



Environmental Protection through Expanding Lemon Grass Growing and Education in Uganda

Quarterly Performance Report

April–June 2019

Prepared by



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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CU	Church of Uganda
GBN	Global Bridge Network
JFGE	Japanese Fund for Global Environment
SORAK	Strategic Organization for Real Action -Kampala

1. BACKGROUND

SORAK with funding from Japanese fund for Global Environment (JFGE) through partnership with Global Bridge Network (GBN) is implementing a 3 year project (2017-2019). This is an environment protection and promotion project with title: Environmental Protection through Expanding Lemon Grass Growing and Education in Uganda.

This project has had the following key results in the last two years;

- The growing of lemon grass as both a cover crop/grass to soil erosion control as well as a source of livelihood has been introduced. This has made project targeted farmers change their attitudes towards this grass from growing it in courtyards in few plants for purposes of tea scenting to growing it as soil erosion control and garden boundaries.
- Tree planting/ growing was popularized in primary schools, with the attendant multiplier effect of many more schools asking SORAK to extend the same project in their respect schools. This has greatly provided good learning lessons to the effect that this year, SORAK plans to work with environment clubs in 16 primary schools as well as support them plant trees aimed at conserving the environment.
- SORAK promoted environmental education/awareness among both school children/teachers/parents and local leaders. These are currently more concerned about the need to promote environmental conservation
- SORAK was able to work with the local leaders and stepped up efforts geared at enforcing existing laws and regulations on wetland use. This was possible through activities that included wetland use monitoring. Here the monitoring teams were able to give guidelines and also stop those who were found carrying out indiscriminate wetland reclamation.

The above key results notwithstanding, the project has had the following challenges though SORAK has been able to address them progressively through making relevant project activity adjustments include the following;

- Lemon grass not being able to withstand dry season and hence drying up. This has discouraged some of our farmers, especially those who wished to consider it as a sole source of income. This applied to 4 farmers in Kiyuni Sub County.
- Failure to get a stable market for essential oil made by SORAK, we however addressed this by deciding to make use of this oil in the making of our own products like liquid soap, candles etc.

This report presents quarterly progress of activities implemented between May to June 2019. The reports highlights results, outcome, challenges faced in the first quarter and how SORAK has been able to overcome challenges as well as its achievement.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project in Mubende District, Uganda seeks to promote environmental protection and education through growth of lemon grass. This project is based on the lessons provided by the SORAK through the project, "Lemongrass for essential oils production and sales" funded by Common Wealth of Australia in 2013.

These lessons include;

-Rural people are willing to grow the grass

-The grass grows rapidly

-The grass has a strong ability to protect the soil from agents of erosion

-The grass has many other uses from extraction of oil to being used as a mulch as well as controller of water runoff

-Planting tufts can be easily obtained now

-We have experiences of distilling essential oils and have been aware of oil yields per ton of withered grass.

SORAK is therefore, encouraging farming communities in Mubende and the neighboring Kyegegwa district grow lemon grass with emphasis to its environmental and livelihood improvement benefits. The grass puts waste and redundant and barren hill slop lands into productive use. Farmers are realizing the benefits of controlled water runoff while being able to meet their basic needs namely; medical care, scholastic materials, food, clothing among others.

The project is having environmental benefits of providing a permanent soil cover to the currently eroded bare grounds. It further helping in solid waste management when waste is collected and added to lemon grass spent grant for briquette charcoal making.

Further, SORAK is making use of spent grass after distilling essential oil in the production of briquette charcoal. Global Bio- Energy Uganda (GBE), Limited has provided all the necessary support to that enabled SORAK establish a briquette charcoal production unit during the second project year 2018. This area also grows a lot of maize and cassava and those solid waste is now being used to make briquette charcoal. SORAK is using other organic waste to make briquette charcoal.

This project is accompanied with environmental education through both community and school based campaigns. This has raised prospects of women and youth sustainable livelihoods and mitigation of climate change effect. The project has overall contributed to environmental awareness and protection.

3. PROJECT RESULTS AS PER ATIVITY

<Activity 1>

Activity 1.9 Conducting routine support supervision and monitoring of the project activities

SORAK visited three lemon grass farmers namely Kyeyune Daniel, KatusabePeter and Alindalsaac. The monitoring took place on the following dates.

Dates: 27th May 2019 and 27th June 2017.

Locations: Kisombwa and Lwemiyagavillages, Kibalinga Sub-County.
Kafundezi village in Nabingoola Subcounty.

Participants: Total: 47 (including 27 female and 20 male)

Activities:

1. Spot checking in planted trees and lemon grass among project beneficiary individuals and schools.
2. Participants sharing of key gains and challenges –gains included having attained shade for school children, trees acting as wind breakers and while challenges included termite attack to planted trees and dry spell that affected lemon grass proper growth.



