



The
WIFE
Project

The Women's Initiative for Education & Empowerment (WIFE) Project

Media Kit 2013



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Began by **Global Unification - The Gambia (GU)** in 2011, the **Women's Initiative for Education & Empowerment (WIFE) Project** seeks to use innovative community-development and climate-smart agricultural methods to build the capacity of local women in Dongoroba Village and thus provide them with much needed skills to enable them to reduce their level of poverty.

The plan is to identify and use the best practices of The Gambia to address the continuing challenges of poverty, social exclusion and gender-based violence. WIFE is a new concept and the first of its kind to be implemented by Global Unification - The Gambia.

This Kit includes:

- Our Partners
- Video about WIFE
- The WIFE Project's Mission and Vision
- About the Team
- Phase One
- Phase Two
- Press Release
- In the Media





Our Partners



1%CLUB (Netherlands) | Earth Charter International | Action Aid - The Gambia | Network of African Youths for Development | African Youth Initiative on Climate Change

In implementing the WIFE Project, we work closely with the Women Cooperative Society of Dongoroba Village (Women Kaffoo) and the Dongoroba Village Community Based Organisation (DCBO).

video about WIFE



Video by Brigit Oele; Photography by Laura Dem.

The WIFE Project's Mission and Vision

Our Mission

In co-operation with other Institutions, our mission is to excel in delivering the best educational skills and practices to individuals and groups to accelerate sustainable development in The Gambia.

Our Vision

We believe in the unity of mankind – that all people matter, and that the world is run under one system, as one planet, ensuring mankind's survival.

We believe that the word 'Poverty' should be removed from our dictionary and that there should no longer be poor countries or poor people on our planet.

We believe that the differences between us, which make life interesting, and that we should cherish these differences, not ignore them.

Our Goals

- To build the capacity of local women in Dongoroba village in vegetable preservation techniques and marketing.
- To support local women of Dongoroba village in gardening and entrepreneurship activities that would enable them to reduce their poverty level.
- To improve the level of awareness among women and men about negative effect of family gender-based violence meted against women.

About the Team



Sutura Sowe joined Global Unification-The Gambia (GU) in 2008 after working for the organisation for many years as a member. From 2009 to 2011, he was promoted as an ICT Officer and the Coordinator of the then GU Information Communication Technology Center and Media Activities for the organisation. In 2011, he also headed the child and youth domain as a coordinator, looking after the welfare of the young people in the Gambia by creating free training for young school leavers. He was part of the project team who created the feasibility study for the successful WIFE project during Phase 1. In 2012, He was moved to Education, Technology and Training to coordinate that domain. Now he is the Project Coordinator of the Phase 2 of WIFE project.



Ebrima Dem is a co-founder and National Coordinator of Global Unification-The Gambia (GU), author and supervisor of the WIFE project and many other projects of GU-The Gambia.

Ebrima is a social rights activist, specialising women's rights, youth development and climate justice. He has made several presentations on climate change and human rights issue in various international fora. He has also written series of articles and contributed on policy papers on climate change adaptation and sustainable development, among many other topics.

About the Team



Laura Lopez Dem is a women rights activist, auxiliary nurse and professional photographer. She joined Global Unification-The Gambia (GU) in 2009 after having participated in a two week volunteer work in the Gambia under the Africa Stop Malaria project implemented by Africa Stop Malaria Association in partnership with GU.

Laura also uses photography to raise awareness on environmental conservation and health issues such malaria and women's reproductive health.

Laura was back in the Gambia in 2010 to participate in the GU summer school and in January 2012 to participate in the media training workshop on climate change, organised by GU. During this visit, she also attended a consultative meeting of WIFE project team and community of Dongoroba. She took a lot pictures and video of these meetings and the WIFE project site, which were compiled into videos which help to improve visibility of the WIFE project and attract. With her efforts, GU was able to visually explain the WIFE project to its diverse supporters.

Laura is currently working on her new project *Anda ak Afrika*, meaning walking with Africa in wolof language, whose aim among other issues, train local communities alternative form treatment using naturopathy and Shantala massaging for babies.

About the Team



Madiba Sillah joined Global Unification-The Gambia (GU) at its inception in 2006 and went up the ranks from being an ordinary member to becoming the current Networking and Partnership Coordinator. He has coordinated and jointly implemented the organisation's numerous activities, programmes and projects including the Green School Initiative and the Community Based Adaptation to Climate Change project.

Having successfully coordinated the first phase of the WIFE project, he is now coordinating our GEF SGP-supported Coastal CARE project in the villages of Gunjur, Tanji and Sanyang.

His fervent passion for youth activism, volunteering and development work is undiminished. With such resolution to bring about positive change in the lives and livelihoods of the less privileged in the Gambian communities, particularly rural women, like the WIFE beneficiaries in Dongoroba, he does not wish to relent.



Fatou Drammeh was Phase 1's Project Officer and is the Gender and Women's right Coordinator at GU. She join GU in 2008. She served as Fundraising Officer prior to her recent responsibility. Fatou Drammeh hold AAT diploma in accounting from the Management Development Institute.

About the Team



Jalika Keita was also Phase 1's Project Officer and is the Deputy National Coordinator of Global Unification-The Gambia (GU). Jalika finished her high school in 2007. She is now a Biology and Public health Student at the University of the Gambia. Jalika also has a diploma in Laboratory Assistant. She joined GU in 2009 as Community Health Educator. In addition to her current responsibility as the Head of Gender and Women Rights unit, Jalika is also the Coordinator of the annual GU Summer Academy Programme and a presenter of Climate Talk Radio programme.



