

Case Study: Gambia is Good

'Gambia is Good' (GIG) is a Pro-Poor Fresh Produce Marketing Company established by Haygrove Development Ltd in conjunction with Concern Universal and in association with local partners in The Gambia.

Haygrove is a horticultural producer, founded in 1988 with just one hectare of strawberries. It has since grown to operations in Hungary, South Africa and the UK. The company developed the Haygrove Multi-Bay Tunnel growing system that is now exported world-wide. Concern Universal is a British based NGO that has been working on rural development in The Gambia since 1992. This combination of an NGO which has strong local experience with a horticultural company that has a track record of commercial achievement has been a key factor behind the success of the project. The project links into donor funded projects such as the Smallholder Irrigation for Livelihood project.



The DFID Business Linkages Challenge Fund, administered by Emerging Markets Group (EMG) Ltd., provided financial support of almost £197,000 that enabled GIG to get off the ground in 2004. Haygrove has itself provided both financial and technical support as has Concern Universal.

Prior to the establishment of GIG, local produce was only available during short seasons, with produce imported from Senegal and from Europe. Sales through 'middlemen' resulted in very low levels of income to producers, and, sometimes, no income at all. The Gambia is ranked 155 on the Human Development Index (2006) with approximately 60% of people having an income of less than one US dollar a day. Three quarters of the population is engaged in agriculture and 65% of those are in horticultural production. Thus a transformation of horticultural production is of substantial significance.

GiG is a business that has introduced:

- Training to horticultural producers that enables them to grow on a year round basis;
- Crops previously not produced in The Gambia, such as cauliflowers;
- Seed stores providing quality seeds to growers in their area;
- A quality grading system to improve product quality and selling prices;
- A pricing information system that encourages producers to grow those products likely to achieve the best selling prices;
- A mechanism for sale and distribution to end users (primarily hotels, restaurants and supermarkets).



As of 2007, GiG purchases from over 400 rural farmers, some 90% of whom are women working in community gardens. Incomes for these growers have been transformed with one describing the impact of GiG as equivalent to 'going to heaven'. The wider impact extends to some 4,000 people.

The success of GiG has been recognised by the Travel Foundation who, in 2006, provided a grant to support the establishment of a GiG demonstration farm. GiG is seeking to substantially extend its operations and has a need for further funding to provide capital for the acquisition of new facilities such as a cold store and second refrigerated truck.