

**REPORT OF THE YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SKILLS ADVANCEMENT**  
**CENTRE**  
**(YESAC SO FAR)**



**SUBMITTED BY: THE FIELD OFFICER FOR KARAGA DISTRICT**

*16<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2012*

## **Introduction**

Northern Sector Action on Awareness Centre (NORSAAC) a Northern Based NGO in collaboration with Empower a USA based Non-Governmental Organization set up Bicycle Project in Karaga dubbed Youth Entrepreneurship and Skills Advancement Centre (YESAC) targeting the youth in the Karaga district. This project covers the entire Karaga district for the trainees to be drawn and trained.

Karaga district is a farming dominated population with bicycles as their major means of movement especially to their farms, work places and even carrying things and people to places including health centres for treatment more terrifying poor pregnant women for delivery. The maintenance and repairs of this bicycles could be a priority as it is their legs but there exist inadequate bicycle mechanics in the district, and it always create a lot of difficulties in finding ways to places especially to farms when these bicycles are down or broken. Also, more of the youth have unfortunately not in school and have nothing doing for a living except the long adage of farming and. The youth aged 15 to 25 years who are out of school either drop outs or totally not had any formal education at all, have needs either economically or socially which obviously must be met. But the unfortunate question is how,

when these people have nothing doing and are always moving after sheds all day.



*A farm located very far from the residence*

Given the above NORSAAC has identified that the situation should be arrested by equipping these people with some amount of economic skills that would make them entrepreneurs of their own to avert the unscrupulous devil finding work for the idle hands. NORSAAC through the Empower is implementing the bicycle repairs and maintenance project in the Karaga district which aims at providing skills for the youth for their future development.

### **Purpose**

Purpose of the project was to provide modern skills for the youth to make them self-employed and economically stable in their communities. The project further aims at creating opportunities for young people in the district to acquire financial literacy skills and general life skills education to make them productive in their communities and the nation as a whole.

The youth aged 15 – 25 years would be trained in bicycles repairs and maintenance services in order to improve the living standard of the youth. The target group were supposed to be both boys and girls but unfortunately, the current trainees are who are still ongoing the training are only boys.

## **ACTIVITIES CARRIED SO FAR IN THE CENTRE**

### **1. Meeting with the Karaga Assembly and NORSAA Team on the EMpower Project**

The meeting with the staff of the Karaga assembly was to introduce the project to the assembly and seek for their acceptance and ownership. It was also aimed at seeking for an exit strategy to preclude a future conflict of who should own the project either assembly or the community.



The meeting was facilitated by the Director of NORSAA and issues were documented by the Field Officer for Karaga district and the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer. In presence were the Karaga District Deputy Coordinating Director, the Planning Officer, the Finance Officer and Officer in charge of Works department (Engineer). Though the gurus (The District Chief Executive and the District Coordinating Director) were not present but deliberations were as apt as it could be.

## **2. Meeting with the Traditional Authorities**

The approval of the Karaga District Assembly alone could not measure fullest recognition of the project in the district hence the traditional authorities were met. In the meeting NORSAAC and its activities were made known and the Empower project as the reason for being there was emphasized.

The Chief and elders were very happy for chosen Karaga district only for such a project and they quickly applauded their acceptance.

The District Planning officer said the project would train the youth in the district and NORSAAC needs land to build the training center, the accommodation for the trainees and rooms for the field officer.

The chief asked whether we have gotten a plot for the structures and the Field Officer said he first met Andom the chief's representatives (son) and a particular place was suggested. The chief said if that plot is good then cut the portion that would be enough for all the structures mentioned.

## **3. Recruitment of the instructor and the cook for the trainees**

The field officer was assigned to look for the instructor and the cook. He first of all conducted an unstructured interview with some of the people in the community to know the well recognized and good bicycle fitter who can handle trainees very well. Also he further made visits to the bicycle fitters in the community just to have adequate information for the decision to take about the instructor. He finally concluded on the current instructor as many hands pointed at him and a lot of people trouped to him on daily basis for repairs and maintenance.

On the part of the cook, there was the need to get a trusted person who I think could fear God in handling the food stuffs very well without squandering or using it for her own needs. Given that reason I selected a friend's wife who I know can be entrusted with the food stuff.

#### **4. Selection of the trainees**

In selecting the trainees, the knowledge of community entry skills was applied to get community leaders approval of the project and select an obedient person for the training. A visit to communities and meeting the community heads such as the assembly persons, chairmen and others were the procedures used in getting the trainees. After wards, a total of ten (10) boys and two (2) females were ear marked and have express interest. However, the two females resigned their acceptance after realizing that bicycle fitting was meant for boys. To complete the number, additional two (2) boys were later gotten to make up to twelve (12) trainees.

