

## Training and supporting fisher families in Ussangoda to establish home gardens



Bitter melon home garden, Sri Lanka © K. Ekaratne

alternative livelihood activities, specifically home gardening of pulses and vegetables such as ladies' finger, millet, green gram, chilli, onion and cowpea.

### Target beneficiaries

Forty fisher families in the RUK area.

### Outputs

- ▶ Delivery of awareness programmes on home gardening, gender equality and financial management.
- ▶ Provision of vegetable seed and fruit plants.
- ▶ Establishment of 40 home gardens.
- ▶ Construction of protective cages for plants in home gardens.
- ▶ Cultivation of vegetables, millet, pulses and fruits.
- ▶ Cleaning of a 2-km stretch of beach.

### Accomplishments and challenges

The project created 40 home gardens to provide extra income for poor fisher families. Through awareness programmes and other activities, the beneficiaries' awareness of agricultural practices, financial management and gender equality was enhanced.

Forty fisher families were introduced to agriculture, which was a new experience for them but has served to raise household incomes and awareness of key local development issues.

Women in the fisher families were trained and assisted in planting their home gardens with various crops. The beneficiary families gained a regular supply of fresh vegetables, fruits and pulses, and were able to sell their surplus produce at the weekly village fair, bringing in extra income.



#### LOCATION

Rekawa, Ussangoda and Kalametiya (RUK) area, Sri Lanka

#### PRIORITY POWS

- Strategies for Management
- Civil Society Engagement
- Sustainable Livelihoods

#### DURATION

Ten months

#### MFF GRANT AMOUNT

US\$3,240

### Objectives

This project had five objectives:

- 1 to enhance the economic status of the community;
- 2 to promote gender equality;
- 3 to improve knowledge of financial management;
- 4 to protect and sustainably manage the coastal ecosystem; and
- 5 to provide an alternative source of income.

### Background

Although surrounded by rich environmental resources, fishing communities in the RUK area lack economic stability, gender equality and appropriate knowledge for development. The Meth Sith Development Organisation sought to address all three deficiencies by conducting awareness programmes on nature conservation, financial management and gender equality. It also aimed to promote

### **Challenges**

The main challenge was a severe drought that hindered growth of the home gardens.

### **Contributions to cross-cutting themes**

#### **Gender equality**

This project sought to promote and improve gender equality amongst its beneficiary fami-

lies, focusing on women as the managers of home gardens.

#### **Lessons learned**

To maintain transparency, it is important to keep the local authority well-informed of ongoing village activities.

*“The project gave the beneficiaries food security and a pleasant environment.”*

— MRS DHANESHWARI DAHANAYAKE,  
PROJECT MANAGER

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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