



Environmental Protection through Expanding Lemon grass growing and Education in Uganda

Activity 2.5 Conduct quarterly review meetings to assess progress and challenges of environmental protection regulations adherence and implementation

Dates and Locations:

No	Dates	Locations
1	22/6/2018	Nkandwa catholic Hall
2	29/9/2018	Kabowa Trading centre
3	15/12/2018	Mungungulu
4	10/03/2019	Semuto Trading centre

Introduction:

With support from Japanese Fund for Global Environment (JFGE) and Global Bridge Network (GBN), SORAK Development Agency was able to conduct 4 quarterly review meetings to assess progresses and challenges of the project implementation and the agreed up actions of environmental protection and related laws and regulations enforcement and their implementation.

Objectives of this activity:

The quarterly review meetings were intended to assess the following issues;

- Project progress in terms of achievements
- Identification of challenges
- Devising methods and strategies of overcoming challenges
- Ensuring that all communities, sub counties and district stakeholders are adequately involved in and updated on this project.
- Promoting project ownership by the communities and local government which would promote sustainability even after the JFGE funding period.

Participants:

The participants of the quarterly review meetings were drawn from the project stakeholders including community/beneficiary representatives from schools, women and youths, local leaders from villages through the parish, Sub County, and district level. The ratio of male and female representatives are below.

No	Location	Male	Female	Total
1	Nkandwa catholic Hall	25	15	40
2	Kabowa Trading centre	21	19	40
3	Mungungulu	20	20	40
4	Semuto Trading centre	21	19	40

Facilitators:

The 4 review meetings were facilitated by key SORAK staff members;

1. Muhammad Kyeyune –the executive Director

2. Martin Mafabi –Finance officer
- 3- And Hadijah Nnakiruuta –Programmes Manager

Activities:

During the project review meetings, the focus was put on the following areas/concerns;

1. Sharing information on the progress in terms of outputs and actions undertaken in the respective areas and with the numbers of beneficiaries and schools.
2. Identifying challenges and proposing strategies how to overcome them.
SORAK staff shared the outputs achieved in the project area with all stakeholders including number of schools (8), reached, number of children (3,800), number of trees planted, number of women (81) and youth (80) involved in lemon grass growing and acreage planted, monitoring activities done in wetlands and institutions among others.

The following key challenges were shared;

1. The long dry season has affected timely planting of both lemon grass and trees also lead to dry up some lemon grass gardens.
2. Continuous and uncontrolled wetland degradation and encroachment.
3. Domestic animals ate some trees and seedlings planted at school compounds
4. Termite attacked trees planted in some schools
5. The limited market access of lemon grass essential oil

The suggested methods to overcome identified challenges above;

1. To wait for the rainy season and ensure that planting of trees and lemon grass are done at least during the second-longest rainy season that normally starts in August every year.
2. The police officer cautioned participants especially the local leaders to play their appropriate roles in their communities including ensuring that local community does not continue encroaching on the wetlands.
3. It was also suggested that the police and other law enforcers play their roles and arrest all persons who were abusing the environment including wetland clearing for arable farming and illegal logging for timber and charcoal etc.
4. All schools were advised to put cages around every tree that they plant in their school compound. This would prevent domestic animals like goats and sheep from eating their planted trees.
5. Local leaders were also asked to inform their communities to always keep their domestic animals tied or fenced to ensure that they do not graze freely leading to destroying other people's crops and planted trees at schools.
6. For the termites, it was suggested that trees that resist termite attack must be planted.



The Village leader of Nabingoola sub county emphasizing the importance of environmental protection.



The Assistant chief administrative officer, talking about the need to protect environment



A Police officer explaining the community members about the laws governing environment



SORAK Director presenting achievements to the Kibalinga sub-county review meeting

Outcomes:

1. Local leaders agreed to enforce laws and regulations concerning environmental protection.
2. School representatives agreed to take on tree planting as a serious and important activity including planting fruit trees as these trees would make their schools environmentally friendly.
3. The police gave a stern warning to all leaders and community members to go and inform the general public about the impending surveillance that would include arresting all people who were found encroaching on the environment.
4. Leaders asked SORAK to continue providing support in form of review meetings, providing materials for tree planting and lemon grass planting, as these would lead to environmental protection and conservation.
5. The Police together with district officers promised to print out copies of environment protection regulations and display them in the community centre.

6. The Police promised to monitor any violation of laws of environment protection and assured that culprits will be brought to face charges.

Major challenges:

The proper implementation of this activity has faced the following challenges;

1. Poor time management (making delay on arrival) especially of the local leaders. Their late arrival made some meetings to start late and end late. It was inconvenient for both SORAK staff and the meeting participants.

Recommendations:

Considering all these 4 quarterly meetings took place, the following recommendations were made;

1. The Police and government leaders to ensure implementation of laws and regulations concerning environment protection.
2. SORAK to continue reaching out to more communities and schools with similar activities like these already implemented in the targeted schools and communities.
3. To make it compulsory to every school and community to plant trees including fruit trees
4. The sub county and the district local government to increase in the budget for environmental protection with specific emphasis to monitoring wetland encroachment.

Conclusion:

In summary, conducting quarterly review activities was an important monitoring and evaluation activity that helped a lot to shape the progress of the project. It also helped to keep local leaders, women, youths and sub county and district technical staffs informed and subsequently involved in these project activities. This is a sign of healthy relationships and an assurance of project ownership and sustainability even after the end of the project.