#### **5. Acquisition of food stuffs and other items**

The trainees are coming from different communities which are very far away from Karaga town where the training centre is situated. These trainees cannot be commuting from their communities and to the training centre each day given the distance. Hence, they must be accommodated and fed three (3) times daily (breakfast, lunch and supper).

Given the above background the following items were bought; bags of maize, bags of rice, bags of beans, bags of cowpea, gallons of cooking oil, packets of tin tomatoes and other ingredients. In addition other items like student mattresses, lanterns, water cans/gallons for storing water, kerosene for the lanterns, cups, plates among others were made available for the trainees. The acquisition of the above was meant to make the trainees feel at home and happy to be able to learn freely without many challenges.

#### **6. Renting of temporary accommodation**

A temporary structure to accommodate the trainees was rented in the community. This was necessitated by the fact that, the permanent structure was still under construction and time was going. In order to achieve targets there was the need for the training to start as soon as possible. The temporary structure was three rooms and rented for a period of three months.

## 7. Erection of temporary training structure

A temporary training structure to kick start training was also in place. To do this roofing sticks and Zanamats were bought. Also, space was secured for the structure. This structure was used as the training ground for the bicycle trainees.

## 8. Trainees reported and training started

Training started on the 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2012. On the first week four of the trainees were there and the joined in the second week.

### 8.1 Number of trainees

Even though the selection process were made open to all males and female, however only boys reported. Two girls initially expressed interest but never reported due to stereotype and also they said they are feeling shy since majority of the trainees are boys. Hence, the centre started with exactly eleven (11) boys. In a month later two of them dropped because one needed to accompany his parents to farm and the other person joined Moto fitting. The centre is now moving on with ten trainees, they are

### Names of trainees, their communities and age

Number	Name of Trainee	Name of Community	Age of Trainee
1	Abdul-Razak Ahmed	Sung	21
2	Bawa Alhassan	Shellanyili	20
3	Tahiru Alhassan	Tong	15
4	Adam Kamaldeen	Bagli	17
5	Saani Abdullai	Kuduli	18
6	Yahaya Issahaka	Bagurugu	20
7	Imoro Ibrahim	Kumoayili	17
8	Yakubu Karim	Langogu	18
9	Alhassan Braimah	Nyong Nayili	22

## **8.2 Attendance and Punctuality**

With regards to punctuality, the attendance level of the trainees ranges from six to eight. The highest attendance ever recorded was the total number of the trainees and this was after two months the trainees were reported. The lowest attendance ever recorded has been three on a particular Monday when the trainees were reporting back from their communities when rain fell in the morning. Many reasons accounted for their absence in some instances and these include funerals, naming ceremonies, farming activities and calls by their parents to run errands on their behave.

## **8.3 Understanding level of trainees**

For the four to five months of training so far, at least six of the trainees can execute the following repairs and maintenance work without supervision

- ✦ Fixing bicycle spokes
- ✦ Servicing of a bicycle
- ✦ Wheel straightening
- ✦ Puncture mending
- ✦ Easy identification of problems in bicycles

The same number of trainees can execute fixing bearings of bicycles (both front and back wheels) with very little supervision. And three of them cannot execute the above functions without supervision.

## **9. Monitoring visits by the Programmes Coordinator and the M & E officer of NORSAAC**

As expected the Programmes Coordinator and the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer paid visit to the centre and the trainees. The visit was to see the progress made and to also have a feel and sight of the activities undertaking in the centre to ensure that issues conform with agreements in the office. Also, it is the duty of the Programmes Coordinator to see how



scheduled activities are implemented and hence she monitors. In addition, tracking and matching performance against targets as the duty of the M and E officer should be executed and hence she also monitors. During their visit they had the opportunity to chart with the trainees and the instructor and finally the visit was successful as recommendations were made for effective execution of duties.

### **10. Construction of the permanent site started**

The construction started with the acquisition of land or plot from the authorities of the Karaga Traditional Council. This was followed by the need for the plot to be demarcated and a site plan developed. The development of the site plan helps to preserve the ownership and avoid future conflicts about the land.

To kick start the construction, the plot was cleared and necessary arrangements were made to acquire materials for the construction. The materials acquired are; 11 packets of roofing sheets (zinc), 40 bags of cement, 24 trips of sand, 10 buckets of paint, 2 trips of sea sand, 11 packets of roofing nails and 6 packets of others nails, 160 (2x6) wood and 20 yards of binding wires.



Labour for the construction was provided by the people of Karaga at a fee. Some received wages and others received workmanship. The construction involved the building phase where the local builder used the molded muds to build. Here a builder was contracted, 10 molders were used and 11 carriers were also used to put sand and water on its feet.

