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Degree Programme in Social Services  
Bachelor of Social Services  
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# A SOCIAL WELFARE APPROACH IN BUILDING SYNERGY TO RURAL ENTREPRENEURS

**A Case of Finnico Organisation in Ideato North Local Government Area in Nigeria**

## ABSTRACT

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The aim of this project thesis is to raise awareness through information sharing and by activating local stakeholders on the issues of poverty alleviation, in line with one of the millennium development goals of the United Nations which is:" declaring emergency against poverty and hunger in the developing countries. "And in this case the rural communities of Ideato North Local Government Area of Imo State, Nigeria.

In this project, the social welfare officer and manager, utilized a mixed method approach which involved concept definition, data collection, data analysis, partner acquisition and a unique intervention method that matches the needs of the local community to deliver the objective of the project. The data collection process was carried out using an online survey tool and video interviews. The questionnaires were sent to the indigenes and stakeholders of the local community and 43 responses were received. The data obtained showed that women are the most affected by the challenges posed by poverty.

The project recorded some significant success ratings and positive feedbacks from the participants, partners and the residents of the local community. Their feedbacks where gathered through follow-ups and letters of commendations. The people welcomed the idea and encouraged the stakeholders to do it again because of the measure of added value it has brought to the community with no added cost on their side.

At the end, the objective of alleviating poverty through new knowledge base was achieved. This is because the training incentives created a new awareness in the community among the women, who applied the knowledge received in various ways to optimize their trade skills, which eventually helped them to create employment opportunities for the women and youths of the community.

One of the project's key performance indicator is the fact that the project activated the team spirit of the rural participants, and it also opened more opportunities for mutual cooperation through networking. This should be further developed to cater for all genders in the community.

**Keywords:** Social Welfare, Building Synergy, Social Enterprise, Poverty Alleviation, Capacity Building, Millennium Development Goals.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis idea was born out of the desire as a social welfare officer of the Finnish-Nigerian Forum for commerce and Investment (FINNICO Organisation), to use a social welfare approach in building synergy for rural entrepreneurs with a view to alleviating the excruciating impacts of poverty and marginalization, which is becoming unbearable, especially amongst the rural dwellers in Ideato North population.

This idea however was in response to a clarion call by participants of the World Summit 2017 on Peace, Security and Human development, organized by the Universal Peace Federation, International Association of Parliamentarians for peace with the Theme: "Addressing the critical challenges of our time: Peace, Security and Human Development". My role however in Finnico organisation as a social work professional is to act as a change agent and bring succour to the downtrodden.

According to the United Nations facts and figures on the Millennium Development Goals no 1, which objective is to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, 783 million people globally live below the international less than US\$1.90 per person per day, and most of the people in this category are found in two regions of Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, a region where Nigeria has a fair share of the extreme poor population. It is also said that globally, there are 122 women aged 25 to 34 living in extreme poverty for every 100 men of the same age group (UN, 2017). A reason Finnico Ry choose women as the target group for the project intervention.

Ewhrudjakpor, (2008), however corroborated the above assertion in his publication, that there has been a sharp decline in general human living condition in Nigeria since 1975. According to Ewhrudjakpor, (2008), available data indicate that from 1980 to 2006, real income per head, con-

sumption, socio-economic and psychological well-being of the Nigerian people has gone below accepted levels. There was however improvement in the people's living condition, largely due to oil boom in the subsequent years. Unfortunately, the situation got worst as at 2016 as the nation entered into recession occasioned by global lower oil price and decline in government revenue which pushed Nigeria's poverty index level to its all time high of 72%, according to Ripples Nigeria, quoting Fitch reports in its September 14<sup>th</sup>.2016 publication.

It is on note however, that the United Nations has spent a huge amount of money on intervention supports, to developing countries through various government agencies and NGO's, without an appreciable impact on the critical mass of the society who are the core targets of the relief materials, as only the elites became the beneficiaries of some projects designed by the state (Niyonkuru, F., 2016) .This is more evident in Nigeria, the pilot country for this innovative approach by Finnico Organisation, as corruption and dearth of social institutions has remained a major clog in any appreciable effort to tackle the ever growing gap between the rich and the poor. (Finnico, 2018)

Our unfortunate realization is that both the national and local governments lack the requisite knowledge on how to address the issues of the perennial poverty, and its by-products of youth restiveness, the social services is non-existent, and the cooperative organizations also lack knowledge on how to render their cooperative responsibilities, which informed the professional involvement of Finnico Organisation to fill the knowledge gap.

Going further, our main objective is to find a social welfare approach in building synergy between the rural Small and Medium-scale Entrepreneurs (SMEs), local partners and relevant funding agencies, which would guarantee a proper networking and information sharing on business and investment opportunities, this product thesis achieved the above by organ-

ising training workshops that gave the participants the tools to get new information, that empowers them towards self-reliance and enhancing their overall wellbeing and community development, and instilling the synergic consciousness amongst the rural people and relevant stakeholders, with a view to putting in place a sustainable framework that would create an economic system that guarantees freedom and empowerment and equality amongst the people, as our contribution to this shared global challenge.

### 1.1 Project Objectives

The aim of this project thesis however is to alleviate poverty, which is a long-term goal of Finnico Organisation and creating a new knowledge base for the rural women of Ideato local government areas, for example, exposing them to new information on how to increase their agricultural productivity, new improved seedlings, preservations, packaging including how to access for available funds. We achieved these through customized workshops, and creation of platforms that will at long term ensure a sustainable source of income. In essence, this objective when implemented is going to improve the knowledge deficit prevalent in this locality.

It has been generally proposed by many scholars and other experts that entrepreneurship is a potent means for economic development and poverty alleviation in poor stricken and low-income countries of west Africa (Mead and Liedholm, 1998). However, since women are the worst affected and most vulnerable, the project was targeted towards them in realization of the fact that mothers are the builders of the society, while recognizing the age long truism that families are the micro unit of the society. When the women are empowered, the society is safer.

To ensure the realization of the set objective, since Finnico Organisation does not have all the requisite resources, we partnered with some local

organisations in Nigeria like the Mind Miners Initiative, an NGO based in Nigeria, and other stakeholders. It is worthy to note that these local partners provided the bulk of the logistics and manpower, for the success of the seminar.

## 1.2 Project Motivation

Prior to this innovative project, there was no synergy in the rural communities and local markets, to address the issues of poverty and its devastating effects on rural dwellers in many developing countries, especially in Ideato Local Governments of Imo State, Nigeria. Therefore, Finnico Organisation as a humanitarian Non-For-Profit organization having assessed this devastating impact of poverty decided to invest in strategies and action plans to find a sustainable and impact-oriented solution to the problems.

There is obvious information and knowledge gap, no existing systems to create harmony that is needed for productivity, and of course no data centre where small scale local producers of certain goods and services could search to locate potential buyers of their products.

## 1.3 Project Pilot Community

Ideato North is a Local Government Area in Imo State, Nigeria, created in 1976 as Ideato Local Government, but was later divided into Ideato North, and Ideato South, with its administrative headquarters in Urualla. As of 2011, the total population of the local government was 156,161(Nigeria Census, 2006). The economic mainstay of the residents of this community is subsistent agriculture and commerce - predominantly farmers and petty traders. But due to poor government motivation, and lack of fund and other facilities, they remain in subsistent level, and can barely produce enough that could feed the ever-growing population.

However, lack of facilities for preservation, and ready markets are also major impediments, which affects the living standards of the people and continues to aggravate the impact of poverty in the community. The main cash crops produced by the people of Ideato, are maize, yam, palm oil, groundnut, melon, cotton, cocoa, breadfruit, cocoyam etc. This local government is within the tropical rainforests of West Africa, which gives her the advantage of growing varieties of tropical agricultural crops (Nigeria Census 2006)

## 2. BACKGROUND (FINNICO Organization)

The Finnish-Nigerian Forum for Commerce and Investment is an independent, business-information, volunteer driven and not-for-profit organisation whose mission is to lead, promote, facilitate and serve the Finland business community wishing to explore business opportunities in Nigeria. Established in 2010 and registered with the Finnish Patent Registry, Finnico Organisation strives to provide networking opportunities, as well as unique Chamber-centric services, that Finnish business community intending to do business in Nigeria will turn to when planning to explore business opportunities in Nigeria. Finnico Organisation also drives social welfare intervention in the rural areas of Nigeria, as a way of their cooperate responsibilities.

