



Bringing you the latest news and updates from PACD

Hello all,
Welcome to the third edition of the PACD newsletter. PACD is a community development programme initiated by the Government of The Gambia to address some of the development challenges faced by rural communities. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the implementing agency. Phase I, also called the Pilot Phase, ended in December 2021, The results achieved are being used to transit to Phase II.



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PACD UPDATES

Handing Over of the GIS Assets, Telephone and Tractor Trackers



On 18 October 2022, UNDP through the PACD project handed over GIS Assets to the Department of Strategic Policy and Delivery. The assets included high tech digital trackers and mobile phones. This is in support of PACD's sustainability plan to ensure timely reporting & quick action on issues. A refresher training on the GIS Platform data capture process also took place on Wednesday October 27th, 2022. The session reviewed the mobile device handover process, downloading the Survey123 app¹, and capturing data issues. The device distribution mission has been initiated in the regions today, October 31st, 2022.

Arresting growing inequalities between rural and urban areas in The Gambia

Why rural feeder roads are the answer to reducing poverty in hard-to-reach communities



The PACD Team started the road trip early in the morning towards Bisandougou in the Upper River Region led by the officer responsible for Monitoring and Evaluation at the UNDP Country Office. The mission was to engage with beneficiaries of the PACD water project to assess how much their lives have been impacted since the installation of boreholes and water reticulation systems by the Programme for Accelerated Community Development, which provides water to their communities.



As we proceeded on the journey, the lack of access to feeder roads was evident compared to other villages close to the main Basse highway. It was still in the rainy season, and the ground was soggy, creating possibilities for vehicles to get stuck in the mud. We moved in a convoy, carefully driving through a grassy maze of seasonal crops, wiggling to gain traction in the mud. We were halfway along the trail when we encountered a damp area, where our hired vehicle inescapably got stuck. Pushing gently on the accelerator, the driver of the vehicle tried to use the weight of the mini-van to get some traction, but his every effort was fruitless to unstuck the vehicle. Thankfully, the official Toyota Land Cruiser V8 UNDP vehicle, which has 4x4 traction as well as a locking differential, was able to come to the rescue and safe the day. Using its 4x4 snatch rope and appropriate anchor/recovery points, the V8 pushed the hired vehicle forward after gaining enough momentum.

Dire consequences

According to the Africa Infrastructure Knowledge Bank, only 34 percent of the rural population in Africa live within two kilometres of an all-season road, compared to some 65 percent in other developing regions. Absence of rural road connectivity has dire consequences on agricultural production.

The Programme for Accelerated Community Development (PACD) is a replication of the Emergency Community Development Project (PUDC - Emergence programme for community development), which is a Regional Bureau for Africa Flagship project. PUDC provides the platform for government to form collaborative partnership with UNDP and other development partners in response to social demands in rural communities.

Genesis of PUDC

The first PUDC started in 2015 in Senegal, where UNDP delivered over USD 200 million in a three-year period fully funded by the Government. This was followed by Togo in 2016, which is currently underway.

The PUDC model consists of four key components –

- **the development of socio-economic facilities like improving the rural poor communities' access to basic socio-economic facilities such as water supply etc.;**

- **the improvement of rural productivity, agriculture and livestock production: with focus on increasing the earning capacity and improving livelihood opportunities for youth and other beneficiaries;**

- **the capacity building of local actors, institutional capacities: with focus on empowering project beneficiaries through stakeholders compliance with UNDP requirements to strengthen donor confidence in supporting the project;**

and geo-referred information systems: focusing on capturing, storing, analysing and sharing of data.

Linkages with SDGs

Allied with the eight strategic priorities of the National Development Plan, the overall mapping of the Gambia SDGs to the PUDC areas of implementation shows direct links with 15 of the 17 SDGs.



The Upper River Region (URR) has witnessed relatively lower poverty levels hovering around 60% as compared to say, the Central River Region (Both Kuntaur and Janjanbureh), which has the highest incidence of poverty in the country in terms of both

absolute and extreme poverty. However, whilst the PACD costed investment into sectors based on the 25 poorest

districts with poverty rates over 60%, the actual selection of communities occurred at a more granular level to that of district. It was realised from the onset that if District is used, it could probably ignore a very poor and isolated village, such as Bisandougou, in a relatively better off district like URR. Therefore, the selection of actual communities was decided based on the 2020 Household Level Poverty survey funded by the World Bank.