The roofing phase also tap the expertise of Karaga carpenters to joined wood, zinc and nails together to prevent the buildings from the hazards of rainfall. After this face, there was the need to protect the walls and also make the bear grounds attractive, hence the skills of masons in the Karaga town were utilized.

For the building to look beautify and be seen completed there was the need for painting and this was exhibited the some people in the sung community.



*Training centre*



*Accommodation for the trainees*

### **11. Monitoring visits by the director of NORSAAC**

The purpose of his visit was to determine progress made on the empower project and the extend of work on the training centre which was under construction.

The activities he under tool during the visit included the following; Examine progress of work on the centre, Interact with trainees and instructor, Discuss accommodation and feeding

issues, Examine the level of Assembly involvement in the project, Agree opening of centre and its management.

In his observation he stated his general observations which is the progress of work was quite impressive and the field officer was on top of the job except that his documentation was poor.

Also worth mentioning in his presentation was the general recommendations. He said there should be a training guide to control the activities of the centre. He added that we should not see ourselves to be so much afraid of dropouts especially when we believe we are doing the right thing. Some of the children could be truants and will need to be disciplined and should not bother if they leave the place because of discipline.

Director urged the field officer to also ensure that family members of the instructor as well as visitors are kept away from the centre unless they have services to seek.

## **12. Launching of the permanent training centre**

The Youth Entrepreneurship and Skills Advancement Centre (YESAC) was dully launch in the Karaga and the district's stakeholders were informed about the activities that are to be undertaken in the centre. During the launch the stakeholders, the parents of the trainees and the entire people of the district's support in making the centre a success was sort.

For the launch the presence of the District Chief Executive (DCE) and the District Coordinating Director (DCD) were highly needed but efforts to get them proved futile. A date was later agreed upon by the District Deputy Coordinating Director (DDCD) to be on 12th of June, 2012. This date was later communicated to NORSAAC and necessary arrangements were made to send request for the meeting. Letters of invitation stating the purpose and need

for participants to be present were written and sent.



*Chief of Karaga Officially opening the centre (Sword Cutting)*

In terms of facilitation and participation, the meeting was facilitated by the field officer for the district and Chaired by the Welfare Officer of the Karaga district. In presence of the meeting were the chief of Karaga, traditional leaders, religious leaders, staff of the Karaga district assembly, assemblypersons of the district, parents of the trainees among other. In all 78 people participated, these comprise of 57 males and 21 females.

During the launch, a speech was delivered by the Director of NORSAAC where he shared with the audience the activities of NORSAAC and the idea behind the formation of bicycle training.



*Director of NORSAAC presenting a speech during the launch of YESAC*

He said, a one year partnership has been signed with Empower (an American nongovernmental organization) to set up this centre in the Karaga district of the Northern Region. He added the activities that are to be undertaken in the centre, thus, train 25 young people on bicycle repair within the project period. In addition to this, 50 young people both males and females will receive financial literacy training to build up their skills in managing finances in their businesses.

In his concluding words, he requested for the continuous support from all stakeholders to enable NORSAAC complete the centre in the near future. He mentioned the things that are needed, which includes a kitchen/ a cooking place for the centre, toilet facilities, a fence for protection, electricity, portable water and so on.

### **13. Checking in of the trainees to the permanent structure**

The trainees are now receiving training and finding shelter in their new structure. They seem to like the place and are happy about the beauty of the place.



## **14. Achievements**

The centre has so far achieved followings;

- ✦ Trainees are receiving training in the centre
- ✦ Most of the trainees became well versed on how to use the tools, because they could dismantle and assembly bicycles with the use of the tools.
- ✦ The existence of the permanent structure for the training and accommodation for the trainees are made available for use.
- ✦ The involvement of the district assembly and the traditional authorities is highly commendable
- ✦ Existence of good relationship between the instructor and the trainees.
- ✦ Existence of good relationship among the trainees
- ✦ The centre has not encountered any interruption in the course of their stay and the training process.

## **Challenges**

- ✦ No lights at the centre and this makes the place very dark and scary at night
- ✦ The trainees travel to far places in search for water
- ✦ Difficulty to control few of the trainees concerning their attendance
- ✦ Poor monitoring by most of the beneficiary parents/guidance

## **Recommendation / Way Forward**

- ✦ The assembly should be lobbied for the extension of electricity to the centre.
- ✦ Intensive monitoring strategies should be adopted by parents and external supervisors from NORSAAC office.
- ✦ Periodic review and evaluation meeting should be put in place with the trainees to know how far they have gone.