Realising the fact that increased inequality imposes a psychological burden that diminishes the wellbeing of the entire society (Wilkinson 1997). The working life partners of this thesis project is Finnico Organisation, who provided the initial budget of 2000 euros that was used for flight ticket, hotel accommodations and local logistics and other variables, decided that to have a healthy and safe society, the root cause of social injustice should be tackled, and poverty reduced to its barest minimum.

An NGO based Finland and Nigeria, Finnico Organisation has been at the forefront in community developments initiatives. The organisation through seminars and mentorship programs helps small and growing businesses in finding their bearings and acquiring the requisite skills that will ensure the creation of sustainable job and promotion of equality amongst all the segments of the society. (Finnico, 2017).

In no doubt, Finnico Organisation understands the United Nations Millennium developments goals, as it concerns poverty and the urgent need to

declare an emergency against its debilitating impacts on the global communities, especially the developing world, where corruption and leadership failures have assumed an epidemic proportion.

## 2.1 United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDG and SDG)

Millennium development goals (MDG) and Social development goals (SDG) are part of the objectives of this project commissioning organisation (FINNICO Organisation). The SDG and MDG goals include: poverty eradication, and job creation. Ban Ki-Moon, the UN Secretary General, in his Millennium Development Goals Report of 2009 sounded an alarm to the global communities on the impending doom of humanity if they fail to decisively tackle extreme poverty, hunger, illiteracy and disease.

Ban Ki-Moon specifically reminded them of their targets towards achieving gender equality, environmental sustainability and a global partnership for development, but regretted that the World body is moving too slowly in meeting the goals. He further maintained that there are already global economic crises staring the world in the face, which if not addressed, could plunge millions more into poverty, which have the tendency of posing a great risk of social and political unrest. It was indeed a clarion call to save humanity, especially those from the developing world (UN-MDG, 2009)

## 2.2 Associate Project Partners

Based on the information from paragraph 2.1 above, building up strong ties with local and international partners and stakeholders is very essential for the success and sustainability of this project now and in the future. In view of this, Finnish-Nigeria for commerce and investment developed a project set to curtail poverty in rural areas and assigned their welfare officer Mr Obinna Kelechi Oliaku to collaborate with relevant NGOs, governmental agencies and private sectors.

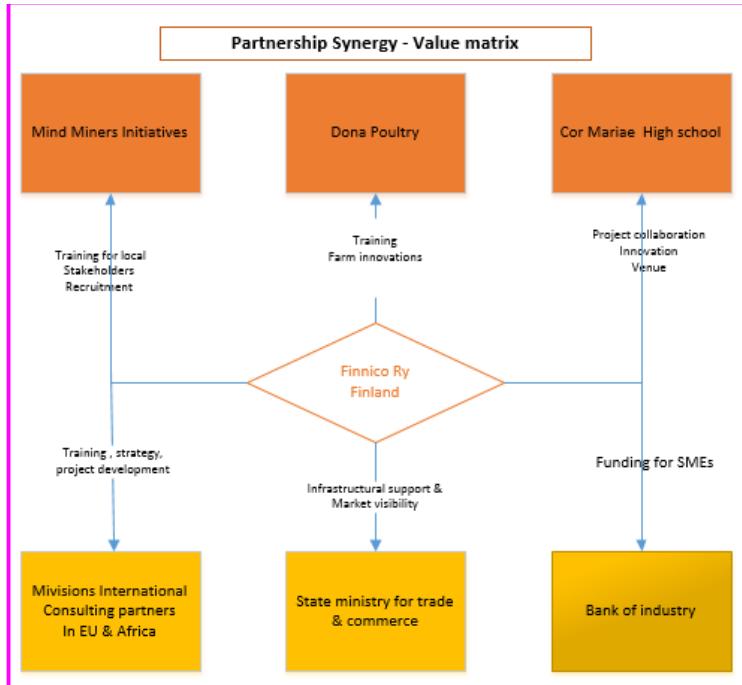


Figure 1: Partner value matrix

The figure 1 above, showcases the key elements of the project partnership synergy to demonstrate how the collaborations added advantage such as youth and women, empowerment and education, which ultimately helps rural women to recognise their leadership, management and organisational potentials in the effort to curtail poverty in the society.

Figure 2 below shows the social welfare officer's opening address at the training workshop in 2017. After which the baton was passed to the second speaker who led the training on new agricultural innovation breakthroughs, as an effort to encourage women on the need for innovative agricultural practices to alleviate food shortage in the community as demonstrated in figure 3 below, which was included as part of the project documentation.

The process of developing this project with the topic: Building Synergy for SMEs in Ideato North local government area, was conceptualized in the beginning of 2016 as part of Finnico Organisations social welfare intervention in Ideato North local government area, and was scheduled to last for

three months for the first phase which was the field work proper, to achieve maximum impact, but due to paucity of funds, the project delayed. Eventually, the first phase of the project which is pre-project planning commenced and lasted for three months, these includes the conceptualization of the project ideas, budgeting and partner identification, all these were handled by me as the supervisor from May to June 2017.

However, after securing partners and signing the partnership agreements, the field work of the project which includes data collections, data analysis and workshops commenced and was carried out between August to November in 2017, that is August, September and November respectively. The data collection exercise was carried out in the host community in Nigeria using both paper questionnaire formats and online survey tool (survey monkey).

After the completion of the second phase which is the field work, I started in earnest to collect the findings, followed by the evaluation of the project outcome, and the writing of the report, this took me four months to complete, from December 2017 to March 2019. As the social welfare officer of the Finnico Organisation, I handled the core elements of the project from conceptualization, budgeting, partner identification, data collection, organisation of the workshop in cooperation with the local partners and relevant stakeholders, together we also draw the findings and evaluation.

I assigned the role of contracting the resource persons for the workshops and the handling of the logistics to the managements of Mind Miners Initiatives, who are our local partners. For the fact that I am not a resident of the pilot community, I interfaced with the local partners during the research and proposals to draw the budget for proper checks and balances, with a view to maintaining quality and ensure that we meet up with the time frame.

The workshop was segmented into three categories according to the individual needs of the participants, age, trade skills and educational backgrounds. The first group which was identified as group (A), received trainings on new agro innovations (see fig.3), and soft skills, these includes business negotiating skills, persuasion, presentations and team work. Group (B) where trained on food packaging and effective business networking using modern social media platforms, while group (C) received trainings on new agro innovations and information on available agro support loans.



Figure 2: Workshop Opening Address

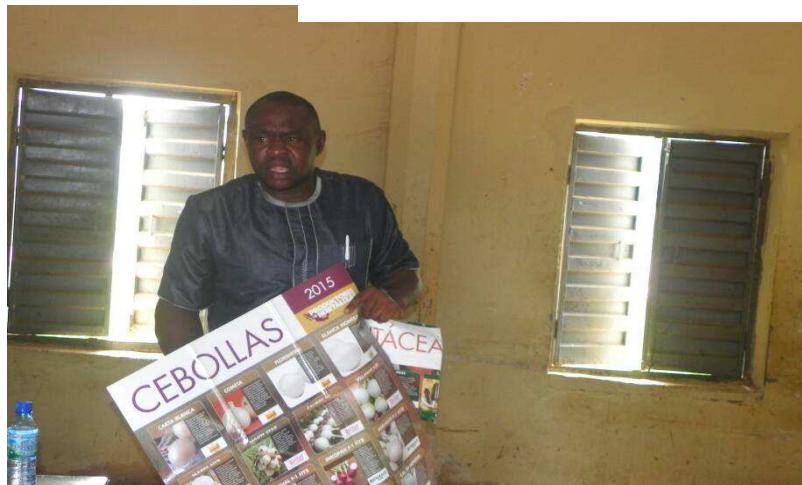


Figure 3: Training on Agro Innovation

Partners such as Mind Miners Initiative shown in figure 4 and 5 below, recognises the role of women in building a formidable poverty alleviation framework in collaboration with stakeholders. They believe that the role of women is important to the successful implementation of the subject of welfare intervention towards poverty reduction.



