

## Rural Development – Integrating the Poor

### Challenges

Economic development often entails high environmental costs and widening income gaps. Rural areas are mostly disadvantaged in their access to major markets. The majority



of the rural population, in particular small farmers, women and minorities, are poor by national standards. These social groups only have limited options concerning their involvement in mainstream development. Moreover, unsustainable production techniques threaten the prospects of future generations.

### GFA Concepts and Services

Sustainable development in rural areas requires a comprehensive and cross-cutting approach to achieve 'pro-poor' and 'green' growth. Because of the variety of conditions regarding natural and human resources, there can be no blueprints. GFA concepts are therefore based on sound and specific situation analyses. Selecting from a diversity of state-of-the-art tools and methods, GFA services are tailor-made packages of interventions that best meet rural development needs. Depending on the situation, the services we offer are modular combinations of several of the following intervention options.

**Poverty Reduction and Social Development** Our teams of experts implement national poverty reduction and food security strategies at the local level. They integrate marginalized population groups and open gender-specific opportunities. GFA specialists foster participatory planning, community development, administrative decentralization and democratic institution building.

**Environment and Natural Resources** GFA experts strive for the protection and sustainable use of natural resources in conservation areas and buffer zones, land use planning, and land management. Sustainability principles also rule community forestry as well as climate change adaptation and mitigation measures at local levels.

**Territorial Development** Through participatory assessments of competitive advantages, GFA assists boosting regional competitiveness as well as local economic development. To our teams, planning and implementing needs-based, small-scale rural infrastructure often is a point of departure.

**Economic Development** GFA specializes in participatory agricultural extension, low-input strategies, and increasing agricultural productivity and market orientation in a sustainable fashion. Off-farm income opportunities and the processing of primary products from agriculture and forestry are



crucial elements of our trade and marketing efforts. We also promote producer groups, associations and cooperatives by facilitating production clusters and local value chains and connecting these to international supply links. Similarly, GFA experts assist public and private service providers and small enterprises in rural areas, e.g. by facilitating small-scale credit programs or providing microfinance.

## GFA at Work

### Rural Development, Vietnam GIZ, 2003–2009

The project supported the integration of ethnic minorities into the economic development in Dak Lak Province. Aiming at improving the living conditions of these marginalized



groups, major components comprised participatory planning at the local level, upland agriculture and community forestry. The specific consideration of the requirements and socio-cultural background of the ethnic minorities was a key to the anticipated adjustments of the regulatory framework for rural development.

**Contract Value: €4,266,300**

### Natural Resource Management, Ethiopia KfW, 2005–2010

GFA has been managing the financial assistance component of this German Cooperation Program in Ethiopia. Based on participatory land use planning, investments aiming at soil and water conservation are financed. The objective is to rehabilitate and secure fields and pasture land as a basis for developing agricultural activities further. Our team introduced labor-intensive soil and water conservation measures on communal lands to increase agricultural productivity. Also, the GFA specialists support decentralized communities and farmers in managing investment funds, establishing maintenance concepts and in monitoring the use and sustainability of investments.

**Contract Value: €2,600,000**

### Poverty Reduction, Dominican Republic/Haiti GIZ, 2008–2010

The project aims at poverty reduction through the sustainable use of natural resources in the cross-border catchment area of Rio Artibonito. Our experts contribute to improving national and cross-border development strategies, community development and participatory processes. GFA also consults on marketing strategies for local services and agricultural products as well as land use planning and natural resource management. Awareness about the shared responsibility for the whole river catchment area is needed to put the Dominican-Haitian cross-border cooperation to life.

**Contract Value: €1,565,500**

### Argan Forest Management, Morocco EC, 2004–2009

GFA supported the production and marketing of high value edible and cosmetic oil of the endemic Argan tree in Morocco. Women cooperatives received technical support to bring their facilities and production process up to international efficiency, hygiene and social standards. Marketing groups were established and supported by GFA experts who advised them on product lines, logo design and long-term relations with clients. Other activities GFA assisted were quality control, research programs, trainings and Argan tree plantations on public and private land.

**Contract Value: €2,100,000**



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