Pulled to safety, the hired mini-van and the UNDP V8 vehicle drove steadily on the muddy surface to Bisandougou, in part down to careful maneuvering and determining course of action at each muddy confluence to avoid getting stuck

again.

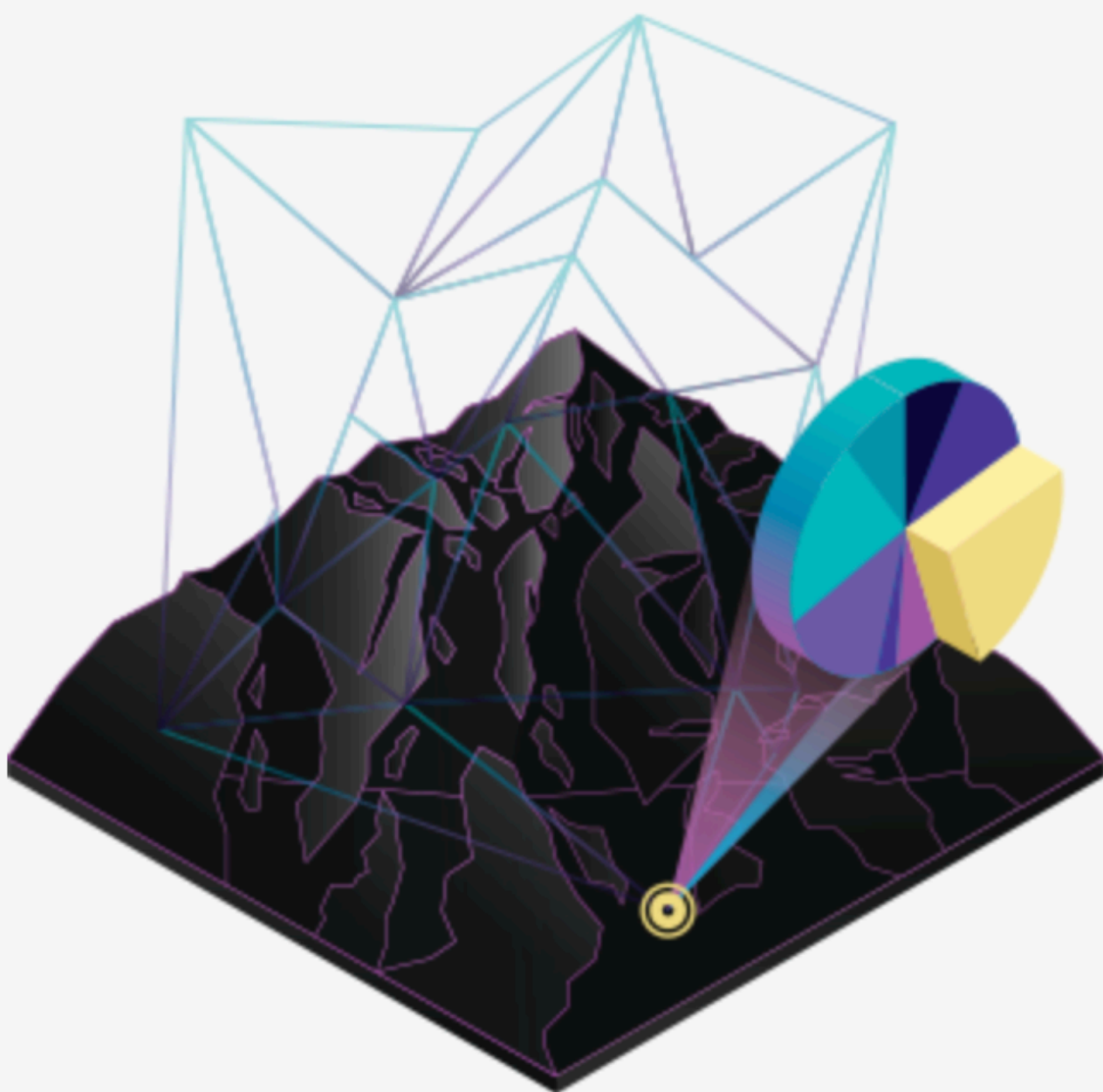
The selected areas for the initial implementation of the Programme for Accelerated Community Development are feeder roads, as the basis for any further socio- economic development in the community. However, due to lack funding, the roads project has not materialized.