*Figure 4: Training on Women Empowerment and soft skills.*



*Figure 5: Cross section of the workshop Participants*

Most of our project partners worked in line with the Finnico Organisation project specifications to achieve the essential objectives through practical engagement with the community residents. Mind Miners Initiatives however, spearheaded workshops and seminars, and outreaches to the less

privileged of the society. They have been at the fore-front in sensitizing, advocating and protecting women against such oppressive cultures like female genital mutilation, which is practiced in some parts of Nigeria, and also organise forums that centres mainly on steps for financial independence, leadership, and socio-economic problems (Mind Miners Initiative Nigeria, 2019)

The stakeholders in their various capacities brought together their expertise in the full-scale project execution, evaluation and follow ups to ensure that Social welfare parameters were adopted throughout the project life cycle. The knowledge and field experiences of each of the partners, especially Mind Miners Initiative as mentioned above, were also a key factor in the partner selection exercises. We also ensure that there was clear project-objective alignment for all the partners. This act was demonstrated by signing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and a commitment agreement, which protects the project and the all the parties involved therein.

### 2.3 Similar Project Ideas

A lot of similar projects have been carried out in many parts of the world, especially in poverty ridden areas of Asia and Africa, but our new innovative approach as this thesis project tends to portray will generate a new knowledge base through trainings and re-trainings, it will also create avenue for networking and information data-bank to improve for maximum impact the existing approaches.

Special mention is the Susila Dharma Indonesia (SDI), funded by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA) which offers micro credit grants for economic recoveries in West Java and Pangandaran. Like Finnico, they complimented the micro-grant projects by organizing series of training and workshops for capacity build-

ing (UN-OCHA, 2007). Unfortunately, there seems to be concern to sustainability through networking.

There were found other organisations that employs similar ideas of poverty alleviation using social enterprises and capacity building as a tool. Chemonics is a good example which has executed developmental projects in almost 70 countries around the globe. But the fact remains that greater number of SMEs in the rural areas crumbled not due to lack of finance, but essentially due to lack of business management knowledge (Mind miners-initiative, 2017).

### 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

It would be pertinent to reiterate that the idea manifested in response to a global concern of the adverse effects of Poverty in the life of the rural dwellers, and its possible spill over effect on the overall security of the people and communities. There is no doubt that poverty and hunger are enablers of youth restiveness, and high rate of crimes in the rural communities, and should be declared an emergency for global peace and security.

Poverty has remained an intractable global challenge before now despite huge sums spent by UN annually on interventions. The global body in view of the urgency also went further to declare an emergency on poverty by enunciating the popular 17 Sustainable Development goals (SDGs) otherwise known as the Global goals with poverty as the number one. (UN-SDG, 2015) to alleviate poverty.

#### 3.1 The Concept of Poverty and Causes

Townsend, (2006) opined that people can be said to be in poverty when they lack enough income and other resources essential to obtain the conditions of life - the diets, material goods, amenities, standards and services - that would guarantee them certain roles and meet the obligations in their relationships and customs of their society.

Kareem, (2015) further concur that a concise and universally accepted definition of poverty is elusive because it affects several aspects of the human conditions including physical, moral and psychological. He therefore suggested that to conceptualize poverty, variety of criteria have been applied, sequel to which several analyses follows the conventional view of poverty because of in-sufficient income for securing basic goods and services.

In his article for the Borgen project on three challenges and solutions to global poverty, Zachary Wright opined that global poverty comes in diverse sizes and forms and suggested as some of the tools to effectively combat it, i.e. investing in open political and economic systems, promotion of education and health system improvement. (Wright, 2013). The missing link however in this and the Finnico Organisation project, is synergizing with those relevant agencies to tap through the existing talents of the locals for mutual benefits.

Furthermore, the nature of poverty problem in Nigeria as a country is multifaceted, this contributes to the widening gap between the overall well-being of people in the Ideato community. In analysing the causes of poverty, we can deduce that economic stagnation as the major causes of poverty in Nigeria, which is occasioned in my opinion by bad and anti-people-oriented government policies and systems, in a way of their failure to address the basic needs of the people, education, infrastructural development, and improve state service provisions.

The prevalence of poverty in Nigeria in no doubt remains a source of concern, as the poverty profile of Nigeria indicates that the incidences of poverty in Nigeria has remarkably increased since the 1980s. The available statistics from the UNDP (2010), shows that between 1980 and 1996, the percentage of the core poor rose from 6.2 percent to 29.3 percent, and declined to 22.0 percent in 2004. Omotola (2008), as quoted by Oshewolo (2010), avers that about 70% of the population now lives in abject poverty.

Though as this thesis tends to project, a number of factors are responsible for the poverty at the micro level amongst the women of Ideato North local government area, these are but not limited to inability to access funds to expand their businesses, lack of information which brings about knowledge deficit, lack of infrastructures are also another enabler of pov-

erty among the rural dwellers, however, at the meso level lack of government support system occasioned by poor government policies and programs contributes a great deal in increasing the poverty level of the communities.

### 3.2 The Empowerment Concept

Many a scholar have concluded that there is no clear definition of empowerment as a concept, suggesting rather that its definitions depend largely on the disciplines on which one applies it. Robert Adams in his book "Concepts of Empowerment" inferred that it is a better and practical option to explain empowerment in a variety of ways, instead of seeing it as an exclusive and unambiguous concept.

Poverty reduction on a large scale depends on empowering those who are most motivated to move out of poverty (Rayan, 2005). Therefore, in the field of social work and community development, empowering people is seen as a process of aiding both individuals and in extension the rural communities, by developing their capacities in order to influence their life situations (Zastrow, 2013).

Therefore, this human development and education intervention is to empower the rural women, so that they would put their hidden talents in greater use to solve their immediate needs. This would also engender equality and inclusiveness in a hitherto patriarchal society, where the women's place is said to be only in the kitchen.

### 3.3 Social Entrepreneurship Concept

According to Certo, S.T. and Miller, T., (2008), "social entrepreneurship refers to the identification, evaluation, and exploitation of opportunities that result in social value". Evidently, social entrepreneurship could be defined as an innovative approach of finding a market-based solution to deal with existing and potential socio-cultural, economic, environmental and other related problems confronting a people. The above could be achieved through the introduction of new products or services, or essentially through any other viable means that could address the various challenges.

Hill and McGowan (1999) as cited by Kareem, (2015) opined that entrepreneurship is a process which involves the effort of an individual or set of people identifying viable business opportunities in each environment or location, including obtaining and offering capacities to manage the resources required to utilize those opportunities. Social entrepreneurship has in recent time grown to a global movement that is producing solutions to a good number of the world's toughest problems and alter the way people hitherto think about social change (Bornstein & Davis, 2010).

The Finnico Organisation through her social welfare intervention, has taken to a new level in changing the mind-sets of people towards believing that no type of problem confronting the world today is insurmountable, which informed the reason why developed countries like United States of America, through organizations like Ashoka, Teach for America etc., and Canada through the Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network, have embraced social entrepreneurship as the most effective tool to renew and optimism, in societies where people have lost confidence in both the government and her social institutions (Born-stein & Davis, 2010).

### 3.4 Concept of Building Synergy

Merriam Webster dictionary defined Synergy as the increased effectiveness that results when two or more people or businesses work together, or a mutually advantageous conjunction or compatibility of distinct business participants or elements (as resources or efforts). (Miriam Webster, 1989).

Daryl Conner (2011) in his series “A process for building Organizational Synergy” opined that as a prelude to create and sustain synergistic relationships, there are two specific conditions to be met, for example, the individuals involved must show the willingness to engage in the pursuit of a goal with others, and demonstrate the abilities manifest in what is known as a four-phase model; as follows, Interacting, Appreciative Understanding, Integrating, and Implementation.

In this project “A Social Welfare Approach in Building Synergy”, all the core elements of this model above were adequately deployed. There were proper professional interactions that guaranteed an appreciable understanding between Finnico Organisation, our local partners and stakeholders which created trust, and the total deployment of all their wherewithal in ensuring a smooth cooperation, and implementation of the project.

He further propounded that a willingness to contribute to synergy is reflected in what he described as a “foxhole” relationship, which is a condition where people from diverse backgrounds are spore by a sense of urgency in addressing the situation confronting them.

#### 4.PROJECT DESIGN

This project is designed in consideration with key success elements such as data collection, time and partner involvement as a comprehensive mixed approach that is expected to produce a favourable outcome of poverty alleviation. Surveying and interviewing were both used to obtain some more descriptive data regarding the challenges facing women and youth entrepreneurs in the rural communities. The information that was needed during this project were practical information which were relayed through training workshops and mentorship, literature related to social welfare intervention and the stakeholders' long-standing experiences in tackling related issues.

