Evaluation

Evaluation Title: Impact Evaluation of the Lumière Project
Evaluation Year: 2018
Evaluation Report Sequence Number: 2018/001
Region: ESAR
Office: Burundi
Person In Charge: Jeremy Hopkins

Overall Response

Overall Response to the Evaluation: Lumière Project is a micro enterprise model for delivering clean, off-grid energy supply to rural households in Burundi. The project is implemented through local credit and savings associations called the Nawe Nuze, and works by giving them the opportunity to purchase a power cycle and rechargeable LED lights to sell within the community. In this way, Project Lumiere introduces a new revenue stream into the community while providing clean energy solutions to households and carrying a myriad of other benefits – improved health, education, and protection outcomes; VBG risk mitigations; greater household savings; and increased support for vulnerable children in the community. The aim of the evaluation was to assess the project’s benefits by answering questions such as mainly (i) how important are the activities supported by the Lumière Project in the overall portfolio of the village-based organizations VBO? (ii) Is the project increasing the capacity of the VBO to support its other activities? recommendations were drafted but considerations related to children well-being, environment, and health aspects were not clearly addressed. The UNICEF management response plan is below highlighted.

Planned Use of the Evaluation: The findings will help UNICEF and partners to refine the model and explore additional options to make the project more profitable to beneficiaries in terms of children well being, environmental, and health aspects by focussing on cooking habits.

Recommendations and Actions

Recommendation #1:

Working through the VBO ensures a certain take-up among its members, but limits take-up outside. Indeed, non-members perceive the re-chargeable lamps as club goods, accessible only to members, even when this is not the case. Hence, VBO should be encouraged to open-up and change this perception;

Management Response: Agree

Action #1:

Responsible Section: Child protection
Responsible Person: Dan Rono
Expected Completion: 4/30/2018 12:00:00 AM
Implementation Stage: Not Started

Action Planned: Ensure at least 30% of community members reached by awareness raising on the power cycle benefits sessions are non VBO members.

Action Taken: Non members reached by awareness campaigns to be counted systematically. To date, 9,472 households including X (Y%) non-project members have been reached by awareness

Recommendation #2:
The donor, if it wishes to continue working with the NGO should demand full transparency, both on its finances as well as on the way it works with the VBO

**Management Response: Agree**

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**Action #1:**
- **Responsible Section:** Child protection
- **Responsible Person:** Dan Rono
- **Expected Completion:** 9/30/2018 12:00:00 AM
- **Implementation Stage:** Underway

**Action Planned:** Propose changes to the Project management team and set performance indicators targeting quality improvements and VBO participation in the project management.

**Action Taken:** The project management team was changed and new management indicators set. So far 80% of management indicators have been reached.

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**Action #2:**
- **Responsible Section:** Child protection
- **Responsible Person:** Dan Rono
- **Expected Completion:** 9/30/2018 12:00:00 AM
- **Implementation Stage:** Underway

**Action Planned:** Increase the participation of the beneficiaries in the management of the project.

**Action Taken:** 2 VBO members (1 male and 1 female) selected to participate in project management meetings in each Province.

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**Action #3:**
- **Responsible Section:** Innovation
- **Responsible Person:** Abdoul Hamid Seck
- **Expected Completion:** 9/30/2018 12:00:00 AM
- **Implementation Stage:** Not Started

**Action Planned:** Improve the real-time management of the project through the use of RapidPro

**Action Taken:** Introduction of RapidPro technology and U-report At least 90% VBO fully compliant with this reporting method.

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**Recommendation #3:**
Given the speed of technological evolution the Powercycles are already outdated, as solar energy is proving cheaper, more durable and more efficient. Some households in the endline survey were already using it, and do not wait for an NGO or a VBO to help them. We recommend a full transition to solar energy if the project continues.

**Management Response: Agree**

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**Action #1:**
- **Responsible Section:** Child protection
- **Responsible Person:** Jean Claude Nkezimana
- **Expected Completion:** 12/30/2018 12:00:00 AM
- **Implementation Stage:** Underway

**Action Planned:** 100% of new purchases under the action plan use solar energy.

**Action Taken:** Progressive introduction of lighting products for the use of solar energy as a replacement for power cycles with 100% of project investment and activities focused on solar panel by December 2018 Technical support to continue for those still using the bicycles until they are out of use.

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**Recommendation #4:**
The business model, whereby a VBO is responsible for the sales of lamps, their re-charge as well as the management of the Power cycles, worked well. However, with the arrival of solar energy, households will not need a centrally or village-level managed supply anymore and the current business model will not stand a chance.

**Management Response: Disagree**

**Reason**
The project is built on a community based approach for the promotion of renewable/ solar source of energy for very low income households and households with the financial capacity to have individual solar system will be encouraged to do so. This confirms the project ability to influence local behaviors and practices which is also one of the project expected results. The project will maintain the community based approach to keep consistent with the profile of the targeted group and will use any positive lessons learned from the financial and technical interaction between individual and group initiatives to review and improve the business model.

**Recommendation #5:**

Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 5: The project does not address the use of wood as the main source of energy used in the household, for cooking. This source is responsible for health problems and air pollution. We recommend a (new) project to address alternatives for cooking with wood.

**Management Response: Partially Agree**

**Action #1:**

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<tr>
<th>Responsible Section:</th>
<th>Child protection</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsible Person:</td>
<td>Dan Rono</td>
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<td>Expected Completion:</td>
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<td>Implementation Stage:</td>
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**Action Planned:** Identify and link the Project management team and VBO with existing initiative to promote improved cooking stoves and other alternatives to the use of dangerous material for cooking including the UNICEF funded Nutrition – Child Protection Project in Makamba and Rutana Provinces.

**Action Taken:** FVS/ AMADE, the Project Lumiere implementing partner has also be contracted to implement a joint Child protection and Nutrition in which the development and promotion of locally made cooking stoves is one of the key components. Encourage discussion around opportunities for experience exchange between Project Lumiere and Nutrition – Child protection beneficiaries around improved locally made cooking stoves.