



# Environmental Protection through Expanding Lemon Grass Growing and Education in Uganda

Quarterly Performance Report

July–September 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. This is an environment protection and promotion project with title: Environmental Protection through Expanding Lemon Grass Growing and Education in Uganda.

This report presents quarterly progress of activities implemented between July and September 2019. The reports highlights results, outcome, challenges faced in the first quarter and how SORAK has been able to overcome challenges as well as a documentation of one success story.

### 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 that 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

In order to ascertain progress of project activities, SORAK team comprising of Martin Mafabi and Wasswa Livingstone, conducted monitoring visit to various project sites as follows;

Dates: 13<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> August 2019.

Locations:

- ✧ Two lemon grass farmers namely Isaac Kasolo and Husein Agonza from the villages of Lwobwana and Lwemiyaga respectively.
- ✧ Two eucalyptus tree farmers namely; Matokyi and Lubega Joseph from the villages of Semuto and Kibalinga
- ✧ Ntungamo public primary school

**Activities:**

1. Spot checking in planted trees and lemon grass among project beneficiary individuals and schools.
2. Participants sharing of key lessons and challenges
3. Checking maturity of lemon grass that would soon be harvested and distilled.
4. Checking the functionality of environment club at school and her readiness to plant and maintain provided wood trees and fruit seedlings
5. Checking whether provided trees had been planted and how they were growing.

**Outcomes:**

- SORAK staff was updated on the number of persons that had been supplied with tree seedlings. These were 8 and each had planted a total of 10000 trees. Hence a total of 80000 trees. Other 2000 seedlings were supplied to Primary schools including. Ntungamo Public and Kasana CU Primary School. This demonstrated the need for more seedlings in the next planning project period
- SORAK established actual dates and timing of seedling supply and planting, this helped in ensuring that trees are planted in time when there is still enough rain to enable them grow well.
- During the monitoring, SORAK was able to ascertain the following;
  - 1- The rate at which the trees were growing-Here trees were growing well due to enough rains
  - 2- The challenges faced by farmers and school environment club,-Here it was learnt that there was no much challenge with farmers apart from schools where domestic animals sometimes destroyed the trees in school compounds. School environment clubs were however advised to provide seedling protection sticks from damage that can be caused by domestic animals like goats.
  - 3- SORAK established that it is a good practice for farmers to intercrop the trees with some seasonal crops like beans. This would make it easy to provide attention to the trees as the farmer goes in to weed the crops- For example the beans and groundnuts seen in the photos that were intercropped with the trees
  - 4- It was learnt that environment clubs worked well and had improved the general outlook of the schools supported by this project like at Ntungamo Public Primary school.



Martin checks lemon grass which is due for harvesting – Lwemiyaga village



A health growing eucalyptus intercropped with beans- Semuto village



Proud youth shows off his recently planted lemon grass- Lwobwana village



Martin with on youth checks eucalyptus that is not growing well- Kibalinga village



Group photo of environment club members



Register of environment club members Ntungamo Public Primary school-Kibalinga S/C

### Activity 3.10 Procure, supply of tree planting seedlings

Dates: 7<sup>th</sup> August 2019

Locations: Mubende Municipality and supplied to Lwemiyaga, Kibalinga B, Semuto and Ntungamo villages- Kibalinga sub county

Target: Tree planting targeted 10 farmers and 2 primary schools;

#### Activities:

1. Identification of potential farmers to plant the trees
2. Identification of schools and preferred tree/fruit tree types
3. Reaching out to the tree nursery beds and selecting best seedlings
4. Collection and loading of seedlings to a hired truck and deliver to various gardens

#### Outcomes:

- Eucalyptus trees were preferred A total of 8 farmers and 2 schools were provided with a total of 100,000 tree seedlings.
- Schools preferred both eucalyptus and fruit trees. This was because eucalyptus trees would grow very fast and provide wood fuel to the schools. The fruit trees would provide fruits and shade to the school children.
- The supply of tree seedlings to schools increased school environment club functionality and activeness as they now had an added activity to tree planting and care.