The outcome of this thesis project is the alleviation of poverty in Ideato-North local government, with a special emphasis on empowering the rural women and creation of employment opportunities, which would consequently bring about reduction in rural urban migration, and general empowerment of the poor in the remote and neglected rural areas. The project afforded the participants the opportunity to learn new business ideas, latest agricultural innovations and effective preservation methods. These in no doubt increased their productivity, which in extension created more employment opportunities and self-reliance.

Finnico Organisation has noticed that small businesses especially within the rural areas do not have access to any form of government or private funding instruments, due to dearth of requisite information and networking among these rural entrepreneurs and relevant agencies, and against this backdrop, our organization is the first to set up an intervention framework in this community.

#### 4.1 The Urgency of Project Intervention

In no doubt, there is no better time to frontally tackle this issue of "Extreme Poverty" than now, owing to the thought-provoking exposition of one of the speakers at the World Summit 2017 on Peace, Security and Human development, where he stated that "there is no more serious threat to peace and security than poverty and especially inequality. Poverty is a social injustice that paves the way for all manifestations of violence under the guise of political, cultural, identity or religious conflicts." (Djabir, 2017)

The many different aspects of poverty and its effects, and the ever-increasing gap between the levels of people's well-being in especially the West African sub-region, compared with other developing regions of the World, made this project imperative. This is so when one considers the abundant human and material endowments in this region. There is no doubt the fact that the outcome of this project will go a long way in empowering the people and creating a veritable ground for an accelerated economic growth.

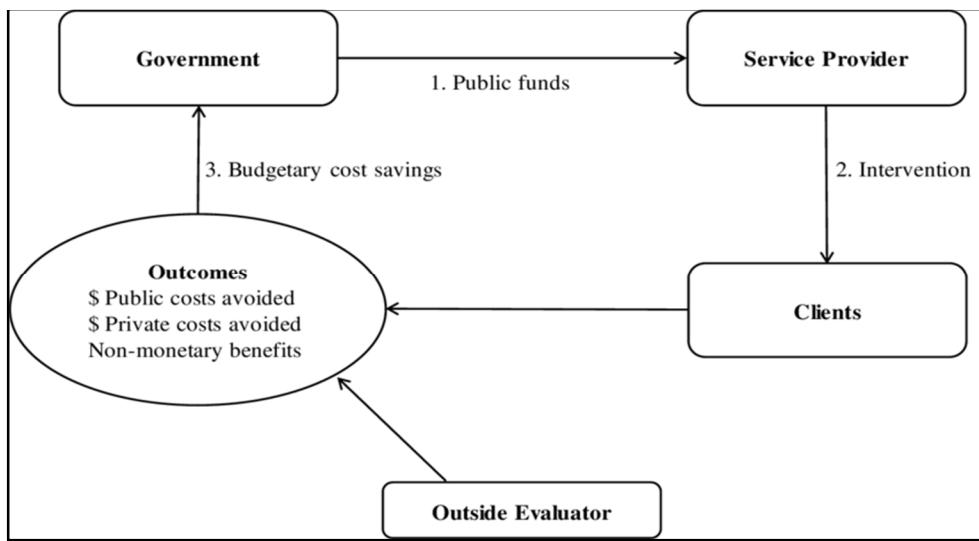
To achieve the most critical aspect of poverty reduction in these rural areas in line with the recommendations of the Millennium development goals (MDGs), rural and small-scale entrepreneurs should not only be encouraged, but provided with the requisite knowledge on how to effectively utilize their talents, through the introduction to new business innovations, and the right channels to access funds to enable them to maximize their potentials, which would ensure the improvement of their living standard.

#### 4.2 Social Welfare Intervention Model (SIP)

Finnico Organisation considers social welfare intervention model as part of the key elements for clear project implementation and management. A social welfare agency must imbibe the change agent mentality as a propeller for all its actions and activities. Asking key questions such as: How does the actions of our organisations and partners today, guarantees a safe environment, human development and economic benefit. This informs the basis for the adoption of a SIP model primarily to show all the levels of interaction that must be in place before, during and after the project life cycle.

Applying Daryl Conner (2011) theory of four-phase model as in page 17 above in relation to the SIP model, Finnico Organisation and its partners showed the willingness to work together in pursuit of a shared value and goals, they started the process through effective interaction on how the project would impact on the environment, and there socio-economic benefits derivable from it, and after reaching some kind of understanding and cooperation agreement reached, we commenced the project process by bringing together our material and intellectual resources, which culminated to a successful project execution in line with our set goals.

From figure 6 below, Finnico Organisation as social welfare agency considered carefully the role of the government agencies, service providers and participants, and weighing their contribution against all the anticipated outcomes in order to deliver relevant and measurable outcomes. In acting as a change agent and trying to build the capacity of the local inhabitants, Finnico Organisation and partners uses this model as an engagement roadmap to push and pull all the touch-points necessary to achieve working synergy that will deliver the set goals of this project.



*Figure 6. Visualizing the key concepts.*

In addition, as a team with common goals and objectives of combating the menace of poverty in this community we try to leverage on the meagre funds from Finnico Organisation and local donors respectively. The project has to be sizeable, on the budget and sustainable.

Despite the fact that the project succeeded in improving the capacity of the beneficiaries, and impacting on the community at large, the project from an outside evaluator's point of view was offered with zero cost to both the government and individual participants, while still maintaining the quality of services provided to the clients.

#### 4.3 Project Operational Process

From chapter 4 and sub chapter 4.2 above, creating a balance within versatile partner network is a key to successful project execution, especially for a project which is expected to deliver a steep turnaround in the welfare condition of the people. According to Heifetz, and Laurie (2001), to work well, since people within an organisation, and even partners brings in different experiences, values, beliefs and often contrasting viewpoints, hence partners need to have enough time and space for communication and understanding each other.

However, according to the five traps of performance measurement in this context which are: poor consultation with partners, poor consultation with the local communities, collection of irrelevant data, inadequate logistics and insufficient budget can hamper the operational process of the project, but the evaluation will reach higher accuracy results if the partners are able to prioritize on all the essential elements of a successful project execution before the commencement. Indeed, it may be better to maintain integrity and transparency in the process. Furthermore, running a controlled process would encourage our partners to keep up with the prescription of the project.

We also considered technical system implementation to enable effectiveness within the partner interfaces and to corroborate evaluations, comments, feedbacks or complaints whenever they want. One way to get the performance measure rolling along side with the partners' lifespan is to apply the continuous improvement model. According to Grumdahl (2010), Deming creates constancy of purpose towards improvement and training of members of a community, with the aim to become competitive and to enhance job creation.

#### 4.4 Project Data Collection

The data collection process is an intricate part of this project because we need the right data in order to gain in-depth, descriptive data about the situation. The questionnaire platform was used for primary data collection and the interviews and literatures were used for secondary data collection respectively. This kind of data supports the project objective since the aim is to gain information about feelings and individual opinions.

Besides this, this project data collection and analysis approach leaned towards exposing the causes of the knowledge deficit which has ultimately

produced an impoverished community seeking for external help. Apart from the theoretical part, the information will be gathered from youth and women entrepreneurs in order to access the level of social intervention that would be required for sustainable development.

Also, some selected individuals from different countries were interviewed to get more information regarding the state of their communities with similar challenges, and what they think is the most suitable policies or programmes that should be implemented to eradicate poverty within those communities. This way, a wider range of perspectives into what can be done to eradicate poverty within the community would be made from the data gathered.

## 5. PROJECT ETHICS

The first aspect of my ethical consideration while planning and executing this project, despite being the social welfare officer of the working life organisation (Finnico Organisation), is to extract a written permission from the management of the organisation. This is to comply with the emerging global best practices of project ethics on confidentiality (Diak, 2018), both on the part of the organisation, and the participants, since the project outcome will be showcased in the public domain. (See appendix 6. I also informed both the local partners, and the participants that the project report will be published, since there are pictures and videos taken, of which they gave their consents.