Monitoring team taken around planted trees-Kisombwa COPE centre



Leaders take a visit of the project achievements-Lwemiyaga



Discussing shared learning-Kafundezi



Leaders participate in environmental supervised visits -Kisombwa

Outcomes:

- Leaders were updated on the progress of the project
- SORAK team discovered the project areas of strengths (tree planting with schools) and weakness (drought greatly affecting lemon grass proper growth.)

Activity 1.10 Conducting monthly visits to 16 schools based environmental clubs

Dates: 3rd to 12th June 2019

Locations: 1-Kasaana C U, 2- Katega, 3- Buwata, 4-Ntungamo Public, 5-Cawodisa, 6-Kisombwa COPE centre,

7-Mugungulu, 8-Nabibungo 9-Kyakasimbi, 10-Kafundenzi, 11-Maya, 12-Nkokonjeru, 13-Muyinayina, 14- Nabingoola, 15 –Kibalinga and 16 Kabowa Primary schools.

Activities:

1. Electing leaders and recruitment of members to the environmental clubs
2. Training on how to sustain clubs
3. Capacity building on the importance of environmental clubs in schools. This emphasised telling them the importance of;
 - Tree planting in school compound and at their homes.
 - How to keep the school compound free from waste that is through sorting of decomposable garbage from non-decomposable one.

Outcomes:

- The environmental clubs gained more members
- Shared learning through capacity building
- Room for transparency and direction after electing new members of the environmental clubs
- Each member of the club was given a defined role to play for the success of the clubs



Electing new members of the club-Ntungamo PublicP/S



Leadership training on how to sustain clubs



Involving parents in the environmental clubs at school



Question and answer session

Activity 1.11 Conducting 2 competitive interschool environmental promotion exhibition days–To be held on the world environmental day

Date: 5th June 2019

Location: Kibyamirizi village -Kitenga Sub-county play grounds

Participants: Total 432 from 16 schools (each school was represented by 25 children and 2 teachers)

Activities:

1. The speeches from local leaders starting with the village leader-Chairperson Local council 1, the sub county Chairperson-Mr. Gamba Edward, the area councillors and the District Vice chairperson
2. Other speeches from the District Community Development Officer
3. School children’s presentations of songs with environmental protection and promotion messages-Each participating school has been tasked to compose and perform either a song or a short play illustrating the importance of environmental protection and promotion.
4. SORAK staff also made a speech highlighting the need for environmental protection and why we need to involve children and talked about the problem of drought, seasonal changes, poor crop harvests, and lack of water for animals and human beings as some of the problems that make it necessary to protect the environment.

Outcomes:

- Messages on environmental conservation were passed on to other people through music, dance and drama.
- Leaders made commitment towards environmental protection and conservation



District officials Sign to make commitments to environment protection in schools



Children participating in the event



Children perform an environmental awareness song



Representatives from other schools

Activity 1.12 Conducting environmental awareness meetings to 5 more primary schools

Dates: 6th, 7th and 10th, June 2019

Locations: 1-Ntungamo Public primary school, 2-Kasana CU primary school, 3-Kisombwa COPE centre, 4-Nabibungo Primary and 5-Kirume public Primary school

Participants: Total 2,153 Children and 50 teachers (10 teachers each school)

Activities:

SORAK successfully carried out awareness raising in more other 5 primary schools. Teachers promised working closely with children to foster environmental protection in their respective school localities. All the 5 schools had total numbers of above 400 children from lower primary to upper primary. Upper primary children effectively participated by asking questions than lower primary children. Teachers were also engaged during the awareness raising and each school had beyond 10 teachers. The awareness raising reached a total attendance of 2,153 school children.

The awareness messages included telling them the following;

- 1- Understanding the meaning of environment, environment protection and conservation.
- 2- Ways of environment protection and conservation including but not limited to tree planting, and avoiding indiscriminate waste dumping.
- 3- Telling them their roles as children, teachers and their parents towards ensuring a safe environment for better current and future climate.