It is also well understood that a boost in targeted assistance for agriculture leads to a permanent boost in agricultural productivity. Thus, agricultural productivity has a knock-on effect, boosting savings from the increase in disposable income, and leading to increases in GDP growth. In the absence of rural feeder roads, the cost of moving agricultural produce can be as high as \$2.00 per ton-kilometer according to studies done by the African Development Bank. As a result, some 85 percent of crop production continues to take place within six hours' travel time from the largest cities - leaving behind a large population of the rural poor not engaging in the most effective sector of reducing poverty.

Sustainability

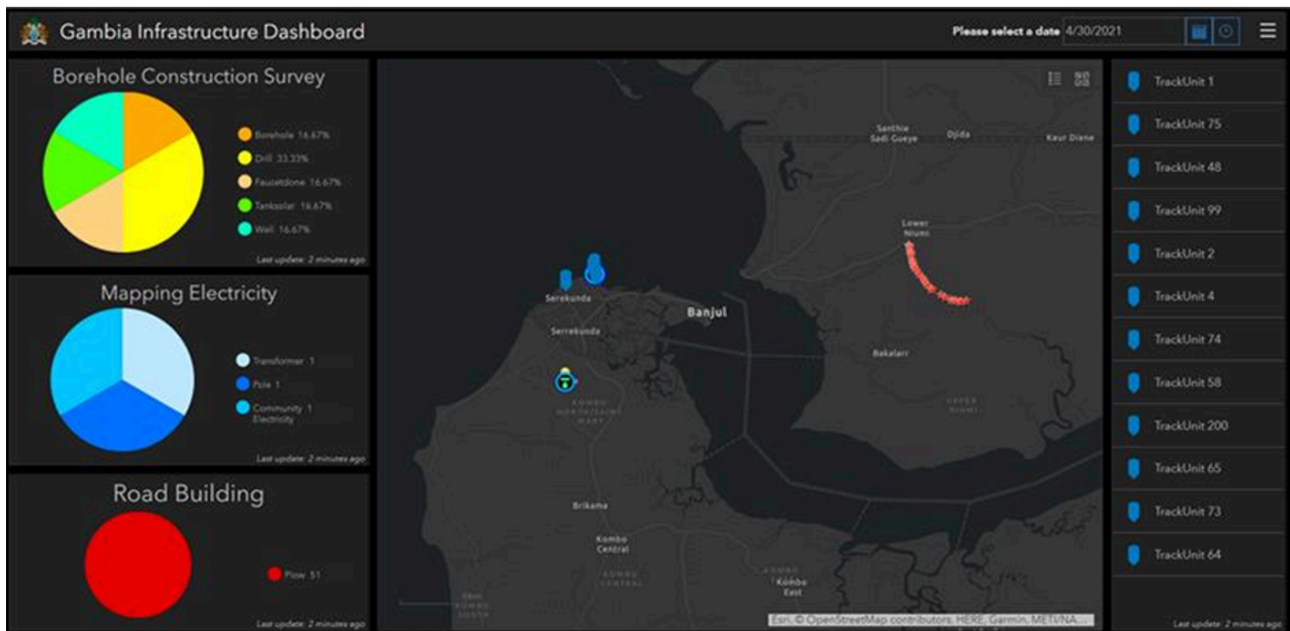
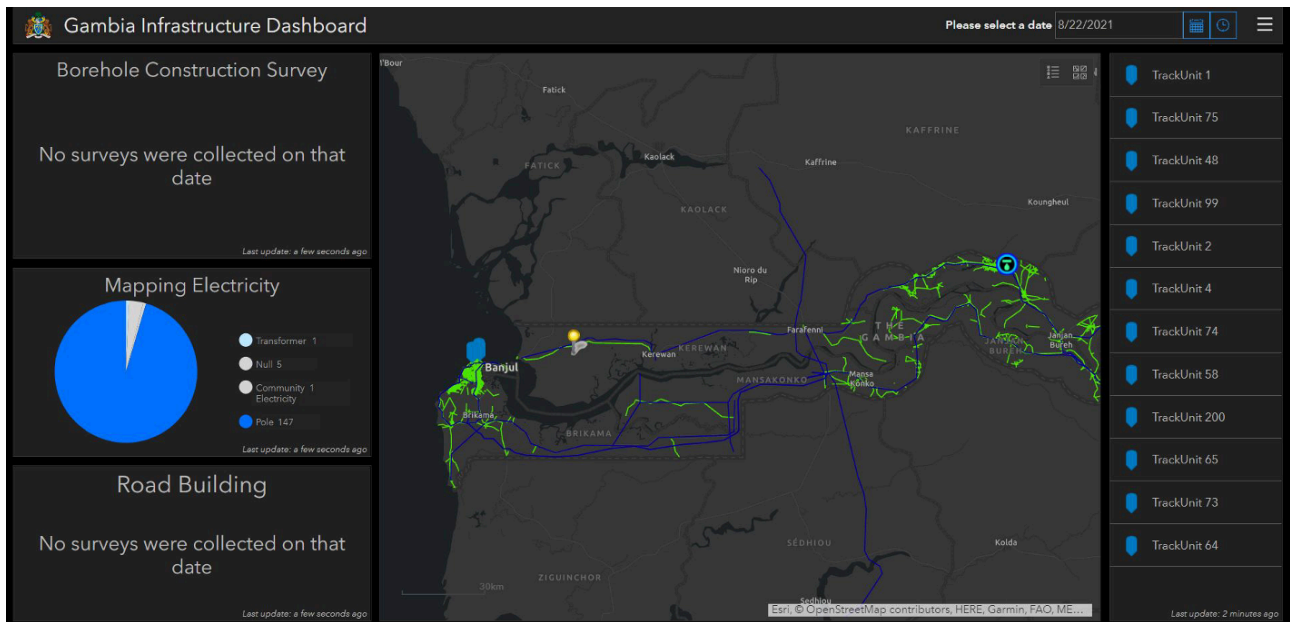
A core part of the PACD is the upskilling and training of individuals within communities. Building the capacity within a community sets the conditions for success with regards to the ongoing sustainability of the assets constructed by the programme. Building on the lessons learned from other developing countries, innovative "community corporations" are suggested as the primary mechanism through which the management of infrastructure and other assets can occur.