The most critical aspect of this project ethics is the personal dimension, being a staff of the organization, and at the same time organizing and managing the project, and a thin line between compromising qualities or values to protect organizational interest. This is where virtue ethics comes to mind. Robert Solomon, a very influential proponent of virtue ethics, argues that more self-awareness of a person's part in an organization, driven by a sense of the virtues and values of the society is crucial (Solomon, 1992). In contrast, Ljungblom and Lennerfors, opined that to follow a code of conduct is not enough, but to practice virtues and avoid the vices (Ljungblom et al, 2015).

However, virtue ethics emphasizes more the need to develop good habits and character, which in this instance focuses on the agent of the organization rather than the job performed by the agent, since good actions is a product of good character. According to Ljungblom and Lennerfors (2015), 'Building character is important in the pursuit of quality, as it brings a personal dimension into continuous improvement.

In other words, to avoid problems and scandals, managers and employees use rule-based ethics that prohibits infraction and wrongdoing instead of becoming role models that strive for the good (Ljungblom et al, 2015). This makes it pertinent that I had to be committed to improving myself, while putting my best in achieving the goals of my organization.

### 5.1 Professional Development

As a social service student of Diakonia University of Applied Sciences, it has been my hearts' desire to contribute to community development through empowerment of the less privileged, and this project afforded me that opportunity to be a change agent towards making the world a better place. Though it has been a constant struggle from the conception of this project idea to the final execution, it taught me the importance of resilience and the determination to excel under the toughest conditions or environment.

The project also honed my leadership ability and administrative acumen, including team work skill in a multicultural society. To be sure, my largest professional development is the area of time management and project organization, though I have earlier been involved in some small projects, but this one I must admit challenged my professionalism, because I had to walk the thin line between customer satisfaction and protecting the values of my employers. But at the end, I chose virtual ethics of honesty as my guiding principle due to my desire to impact on the lives of the poor.

This is more so, because I had to combine my social work approach with writing the project reports while the seminars are still ongoing, hence I faced the uphill task of managing my time properly. It also includes how to synergize with different stakeholder; and providing the needed leadership while applying the best communication skills. However, the successful execution of this project has given me the confidence that I can handle a far

bigger projects in the future. I also learned from the project ethics that honesty, confidentiality, trust and respect to the ideals of the society while not compromising that of one's organization is a sine qua non.

## 5.2 Agreement with Working Life Partner

Finnico Organisation for the project execution in Ideato North local Government. The agreement process was written in line with global best practices in project ethics (Diak, 2018).

Student	Working Life Organization	Status
Project permit	Required	Completed
Data collection	Required	Completed
Ethics	Required	Completed
Data privacy	Required	Completed
Cooperation Agreement	Required	Completed

*Table 1 Elements of the Agreement with the Working Life Organisation*

The table 1 above outlines the different elements required for the working life organization before the commencement of the first phase of the exercise with the working life partner which was reached in 2017. A minimum of three months was allocated for the first phase of the project which is the pre-project planning. Table 2 below presents an overview of the project schedule within the three main phases of the project.

(Placeholder1)	Duration	Tasks	Evaluation by Working life partner	Month/Year
Pre-project	Three months	Conceptualization, budgeting, partner identification	Done by Supervisor	May - June. 2017
Field work	Three months	Data collection, workshops	Done by Supervisor	August – Nov.2017
Post Project	Four	Findings, evaluation and	Done by Supervisor	Dec.2017 -Mar.2019

	months	report writing		
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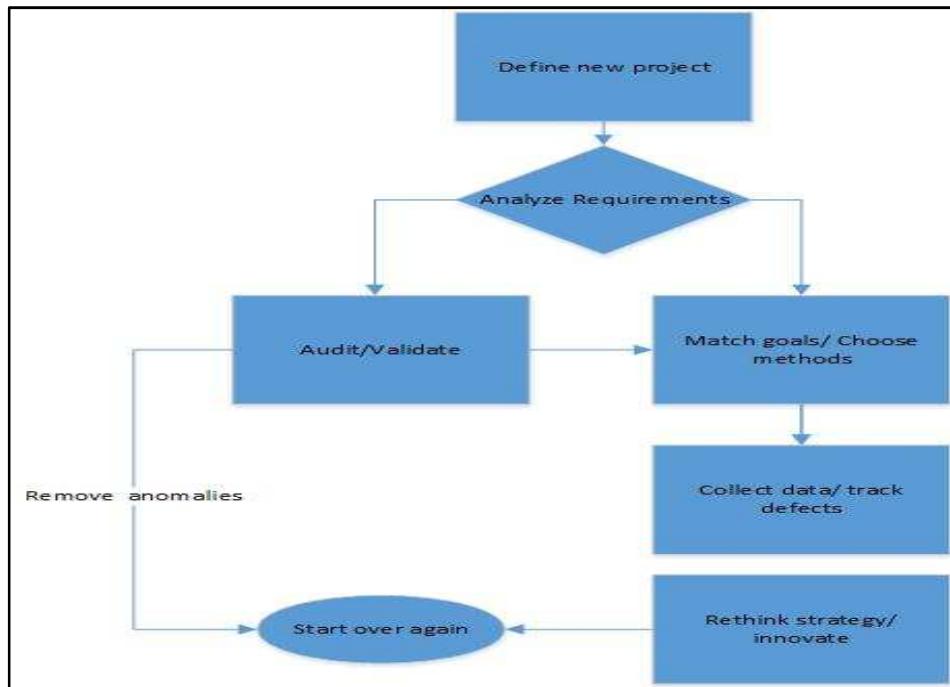
*Table 2 Schedule of Project Phase*

The field work of this project includes data collection, data analysis and workshops, which was carried between August to November in 2017. The data collection exercise was carried out in the host community in Nigeria using both paper questionnaire formats and online survey tool (survey monkey). The last phase of the project was scheduled to be finalized in three months, but the timeline was not feasible as we saw the need to extend the schedule to enable us to refine the project documentation with the project partners.

While the practical project execution was carried out in accordance with the spirit and letters of the attached agreement from the working life organization: Finnish-Nigerian Forum for Commerce and Investment (Finnico Organisation), guided by the project manager in accordance with the project ethics and good scientific practice issued by the National Advisory Board or Research Ethics in Finland.

## 6.THE PROJECT CYCLE MANAGEMENT - PROJECT PROCESS

The project process laid out by the management of Finnico Organisation, is particularly connected to several working interfaces such as: the conceptualizations, the planning, the budgeting, the data collection, the project execution and the evaluation of the project outcomes. This is to ensure due diligence and to guarantee that the paths followed in this project process aligns with the project goals and objectives.



*Figure 7: Project Process flow diagram (Anthony, 2017)*

According to figure 7 above, the project execution is tailored to a process flow that allows the management to verify and rectify anticipated loopholes that may come up either in the early, middle or concluding aspect of the project exercise, and of course to ensure integrity of the project outcomes and sustainability of the entire concept.

Against the above backdrop therefore, the Finnico Ry project became a tool for social welfare intervention for the people of Ideato Local Government Area because of the benefits it attracted to the community such as:

skills optimization trainings, connected the small-scale traders to available funding opportunities, networking and market accessibility.

The first phase of the seminar was organized on the 5th day of August 2017, while the second and third were finished in September and November 2017 respectively. Lack of adequate means of information dissemination initially almost stalled the project, but for the resilience of our local partners to reach out to as many participants as possible. Convincing and getting other stakeholders and speakers for the seminar, and other logistics, including my efforts to commence the writing of this report, consumed extra resources and time than earlier estimated.

## 6.1 Resources and Project Organization

In my position as the social welfare officer, the organization earmarked a substantial budget for the entire project execution from start to finish. Each interface of the project was considered separately by the management team. All cost and resource implications were taken into consideration before the commencement of the project to avoid any bias in the project outcome. The team also rallied support from the organizing partners.

The team also realized that the seminars require a large capacity hall to accommodate all the participants. About forty (40) participants signed up during the first phase of the training workshop. One of our partners - Cor Mariae high school Urualla, provided a conducive venue at a cost friendly rate.

Most of the partners were drawn to the project because of its target on women empowerment, and especially Cor Mariae as a girl only school, was also established to train and empower the girl-child, towards growing to be responsible to herself and the society. Incidentally, the hall has enough chairs and tables. As the social welfare officer, my job priorities

were on planning, organizing, evaluating and execution of the project interfaces. The anchor team members were helping with coordinating and managing logistics and the recruitment of the resource persons.

