



**Tim Kellow**  
Country Director

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“United Purpose is an International Non-Governmental Organisation with an innovative community-led approach to working in partnership with local actors to sustainably lift people out of poverty by moving them beyond traditional aid relationships.

We have worked in The Gambia for 27 years, operating in every region, and over 15 years in neighbouring Senegal, focused mainly on the Casamance region. Our work is targeted at environmental conservation, scaling up agriculture, improving food security and nutrition, and developing sustainable livelihoods for women and youth.

Since 2018, Caplor Horizons have collaborated with us in a variety of ways that have contributed to improving the effectiveness of our partners and staff in The Gambia and Senegal, whilst helping us plan for the future. I am delighted to be able to share some of these experiences as a way of endorsing their approach and recommending them to other like-minded organisations.

As part of a major EU-funded nutrition project, we helped establish regional marketing federations made up of representatives from the largely female cooperative farms across the country. We engaged Caplor Horizons to deliver a programme involving a series of in-person training and development modules to these new groups. We did not know if the approach would work given the inherent language, culture and literacy barriers.

For each module, working closely with our local partners to provide live translation, facilitators from Caplor Horizons demonstrated a rare willingness – in the context of The Gambia – to leave the conference rooms of the capital Banjul: we took the programme to the people – in their rural context and on their terms – where it is most effective. Typically, around 30-50 participants gathered approx. every three months, with each module lasting around 3 or 4 days.

A diverse range of core team members plus various Advisors from Caplor Horizons have been involved. This included three of the Co-Directors Lorna Pearcey, Rosie Bishop and Ian Williams. We are also particularly appreciative of the various Advisors that have contributed on a voluntary basis.

The impacts have been huge: the women quickly grew in confidence as they built leadership capability, learned to design a strategy and picked up tools to engage their members in business planning and delivery.

After two years, the empowered regional bodies had decided to form a national federation body that is becoming a voice for and convenor of the country’s female farmers and has attracted recognition and support from agile donors who want to contribute to their continued and independent rise.

# United Purpose Gambia



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In 2020, just before COVID-19 struck, we engaged Caplor Horizons again, this time to lead a visioning exercise to build momentum among key stakeholders around the possible launch of a social enterprise that connects farmers to the hospitality sector's supply chain.

Ian's long connection to The Gambia meant that he was the ideal choice to co-lead this with his colleague Lorna. The centrepiece was a two-day workshop featuring a variety of private sector, government, civil society and farming representatives. The energy and interaction of the sessions facilitated by Lorna and Ian, resulted in a shared belief that starting the business was possible and a strategy to bring it about over the next two years.

During one session, it emerged that recent rises in women's economic empowerment was also causing unintended consequences - such as stories of increases in cases of domestic violence - that required further research. Caplor Horizons volunteered to work with some of our local partners to investigate this, focusing on the unintended consequences of the marketing federation initiative. Rosie led this major piece of work. It enabled Caplor Horizons to reflect deeply on its engagement and it has led to some fascinating research that will help influence future programming.

Most recently, Caplor Horizons facilitated us to renew our 5-year strategy, this time remotely. They utilised their online expertise to bring to life a range of team building and strategy development sessions over the course of a week.

In summary, Caplor Horizons are professional, friendly and flexible; happy to adapt pre-planned sessions to emerging themes and quick on their feet with a bag full of interactive and insightful group activities tailored to the needs of their audience.

It is difficult to overstate the power of having such highly experienced and effective people engaging our staff and partners with such passion."



9 of Caplor Horizons' Advisors have contributed to this programme including: Saf Ghapson, Chandra Ladwa, Dan Bishop, Fraser Williams, Faaria Hussain, Helen Garforth, Gareth Jones, David Coates and Denise Mulligan