Po-Yi Liu is the Social Media Manager of Global Unification-The Gambia (GU). She is an independent Communications Specialist who is very passionate about gender relations, sustainable development and intercultural/intergenerational solidarity. As well, she is an advocate for the end of violence against women. Po-Yi has worked and collaborated in various capacities for a number of organisations and NGOs. Recently, she has worked on crime victim support projects and social inclusion of migrants in Portugal.

We would like to extend our thanks to our team for all of the hard work they have done to make WIFE a positive and hopeful reality for the women of Dongoroba Village,
The Gambia.

Together, we can make a difference.



Phase One

The WIFE project grew out of our desire to address two of the most critical issues affecting women in Dongoroba village – the level of poverty and social exclusion meted against them. This is a patriarchal community, where men dominate in every aspect of the life of the community and therefore are really slowing the women’s advancement.

Phase 1 of WIFE was a success, having trained 300 women in gardening management and entrepreneurship, re-fenced the garden and tilled it, put a metal gate around it and provided the women with seeds. The women also learned marketing skills and tomato jam making.

The innovative climate-smart agricultural training moreover gave the women the skills and techniques to make their agricultural activities part of the solution to the negative impacts of climate change.

Overall, over 700 women and family members in the village, including the 300 we trained, are directly benefiting from the improved garden, experiencing a reduction in the level of poverty. For women who want to realise their entrepreneurial dream, up to 85 women in Dongoroba Village will be given start-up capital to begin small-scale businesses in their community.

Phase 1 was fully funded through 1%CLUB, an online crowdfunding organisation based in The Netherlands. WIFE also receives some of its volunteers through this organisation, where members sign up to offer their skills.





Phase Two

The WIFE2 is a continuous phase the WIFE project's Phase 1. Like the previous phase, this phase intends to address poverty and social exclusion. Poverty, in addition to being a barrier to women's advancement, is still one of the major contributing factor to violence against women.

The pilot is at the moment still funded through 1%CLUB. WIFE continues to receive some of its volunteers through this organisation.

Through WIFE2, we plan to construct a proper storage facility, which will have an open space to serve as a stall, for the women of Dongoroba Village. This facility will help reduce spoilage due to extreme heat, and the stall will be used to display produce --

to potential buyers.

In addition, the women need watering cans and other gardening tools.

We will also train the women on how to preserve vegetables and on better marketing skills.

Together with the women, we will form the Dongoroboa Women Farmers Association, so that they can demonstrate their leadership and make decisions at the village level. Through this association, we can encourage members to form a credit scheme in which they can save part of their income generated from the garden to support each other, or repair damaged garden materials.

Press Release

Addressing Women's Poverty Level through Climate-Smart Agricultural Community Development in The Gambia

Serekunda, The Gambia – June 3, 2013

Global Unification – The Gambia (GU) is going to launch phase 2 of its pilot project, Women's Initiative for Education & Empowerment (WIFE), this coming July.

Started in 2011, WIFE aims to train Gambian women in climate-smart agriculture, garden management, entrepreneurship and life-skills development. This project is currently piloted in Dongoroba Village of the Lower River region of The Gambia.

This project seeks to address the challenges of poverty and social exclusion of women in the Gambia through gardening and social enterprise activities. In the case of Dongoroba, the WIFE project is working with women and men to rebuild a once abandoned community garden.

“I grew up in a community where women had minimal access to the most basic form of education and are denied land ownership rights,” says Ebrima Dem, WIFE's project leader. “Through this project we're turning these same women into entrepreneurs.”

Phase 1 of WIFE was a success, having trained 300 women in gardening management and entrepreneurship, re-fenced the garden and tilled it, put a metal gate for it and provided the women with seeds. The women also learned about marketing skills and tomato jam making.

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The pilot is at the moment funded through **1%CLUB**, an online crowd-funding organisation based in The Netherlands. WIFE also receives some of its volunteers through this organisation, where members sign up to offer their skills.

The project has big plans for July. Phase 2 intends to construct a storage room, which will help reduce produce spoilage and provide an open space that serves as a stall. The women will receive further training in vegetable conservation techniques and marketing skills, as well as establish the Dongoroba Women Farmers Association.

WIFE is still seeking more donations and volunteers to make phase 2 possible. Information on this project can be found right on their **1%CLUB** page, <http://1procentclub.nl/projects/WIFE2>



In the Media

July 5, 2013

Earth Charter - <http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/articles/977/1/Earth-Charter-Youth-Group-of-the-Month-Global-Unification-from-The-Gambia/Page1.html>

June 6, 2013

Business Fights Poverty - <http://www.businessfightspoverty.org/profiles/blogs/reducing-women-s-poverty-level-through-climate-smart-agricultur-1>

June 5, 2013

Human Centered Design Connect - http://www.hcdconnect.org/stories/reducing-women-2019-s-poverty-level-through-climate-smart-agricultural-community-development-in-the-gambia/?status_message=Story+edited

August 21, 2012

Daily News - <http://dailynews.gm/africa/gambia/article/gu-trains-over-300-women-gardeners-in-dongoroba>

June 19, 2012

Man Up Campaign: Stop Violence Against Women - <http://manupcampaign.org/index.php/action/item/the-wife-project>

March 21, 2012

Earth Charter - <http://earthcharterblog.wordpress.com/2012/03/21/gu-initiates-wife-project-in-dongoroba-village/>

March 13, 2012

The Point - <http://thepoint.gm/africa/gambia/article/women-initiative-project-for-dongoroba-village>

All Africa - <http://allafrica.com/stories/201203130967.html>

Observer - <http://observer.gm/africa/gambia/article/wife-to-enhance-horticultural-production-in-rural-gambia>

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