The team recruited suitable resource persons from the agricultural sectors, banks and the governments department of trade, including financial institutions. These were taken care by our local partners too, including recording the events with some electronics gadgets like camera and video etc. belonging to Finnico Organisation. In no doubt, the seminars wouldn't have been possible without the participants, and I give kudos to our local partner 'Mind Miners Initiative' for making it a huge reality.

My flight ticket to Nigeria for this project going and coming back cost me 900 euros, stationaries and printed handbills for the local advertisements and awareness cost around 50 euros. Refreshments and transport fares for the resource persons and myself to the seminar venue throughout the duration of this project was about 100 euros. The funds were provided by the work life organisation, Finnico Organisation, while the rest of the logistics were provided by our local partners.

## 6.2 The Role of the Participants

At this juncture, it is pertinent to x-ray the roles of different players that led to the success of this project. The project in my opinion recorded a significant element of success, though there is room for improvement to ensure a long-term benefit for the pilot community. However, one cannot help but highlight the critical success factors recorded in this thesis project, as executed in Ideato North local government area of Nigeria. One of such is that the project is impact driven, the impact that it delivered in response of the community, participation and cooperation's between partners was overwhelming, synergies for the project as a key objective of the project was received and both the work life organisation, partners, stakeholders

and participants shared values as communicated prior the commencement of the project was achieved and was maintained throughout the project life cycle at all levels.

The cost for the project execution was minimal and the project was concluded on time as planned without accruing extra cost, while maintaining the quality of the training packages. During our follow-up exercises with the beneficiaries, we realized that the beneficiaries have applied the new knowledge they gathered in improving their small businesses with an increased output, hence it would be safe to say that the objective of improving on their knowledge deficit to alleviate poverty through increased productivity and empowerment was achieved. Moreover, the fact that the project receives a lot of positive responses and good feedbacks shows that people are very much interested, and welcomed the idea, hence they wish that similar projects be replicated in no distance future (See contents of the workshops and trainings in Table 2 of chapter 7).

As the welfare officer of Finnico Organisation, I did most of the planning, managing, and general coordination, Mind Miners Initiative, recruited the resource persons, and secured the hall for the events including reaching out to participants. Other government and private stakeholders employed their expertise in building the capacity of the participants, through knowledge transfer and customized information, in line with the aims and objectives of this project.

The participants who in no doubt are the critical resource of this project, showed absolute dedication and cooperation throughout the duration of the project, their involvements hugely and positively affected the project development process. They expressed satisfaction at the end of the project and got empowered through more knowledge on how to improve their business acumen. At the end of the project, few of the participants were randomly selected and provided with seed money to add to their busi-

nesses. It was Antoine de Saint-Exupery who said, and I concur, that 'A single event can awaken within us a stranger totally unknown to us. To live is to slowly born'.

In the light of the above, this project, tends to amongst others to create this unique capacity building frame work that would be providing information, guidance, and facilitations free of charge. There is however no gainsaying the fact that to increase the rural entrepreneur's capacity, there is need to put in place a sustainable and enabling system that will tackle all the problems that are mitigating their productivities. Through regular seminars, we were able to provide the participants with the requisite education and mentoring, on how to procure seedlings, and on how to access soft loans from local agricultural banks and cooperate bodies.

I am convinced that this project will offer a new and unique perspective on how best to mine the minds of the greater populations of the rural dwellers in this part of the world, towards identifying their talents, fill the knowledge gap, and expose them to the new opportunities that abound around them, while exposing them to the global markets. This at the end would remain a veritable tool for a sustainable empowerment and community development.

### 6.3 The Workshop/Seminar Venue

The choice of this institution for the pilot project was symbolic, due to her enviable history in the girl child development and empowerment. Founded by an Irish born Archbishop Charles Heery, C.S.Sp. who spent all his life in Nigeria as a Catholic missionary, who was moved by the plight of the less privileged in his Vicariate: their suffering, overwhelming ignorance, malnutrition, women and children subjected to de-humanizing conditions, and poor medical care, did everything possible to uplift them, and enable them attain good wellbeing.

In line with the objective of my target group, which is rural women, this college is committed to the growth of women in education, employing their psychology towards using their talents for self-development. In view of this, I strongly aligned in this ideal that could spur the girl-child towards a paradigm for a mature and total formation that would situate her to the habit of striving for excellence through healthy competitions.

Further, I have the belief that every human-being is imbued with the potentials to be creative, and conquer any social-economic impediment, but like a diamond in the ruff, they only need the right information and requisite training to develop the ingrain potentials. This informed the imperativeness of social welfare re-engineering, by activating all agencies of social change, as envisaged by Finnico Organisation.

## 7. EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT DATA

This chapter will enumerate the types of data collected during the project and how it was adopted for the project framework analysis. The data collection focused on demography of the people in Ideato North Local Government Area, because we wanted to differentiate between active and passive demography. This means the segment of the population who are still active within the working age. The project also considered their basic educational qualification and gender, with specific attention on women because they are the most disadvantaged segment of the society according to our findings.

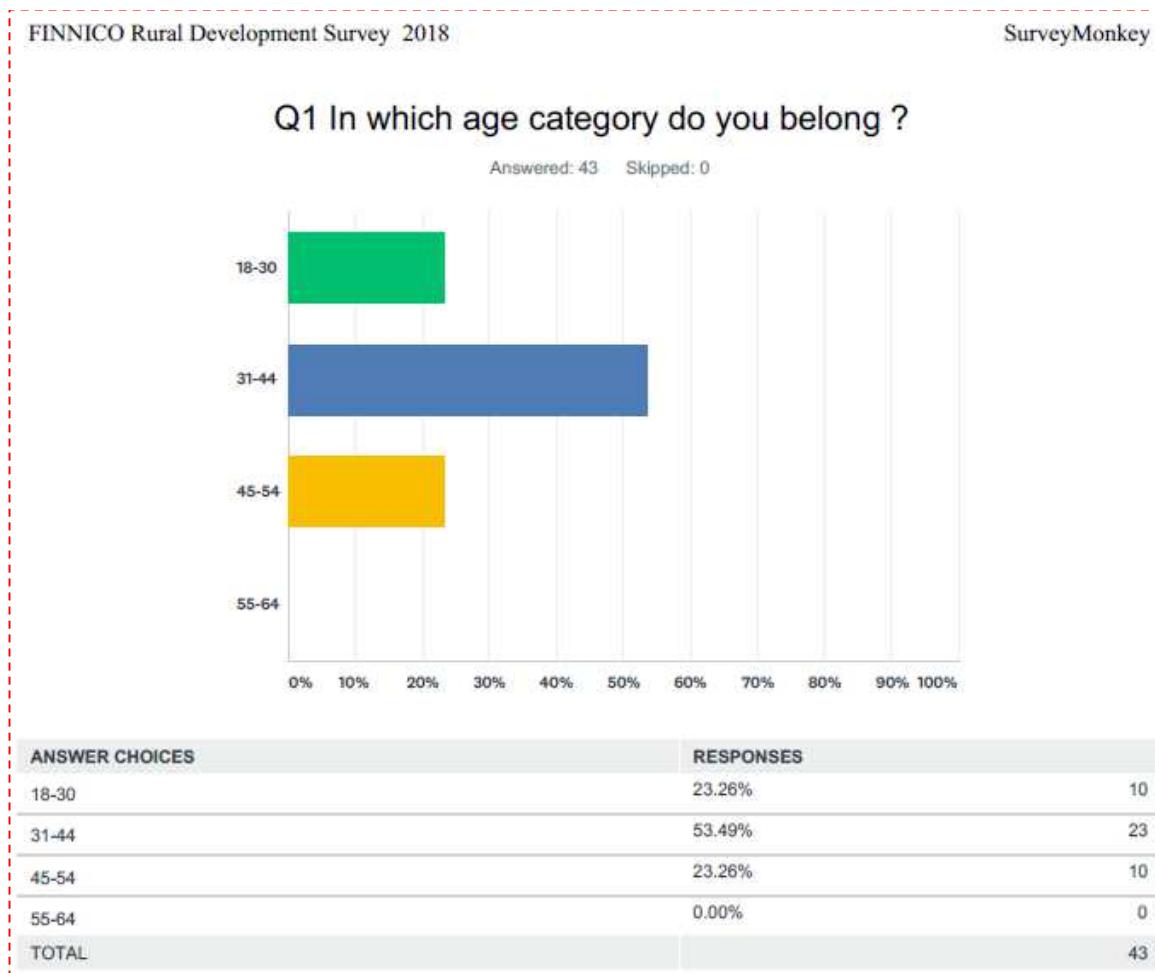


Figure 8: Evaluation of the age of the Respondents

According to figure 8 above, the active working age of the respondents are 31 to 44 which represents 23% of the entire participants. Therefore, the

social welfare intervention measure is more urgent in Ideato North Local Government Area than was expected before the start of the project. The outcome suggests that Finnico Organisation and partners should focus some of its resources in the development of platforms for job creation, and soft skills training of the unemployed women and youth within the communities, to enable them lead and sustain the change desired when empowered. A positive chain reaction is required for sustainable growth of any community to be achieved according to Koehler in his 2008 publication.

