to assess the performance of the students and helped them to create a plan on how to improve their performance.

Figure 5: Mentors conducting a mentorship session to secondary school girls



2.5 HDI CEO and the USA based Board member visit to Kenya

In June, 2019 the CEO visited the organization. During the visit she was accompanied by Dr. Francis Barchi, the USA based HDI Board member who has been a strong supporter of the organization in achieving its mission.

The main objectives of the visit were:-

- To implement the financial service association model
- To finalize the details of the MoU between HDI and Rongo University on student mentorship
- To meet with HDI Board of Directors
- To conduct field visits to women groups

- To host a dinner meeting with Mandela Washington Fellows who had their fellowship at Rutgers University and Rutgers University alumni

Figure 6: Hitaji team exchanging ideas on FSA during the Board meeting with CEO



Figure 7: CEO and Dr. Barchi posing for a photo with students drawn from the education sponsorship program



Figure 8: CEO and Dr. Barchi meeting with HDI staff, students and Board members



Figure 9: CEO and Dr. Barchi meeting with Rutgers Alumni and Mandela Washington Fellows



3 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Sponsored students continued to perform excellent
- Successfully piloted the Financial Service Association (FSA) model in 2 women groups
- Over 80% of the women group members trained
- Added 2 more students in the Education scholarship program
- 98% of the mentored students were able to transition to next class

4 CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED

- Conflicting school calendar schedules of Peer Mentors from Rongo University and Mentees.
- Lack of mentors consistently during the school year due to restrictions imposed by the secondary school Principals on keeping cell phones while in school. This created limited interactions between mentors and mentees to only during school breaks

- Limited resources restricted the number of students recruited in the Education scholarship program

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

- To continue empowering and capacity building women group leaders in order to improve their leadership and managerial skills for effective management of the groups
- To grow the revolving fund of the women groups in order to improve their living standards

6: ACTIVITIES FOR 2020

- Continuing with women group meetings and trainings to build capacity
- Expanding revolving fund to other women groups
- Recruit new cohort under the sponsorship program
- Training group leaders on the FSA
- Growing the mentorship database
- Continue monitoring the impact of Hitaji interventions
- Strengthening linkages between local leaders, schools and other organizations