Implementing sustainable digital solutions to improve basic service access of rural communities in The Gambia.





A geographic information system (GIS) that creates, manages, analyzes, and maps all types of data for the PACD has been launched for community rollout to support real-time geo-reporting of issues related to the operations and maintenance of the assets and services. The GIS (Geographic Information System) platform was developed through collaboration with a Private Firm, Alcis to provide and drive sustainable digital solutions by improving how communities report in real-time and track the implementation progress of the designed infrastructure thereby improving assets tracking, management, and monitoring. The implementation of the GIS is in two (2) phases, with Phase I involving the design of a dashboard



element to incorporate a mapping screen, where the location of the collected assets can be displayed on top of the geospatial data and other supporting mapping layers. Phase II, which includes the full operational platform with facility feed data by local community members is currently underway.

Meet your PACD team!



Cherno Lamin Jallow
Project Manager, PACD



Marie Chorr Bah
Monitoring & Evaluation Analyst, PACD



Thomas Mugabiyimana
Team Leader, Procurement



Rohey Samba-Jallow
Communication and Visibility Consultant, PACD



Alieu Loum

National Coordinator Programme for Accelerated Community
Programme for Accelerated Community Development (PACD)
Department for Strategic Policy & Delivery
Office Of The President



Ismaila Jallow

National Focal Point Programme for Accelerated Community
Development (PACD)
Department for Strategic Policy & Delivery
Office Of The President



Lamin Nyangardo

Focal Point Programme for Accelerated Community Development
(PACD)
Department for Strategic Policy & Delivery
Office Of The President

Have a contribution for our next newsletter?

Please contact us on:



+220 3353082/7471327



+220 4494774



lamin.jallow@undp.org
rohey.samba-jallow@undp.org