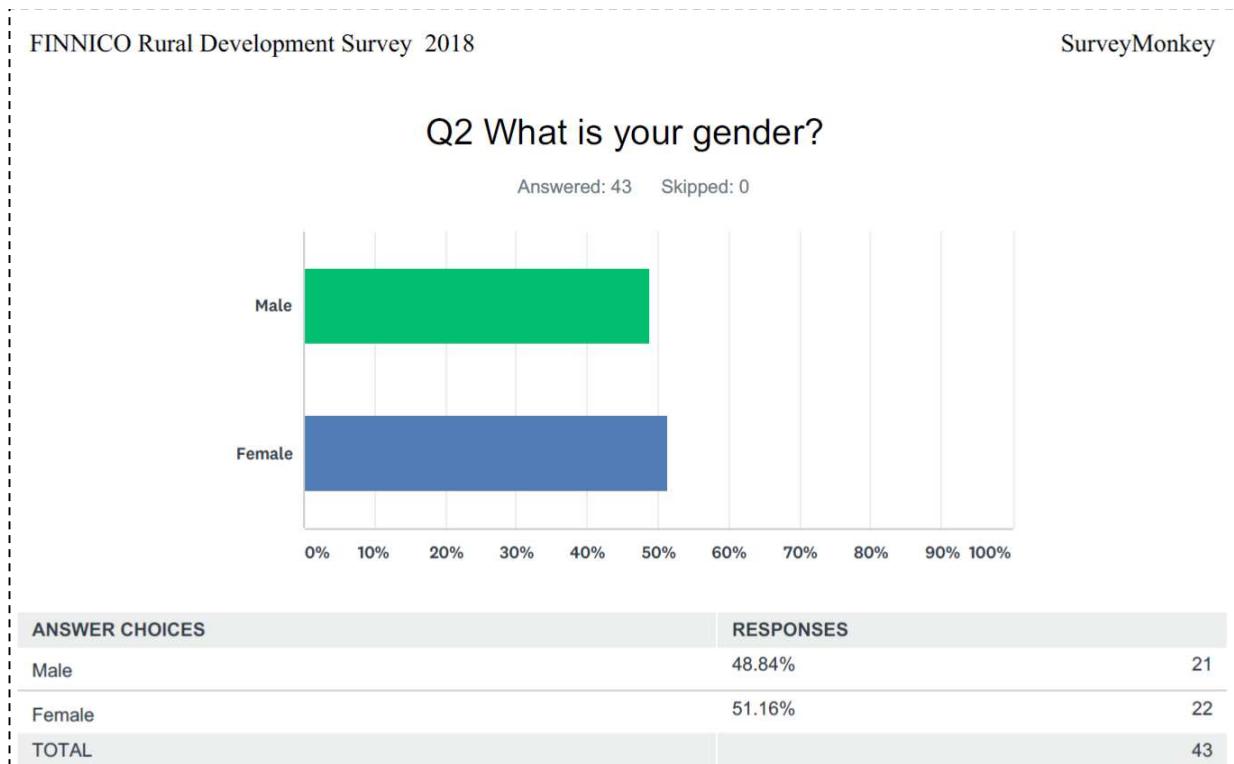


Figure 9: Evaluation of the Gender of the Respondents

According to figure 9 above, the number of female respondents is 51.16%, while male respondents represents 48.84%, that shows that the female population needs more attention, especially for the fact that in an average African setting, women carries a substantial amount of the family burden, hence the decision of Finnico Organisation to chose women as their target group in this project, for the training and empowerment. Therefore, it is of utmost urgency to give total re-orientation to the women of Ideato local government, to enable them to have the capacity to attain the desired

competence in their chosen carriers, and increase their spirit of industry, through giving them functional skills.

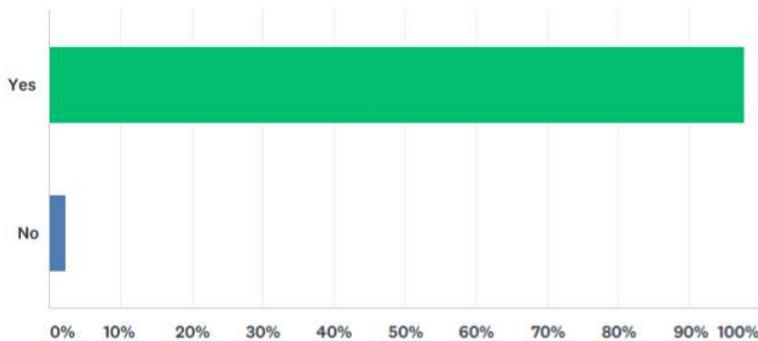
Age Range	Group A	Group B	Group C
18-35	Soft skills	Packaging	Agro Innovation
36-44	Agro Innovation	Business Networking	Agro Support Loans Available

*Table 2: Classification of the Women Training Group*

From table 2 above, it became necessary to classify the categories of the training to match age, trade skills and educational background of the participants. The trainings were staged into three (3) main categories such as Group A, B and C. Each group offers a unique type of skills and competence for the women and youths, tailored to meet their developmental needs as deemed fit by seasoned experts.

Q10 Finnico is creating a rural data center for Ideato entrepreneurs as part of social welfare intervention for the community. Do you think this initiative can boost productivity of SME's and create more jobs in the Rural areas?

Answered: 43 Skipped: 0



*Figure 10: Plans for future Development*

Figure 10 above and the classification from table 1 above, it shows the importance of a data centre in Ideato local government area, as was proposed Finnico Organisation, as part of their social welfare intervention for community development. This project exercise shows clearly the importance of collecting and managing data for recording keeping, trend measurement and future development.

The total respondents that said yes is 97.67% of the 42 respondents, while a paltry 2.33% said no. However, from the above, it is confirmed that this initiative if developed will go a long way in boosting socioeconomic performance of this community, which would in long term create more help in providing decision making data for job creation and other types of empowerment projects coming in as social welfare initiatives by different local and international actors.

However, accurate data plays an immense role in the providing the right Social Welfare Intervention for the people of Ideato local government area. This project execution faced challenges, such as paucity of funds, logistical challenges and time constraints but we maintained the resolve that the project was delivered according to Finnico and partner expectations.

### 7.1 Challenges and Risks

To carry out this project effectively, Finnico Organisation with the help of its experienced facilitators commenced a socialization and training program on management and entrepreneurship, while lobbying the governments both at the national and local level including various stake-holders and partners on the need to adopt our new approach to impact on the general wellbeing of the overly marginalized segment of the society.

However, because this thesis is a project-oriented thesis, with a mixed method approach, encountering risks is obvious, more so getting the participants and convincing them to participate, largely due to series of betrayals they encountered previously in the hands of those in authority might create a kind of lukewarm attitude in them.

Another impediment was the issue of documentation of the would-be beneficiaries especially in a country where reliable statistics has proved herculean. It is however my responsibility as the Social welfare officer of Finnico Organisation to ensure the proper implementation and follow up of this project, and constantly monitoring the distribution of materials and resources, to ensure that beneficiaries judiciously invest the funds in a trade or services that would add value to the society, and bring to bear their sustainable financial independence.

Because of Finnico's core belief that the best approach to empower people is to teach them how to fish instead of baby-spooning them, no stone was left unturned in providing a tailored program that helped the participants improve and consolidate on their capacities to effectively run their businesses and maximize profit. And because the project activated the team spirit of the rural participants, it becomes easy for them to network. Nevertheless, creating a framework for sustainability is a sine qua non.