Outcome:

- Members of the school had accurate information on how to conserve the environment



A song on environmental conservation awareness



Children perform a song after SORAK staff passing on an environmental protection message –Kisombwa COPE centre



Passing on messages on environmental protection NtungamoPublicprimary School



SORAK volunteer creating awareness on environmental conservation-Nabibungo Primary school

<Activity 2>

Activity 2-6 Conducting 1 district level dissemination meeting to share project impact and learning

Date: July 2019

Location: Mubende District Local Government

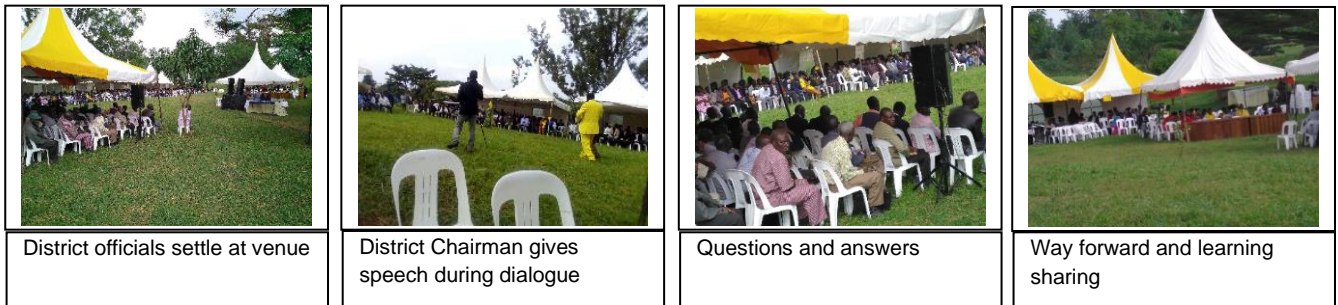
Participants: Total 50 (These are district stakeholders including leaders from grassroots to district level ie village, parish, sub county and district political and technical leaders.)

Activities:

1. SORAK presentation on the project, areas of operation, challenges and recommendations for the district consideration
2. Questions and answers to SORAK and the district natural resources department
3. District recommendations for a sustained effort for environmental conservation.

Outcomes:

- District leaders were updated and in the know of the impact generated and created by the project
- District leaders promised to strongly incorporate environmental protection and conservation activities in the district budget and work plans



Activity 2.7 Conducting 4 policy making meetings on environmental protection.

Date: June-July 2019

Location Bagezza, Kibalinga, Nabingoola, Kigando

Participants: Total 200 (see details below)

SORAK successfully conducted four policy making meetings in Nabingoola, Kibalinga, Bagezza and Kigando sub counties. A total of 200 participants attended these meetings. Participants comprised of centre school chairpersons and head teachers, sub county technical staff, invited district officials and community lemon grass famers. A review of the enacted environmental protection laws and regulations were assessed and reviewed.

- Nabingoola, 52 participants: 8 female and 44 male participants
- Kibalinga, 48 participants: 24 female and 24 male participants
- Bagezza, 50 participants: 14 female and 36 male participants.
- Kigando, 50 invited participants: 27 female and 23 male participants. These included invited representatives from school clubs.

Activities:

- SORAK presented the need to make and implement policies in environmental protection in the area
- Participant discussed the current policies and laws on environmental protection and how all participants can play their roles to ensure that they are enforced.

Outcomes

- The ideas on environmental conservation were included and passed on in the respective Sub-County work plans
- Local sub county councillors promised to step up efforts to monitor wetland and forest conservation and ensure no more wetland reclamation without approval of the district environment officer.



4. KEY CHALLENGES

The key challenges faced during this project implementation period included;

- Rain that affected school awareness creation activities –some schools did not have halls and SORAK staff had to wait until rain stops to continue talking to children.
- Lemon grass farmers especially in Kiyuni were discouraged by drought that led to the drying up of their grass

- Many more schools wished to get support and involved in the SORAK implemented JFGE funded project but could not be involved. This is because they were not originally planned to be targeted.
- During the sub county dialogue meetings, it was noted that sub county local governments did not have enough funds to help them continue monitoring environmental protection without the support of SORAK/JFGE.

5. LESSONS LEARNT

- ✚ For a sustainable environmental conservation, it is important to engage different stakeholders at all the crucial stages of the project in order to achieve results.
- ✚ Use and involvement of children and young persons is crucial in achieving sustainable environmental protection and conservation
- ✚ Use of institutions like schools is very important in fostering successful conduct of project of environmental promotion

6. ACHIEVEMENT

Sub county Local governments of Kibalinga, Bagezza and Nabingoola Committee to environmental protection and conservation

At the beginning of this 3rd year of JFGE funded environmental protection and education project, SORAK did not clearly know that sub county local governments would strongly get concerned and involved in issues of environmental protection.

It has been nevertheless established more especially through sub county based dialogue meetings that sub county leaders have now become more concerned to ensure that no more damage is done to the wetlands.

All schools including those not supported by this project have been tasked to copy what SORAK has done in the project schools. It is because of this that SORAK has received several invitations (8 during this quarter from 8 non project schools). Head teachers and chairpersons of these schools continue to call executive Director of SORAK, asking him to go and teach their schools and parents also the issues being taught in the project funded schools.

This is a clear sign of project continuity and sustainability even after the end of this project funding