



Comunità
Magnificat Dominum

Caritas in Veritate
Int. - USA

Project *Abraham*

Project Abraham

0. INTRODUCTION

The country suffers some main issues in agricultural activities:

- Farms have micro dimensions, mainly run on family basis, and produce a personal income of few USD/day
- Farmers are poorly skilled to improve their farm, mainly trained by experience
- High difficulties on financial credit access that heavily limits the capacity to grow up and improve in quantitative and qualitative terms

Making this farm one of the best can effectively motivate farmers to learn how to improve their own business improving the efficiency of cultivations and how to invest to grow their business

Main data:

Name : Project Abraham

Dream/vision : Cooperation with Masaka Diocese to highly improve its farm through a new biogas plant and an overall renovation up to let it become a model and one of the most modern and efficient farm in Uganda

Mission : Install an ethic, growth-oriented and self-sustainable activity

Objectives:

- 1) Focus on the quality of the products
- 2) Use the biogas plant as a driver for improvement
- 3) Generate stable job opportunities

Values:

- 1) Honesty
- 2) Hard working
- 3) Generosity
- 4) Efficiency and effectiveness

1. WHEREAS

Masaka Diocese is the owner and runs a quite big farm in an area located between towns of Masaka and Mbarara, about 100 km away from Masaka, through its Ssembabule Balunzi Cooperative Company. in the same geographical zone known as Ankole Masaka Dry Cattle Corridor. The Ranch is found in Lwera Local council 1 Kinuuka Sub-County, Lyantonde District. It covers an area of three square miles (3miles²)



Actual farm short assessment is:

- about 780 hectares (3 sq miles, quite big), mainly not cultivated
- area between Masaka and Mbarara
- 800 cows and 200 goats

The farm has actually a workforce of 4 administrative and 7 herdsman, and one of the main issues is that it does not have electricity.

The two main interesting aspects related to this particular farm are:

- it is owned by a diocese, operated by Caritas in Veritate CIV –USA and its ‘ partners through a cooperative company, so it is not totally profit oriented
- it is very big, compared to average size of similar activities in the area, and poorly developed. That means that it offers a big potential still unexploited

2. DESCRIPTION

The project will lead the farm to become one of the best in Uganda, and consists in the overall improvement of farm through renovation of all necessary assets (stables, electricity supply, etc) and the installation of a new biogas plant feeded mainly with cows’ manure.

The very basics financials are:

- biogas plant 1.4 million USD
- farm improvements (stables and others) : 400,000 - 550,000 USD

Total cost of project : 1.8 - 2 MUSD

The biogas plant can use all the produced gas to feed an engine to produce electricity. Given the actual size of the herd, the plant can have an electricity production power of about 200 kWe.

The result is an electrical energy yield of approx. 1.569.500 kWh/year.

This electricity can be used to dramatically improve the quality of the dairy products: indeed they are now exposed to rapid degradation due to lack of electricity.

The electricity that exceeds the farm needings can be sold to the grid.

Alongside of electricity production the plant will also produce heat that can be usefully used for the farm needings (hot water, sanification, cleaning etc).

To lead this project to success some activities need to be done:

- Detailed business plan
- Herd race improvements to be milk-production oriented
- Stables and other basic structures improvements
- Animals training
- Personell training

The foreseen time frame is to finish after 24 – 36 months after beginning.

3. BENEFITS

The main benefits of this investment will be:

- 15 to 50 stable jobs creation, with dramatic improvement of worker's lifestyle (where the average pro-capita income is about 4 USD/day)
- Improve the availability and costs of dairy products in the area
- Improve the overall efficiency of the farm in terms of crops and herd, increasing the revenues for the Diocese that can be used for charitable activities
- Contribute to the country's development through the stable and sustainable electricity production, where the electricity shortages is one of the bigger obstacles against development , and produced from a renewable source
- Stimulate the local economy, today at very low levels and based on micro-farms run on family basis

4. ATTACHMENTS

Hereafter attachments:

- Farm overall description
- Budget offer for a biogas plant

Important note: the offer does not include civil works, that are included in the budget indicated in the previous paragraph.

5. FURTHER PROJECT DEVELOPMENTS

There are some further opportunities that could be spinned-off from this project:

- Spread know-how among local farmers on how to improve farm efficiency, Train personnel and small farmers of the surroundings area through a stable part-time job in the farm that can enforce their income together with school activity
- Install a side agricultural school, at both intermediate and university levels, the first one to train the local farmers, the second to form agriculturalist expert consultants
- Install a micro-financing facility, farming business and women oriented, to address all the poorer families (70% of local population) that base their income on their micro-farm family based activity to address the very high difficulties on financial credit access that heavily limits the capacity to grow up and improve in quantitative and qualitative terms

All these developments need to be discussed with the Bishop.