## 7.2 Recommendations

To better articulate the length and breadth of how a social welfare officer can deliver the much-needed impact is a broad topic which cannot be entirely exhausted in this thesis, however the following recommendations is put forward for future studies and further development of this framework, which was derived from the outcome of interview questions during the process of data collections.

- Soft skills acquisition for small business entrepreneurs
- Create a data centre for proper segmentation of the needs of the rural community
- Create a market visibility for the rural community
- Create a system which trains small business owners how to acquire loans from banks
- Create system which emphasis on networking and partnership synergies

As an exploratory step, this thesis works well as a community development intervention, because this is the first of its kind in Ideato Local Government Area, especially as it intends to activate and encourage the government and other stakeholders to focus on key social responsibilities with

the bearings to enhance the rural social wellbeing. To a large extent, the initiative put together by Finnico Organisation and its partners in tackling the knowledge deficit in this community would help to reduce to the barest minimum the effects of poverty, like high rural crime rate, rural urban migration, and environmental degradation.

## 8. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it was in recognition of the needs for such agents of social change that I was assigned the role as a social welfare officer of Finnico Ry to work in collaboration with local NGO's, local government agencies and private sector organizations to create a sustainable project framework that will encourage social responsibilities amongst the stakeholders, as an effort to curtail the rate of poverty in the rural areas of Ideato North community of Imo State, Nigeria.

The data collection process conducted in Ideato local government during this project exercise showed that the community is endowed with both natural resources and human capital (skilled and unskilled workforce) but there is a huge knowledge gap amongst the inhabitants of this region. This knowledge deficit has negatively affected the effective utilization of the resources available meant to enhance their overall social wellbeing.

Therefore, Finnico Organisation has used its unique social intervention initiative in collaboration with its partners to deliver an effective and lasting solution to the problem. Before the Finnico Organisation's Social Welfare Intervention project started in Ideato in 2017, it was observed that the majority of the businesses in this rural area are micro and very small businesses, with no support system from either the government or donor agencies due to lack of requisite information.

However, we are hopeful that this social welfare intervention approach initiated by Finnico Organisation and executed in conjunction with local and international partners will act as a buffer in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and other types of government initiatives to curtail this problem of rural poverty.

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Figure 5	Cross-section of Workshop Participants
Figure 6	Visualizing the Key Concept
Figure 7	Project Process flow Diagram
Figure 8	Evaluation of the Age of the Respondents
Figure 9	Evaluation of the Gender of the Respondents
Figure 10	Plans for future Development

### Appendix 2: Training Session



## Appendix 3: Project Permit Letter



**FINNISH-NIGERIA FORUM**  
FOR COMMERCE & INVESTMENT

5. July, 2017

### **Ideato North Social Welfare Development Project 2017**

**Dear Obinna Kelechi Oliaku,**

The management of Finnico Ry is pleased to assign you as the Social Welfare officer for the association's development project in Ideato North Local Government in Eastern Nigeria. The aim of Finnico Ry's Social welfare intervention in Ideato LGA is to forge constructive partnerships with the local stakeholders, which will eventually curtail poverty, activate the community cohesion, and open up more channels for developmental initiatives in the community.

Here are some of your coverage areas in this assignment:

- Conceptualize your strategies for the Social Welfare Intervention in Ideato LGA
- Map out and engage local partners – NGO, community leaders and private sectors
- Organize a synergy and training workshops
- Network with students and recent graduates
- Meet up with local SMEs and small scale traders
- Take cognizance of the relevant project ethics

We look forward to successful project execution

*PhnA.*

Regards,  
Chairman, Finnish-Nigeria Forum for Commerce and Investment  
I/co.Vice Chairman (Public Officer)  
Phineese Anthony

## Appendix 4. Process of Interview Questions

### Secondary Data Collection

### Interview Procedures

The respondents were interviewed using a video application. The following were observed during the interview: Interview Procedures

- The questionnaires were made available to some of the respondents about a week before the interview and some received the interview questions at the location of the interview.
- The respondents who received the interview questions a week beforehand were reminded two days before the commencement of the interview to confirm the suitable date and venue of the interview.
- In order to have more quantified information, some candidates were encouraged to come with family members during the interview.
- During the interviews, the interviewer introduced himself briefly, stating the purpose of the project, and the required information that is needed from the respondent
- Also, during the interview, the questions were read to the respondents and the interpretation of the questions was given to the respondents who were not able to understand the questions
- After explaining the questions to the respondents, they confirmed their understanding of what is required of them
- For each question asked, the responses from the respondents were noted and other suggestions were also noted
- After the interview, some of the respondents inquired for more information that may be useful to the project

The information provided was verified with the respondents and they were able to view the video clip of the interview question and their answer

## Appendix 5. Training Workshop Video

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9jtOPyBtNZ0>

## Appendix 6. Written Consent to Use Project Materials

The Coordinator

24th. July 2017

Mindminers Initiative  
Owerri,  
IMO state.

### Application for partnership

I write to request for your cooperation and partnership in my quest to organise a mini project two days seminar as part of my Thesis data collection requirements.

The topic of the thesis is " A Social Welfare Approach in Building Synergy for Ideato north LGA rural entrepreneurs: A case of Finnico an NGO", in cooperation with a local NGO, called Mind Miners.

Project Main Goal is poverty alleviation.

Vision is to empower the target group at the rural areas, to acquire some basic skills and necessary information that would make them self-reliant.

Mission is to build synergy with relevant stakeholders to build a sustainable capacity, through awareness creation and empowerment.

### What we intend to achieve:

- 1 Create awareness on business financial opportunities
- 2 Link the participants to the market
- 3 Provide seed grants for business
- 4 Organise beneficiaries in self groups for easy monitoring and evaluation, ie through follow-ups or Quarterly Reports.

### HOW we intend to achieve this:

- 1 Organise a two days' workshop or seminar on Financial and business opportunities.

### WHAT is needed/means

- 1 Venue

- 2 Two facilitators

### Partnership Benefits:

Because the data acquired through this project will be used in a European university thesis, the partners will obtain international exposure and recognition, through academic work references on the field of global Social entrepreneurship under Social services as a course.

### Conclusion:

This project when successfully implemented will not only be an academic reference point, but a life changing project that will empower the immediate participants. Both the stakeholders and the partner international NGO would have achieved a milestone.

Sincerely yours,

Obinna Kelechi Oliaku

## Appendix 7. One of the Previous Project's by Finnico Organization

  	
<h3>Exploring Business Opportunities in Nigeria</h3>	
<p>Nigeria is the largest economy in Africa, with a fast growing population of over 170 million inhabitants. It is also one of the MINT countries – future economic giants. Still it is fairly unknown to Finns.</p>	
<p>Join us for a morning session to learn more about Nigeria.</p>	
<p><b>Date</b> Friday 24 November 2014 (08.30 – 11.30).</p>	
<p><b>Venue</b> Laurea University of Applied Sciences (Vanha maantie 9, Leppävaara - Espoo), Auditorium Tuomo</p>	
<p><b>Speakers</b> Embassy of Nigeria: HE Ambassador Benedict Onochi Anobi Finnico: Kelechi Oliaku, Charles Nwoko, Evita Haapavaara &amp; Felix Gideon Odu Laurea UAS: Vice President Kimmo Hannonen</p>	
<p><b>Organizer</b> FUAS CONNECT Project, Laurea UAS &amp; FINNICO</p>	
<hr/>	
<p>08.30</p>	<p><b>Welcoming remarks</b> (Vice President Kimmo Hannonen) <b>Introduction of the agenda &amp; speakers</b> (Mr. Kelechi Oliaku)</p>
<p>08.45</p>	<p><b>What is Nigeria</b> <b>Business is booming</b> <b>Relationship between Nigeria &amp; Finland</b> (HE Ambassador Benedict Onochi Anobi, Embassy of Nigeria)</p>
<p>09.30</p>	<p><b>Who are the Nigerian people</b> (Dr. Charles Nwoko)</p>
<p>10.00</p>	<p>Coffee &amp; Nigerian snacks</p>
<p>10.15.</p>	<p><b>Nigerian Management &amp; Communication styles compared to Finnish</b> (Ms. Evita Haapavaara &amp; Mr. Kelechi Oliaku)</p>
<p>11.00</p>	<p><b>Culture shock, Finns in Nigerians' eyes</b> (Mr. Felix Gideon Odu)</p>
<p>11.30</p>	<p>End of session</p>