Nursery bed attendants gather seedlings for loading



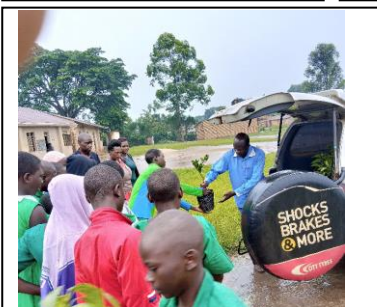
Packed seedlings ready to loading



Youth beneficiaries monitor loading



Youth load tree seedlings



ED SORAK delivers trees to Ntungamo Public primary school



ED SORAK and school environment club patron demonstrate by planting one tree



Environment Club Member after planting a sample tree in school compound



**Activity 3.12 Make products that make use of lemongrass essential oil and raw materials namely candles and oil perfumed chlorine bleach**

Date: 4<sup>th</sup>September 2019

Location: SORAK offices

Participants: These were total 20 participants of comprised of 14 female and 06 male.

In this training, participants were introduced to knowledge and skills of making the following products;

- Glycerine oil
- Liquid soap
- Candles
- Chalk making, this was an added skill.

With the products above, SORAK wished to research on how to make use of lemon grass essential oil.

The training was facilitated by two resource persons drawn from Kampala. These included;

- Mr. Kasule Fred
- Miss. Trevor

These are resource persons with knowledge and experience in training and making of such products trained to SORAK members and youth above.

**Activities:**

1. Assembling tools and equipment used to make the above products
2. Demonstrating the materials and taking measurements of items used to make products
3. Making products and testing their usage with the application of lemon grass essential oil.

**Outcomes:**

- Participants learnt how to make various products
- SORAK realised what it takes to start making products that use lemon grass essential oil



Items and materials gathered during training



Key facilitator asking one participant to demonstrate



Participants listen attentively



Facilitate mixing material to produce liquid soap

**4. KEY CHALLENGES AND MITIGATION MEASURES UNDERTAKEN**

The key challenges faced during this second quarter of the project implementation period included;

- Facilitators for the skills training workshop in the making of products like candles and liquid soap came late, and the training ended late. This was because the key facilitators mothers had got an accident in the morning she was preparing to come and she had to attend to the mother first.
- Too many people asking for tree seedlings yet the project can support a few. Farmers would want to plant as many as 10,000 trees like the farmer we visited who had over 40 acres of land. Each acre can be planted with 1200 trees meaning a farmer with 40 acres of land will need 48,000 seedlings himself alone.
- Too much rain making some roads impassable and therefore making it difficult to SORAK programme staff to monitor the project activities.

**5. LESSONS LEARNT**

- SORAK needs a more committed staff to the department of making products. Current staff is more taken up to social work activities rather that making products that would be required aggressive marketing. SORAK needs to either re-orient staff towards entrepreneurship or hire volunteers who are interested in product making and eventual marketing.
- Use and involvement of children and youth is crucial in achieving sustainable environmental protection and conservation



- Involving schools is very important in fostering successful conduct of project of environmental promotion.

## 6. ACHIEVEMENT

### **SORAK establishes vibrant school based environment club-Ntungamo Public Primary school-Kibalinga Sub county Mubende district.**

SORAK with funding from JFGE and support from GBN targeted Ntungamo Public primary school as one of the environment protection and education targeted schools. SORAK conducted environmental education sessions in the school. This later motivated the school to form an environment club. This has taken a self and sustainable initiative of growing own vegetables and conducting environmental conservation activities of garbage picking and sorting, growing vegetables with organic waste as manure. This was a great achievement and success. The school at the time of GBN Executive Directors monitoring had well tendered for trees, vegetable gardens and was even able to be donated 2 cabbages to the monitoring team. This is illustrated in the photographs below.



Environment Club members donate cabbages to the monitoring team



GBN director and Environment Club members



School head teachers takes lead in monitoring visit to check the vegetable garden