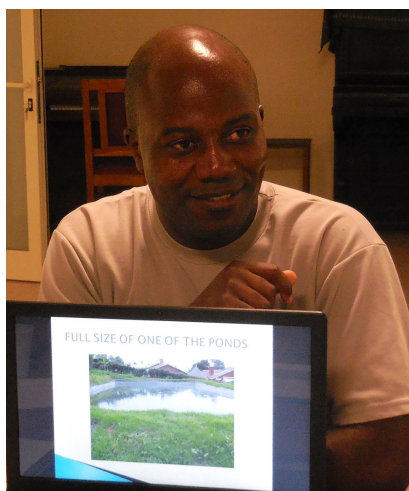


Gachuba Community Development Project (GACODEP), Kenya



Fr. Benard Isanda, CMM, shares a project in Kenya of providing employment to rural areas so that the people do not migrate to the cities for jobs that are not available. This pond was made for 20,000 fish. Currently, the population is 10,000 catfish and tilapia. Men are employed to care for the pond, feeding and cleaning the fish to be sold locally.

The growing number of individuals and families in rural Kenya with unimproved livelihood has led to the increase in untold sufferings and migration for 'greener pastures' and drug abuse. In 2012, this situation prompted me to bring together families, which now number 40, to analyze the situation, discover their strengths/weaknesses/ opportunities, and build on their strengths in order to transform themselves, families, the community and the society.

Thus, a group was formed and registered by the Kenyan Government as Gachuba Community Development Project (GACODEP) as a self help group with Fr. Lawrence of Kisii Diocese as the patron and Benard Isanda of the Missionaries of Mariannhill as the advisor to help the members know more, do more, have more in order in the process of leading to integral human development or as a Missionary of Mariannhill, Fr. Bernhard Huss put it, as our mission to promote "Better fields, Better homes and Better hearts".

Through resource mobilization from the members and supporters, the group has raised chickens locally, constructed poultry houses that can accommodate 2,000 chickens (currently 400), dug a bore hole to make water available, constructed 3 fish ponds (currently populated by 17,000 fishes), purchased one acre of land for expansion of activities and raise cattle as well as planting passion fruit and vegetables. As a result, income is generated, livelihoods improved, employment created with around 20 people working in various aspects of the project—management, harvesting and delivery to the customers—and drug abuse is reduced!

Instead of people migrating to 'Europe for greener pastures' and dying in the Mediterranean sea/getting trafficked/suffering xenophobic attacks/being wounded/dying, or taking years of roundtable discussions on the way to move forward, knowing that the poor cannot wait, small practical steps taken as individuals and as a community such as these which 'take Europe to where people are' could be of help!

While talking tough or erecting walls or enacting strict laws in the Mediterranean will not stop migrants from making desperate journeys, helping them meet their expectations and yearnings of improving their lives will stop them and this is our mission, this is our vocation as in the tenets of the Gospel and stipulated in JPIC and UN rights in the Sustainable Development Goals.

Fr. Benard Isanda CMM