

Non-Profit Organization “Global Bridge Network”

Fiscal Year 2019 Activity Report

1. Activity Period: 2019/4/1～2020/3/31

2. Activity Achievement:

Global Bridge Network (GBN) has been managing two International Support programs: “Improvement of Educational Environment for girls” and “Environmental Protection and Education” since 2017 in Uganda and has successfully completed the third fiscal year with financial support from LUSH Japan and the Environmental Restoration and Conservation Agency (ERCA). Both programs are managed in collaboration with the local partner NGO, SORAK Development Agency, which carried out those activities in the field. Through SORAK’s great efforts, both third-year projects have taken hold in the local communities. Although Uganda has been under lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic since the end of March, fortunately all activities had been implemented without any impact. Finally, the environment project ““Environmental Protection through Expanding Lemon Grass Growing and education in Uganda”” was completed in this year.

As International Communication Promotion programs, GBN held an event, “Sanyu! _3rd,” in Yokohama to introduce GBN’s programs in Uganda as well as enjoy African music, drum and dance with all participants. GBN also held an international party featuring Ugandan cuisine with employees from ECS Co., Ltd., as well as participated in the Yokohama International Forum to introduce Uganda’s life and culture. Unfortunately, the Yokohama festa scheduled to be held on October 12, 2019 was cancelled due to a typhoon. Finally, SORAK’s manager, Ms. Hadijah, was selected as a trainee of agriculture leadership training at the Asian Rural Institute (ARI) in Nasushiobara, Japan, and GBN supported her coming to Japan as a partner NGO.

GBN’s programs reached their third year, which led us to discuss about the next steps/direction with SORAK. However, we are facing difficulties to continue our projects due to COVID-19, and people in Uganda are suffering from food shortages and other hardships under the long-term lockdown. In spite of this situation, we would like to continue our support as much as possible, with careful consideration of the situation and timing.

3. Activity Summary

GBN activities consist of two key areas: “International Support” and “International Communication Promotion.”

① International Support

1) Improvement of Education Environment for School Girls

Monthly menstruation is one of the major reasons for school girl dropouts in economically challenged communities. A large number of female pupils can hardly afford sanitary pads, and as a result, end up seeking other alternatives such as used clothes. These alternative solutions come with many consequences such as infections and humiliation due to blood leakage, among others, which has been identified as the main cause of bullying and teasing by male pupils. The girl students, with no options, end up missing school during their menstruation periods, which affects their performance, and a large number of school girls drop out of school to save themselves from such humiliation. Problems like these indicate that the educational environment for school girls is faced with many challenges.

This fiscal year, school activities of MHM (menstrual hygiene management) clubs which were created last year, were supervised to continue using a child-to-child approach, and project target areas were expanded to Pallisa and Wakiso districts in which training on reusable sanitary pad making, menstrual hygiene management, gender awareness, and sex education (including sexual and reproductive health rights) were conducted with new target schools, teachers, and students. Moreover, community-based training of reusable sanitary pad making and MHM for vulnerable women was implemented.

Through radio talk shows and spot messages, awareness raising on the importance of girls' education, sensitization of MHM with using reusable sanitary pads, and the "Happy Pads" advertisement produced by SORAK were promoted. Furthermore, a video (<https://bit.ly/2LrQnZj>) that presents an audio-visual illustration of the process of making reusable sanitary pads was created to share with communities as a means that could help to sustain their learned skills after the training.

Regarding some of the impacts of the above, an article was published in the *Daily National Newspaper* about the training, which was the first of its kind to take place in respective schools in Pallisa. Also, the quality of 'Happy Pads' improved and SORAK received many inquiries from surrounding communities and other areas of organizations wanting to purchase Happy Pads or receive related training.

We believe that there are still strong needs for this project. By expanding this project, more girls would be able to go to school in a safe environment and complete their education. In the long run, this will in turn lead to women to be independent socially and economically. *Refer to GBN webpage for detailed activity reports and final impact survey report.¹

■ Project Name : "Improvement of School Environment to Combat Menstrual

¹ <http://globalbridgenetwork.org/en/works/>

Hygiene Management (MHM) Challenges to Stop Adolescent Girls School Dropouts in Uganda”

- Date: 2019/6/1～2020/2/29
- Location: Uganda (Mubende, Pallisa, and Wakiso Districts)
- Beneficiaries: More than 3,500 individuals including girls, boys, teachers, parents, and local residents
- Expenditure: 1,050,000 JPY



Training of making reusable sanitary pads for community women



Awareness raising for school teachers and parents



Radio talk show



Gender awareness and sex education at school



Lecture about MHM for students



Sanitary pad making with students

2) Environmental Protection and Education

Uganda, in general, and Mubende district have been impacted by environmental destruction such as persistent drought, particularly human activities in search of arable land, severe deforestation, as well as wetland encroachment. High levels of unemployment with limited income sources are especially prevalent among youth and women who form the majority of the Ugandan population and lack an alternative means of survival/livelihood as they are tied to tilling of the land. This occurs amid limited information and knowledge of the likely impact of unrestricted deforestation and wetland reclamation on climate change.

Cultivating large amounts of lemon grass on barren land caused by drought prevents soil erosion and is anticipated to benefit the environment. The three-year project, an environmental protection project through lemon grass cultivation, had continually implemented by SORAK.



Burning the fields by the locals



Wetland reclamation



Lemon grass can grow among rocks.

Routine support supervision and monitoring of youth and women farmers who took the training of lemon grass growing and environmental protection were conducted and tree planting activities of 112,000 trees in total were carried out with those farmers. Also, regular monitoring visits and follow-up support of 16 school-based environment clubs which were created last year were conducted. All clubs actively had worked on planting trees, growing vegetables, cleaning surrounding schools, and making hand crafts from waste including mats, baskets, ropes, etc., in the compound of the schools. In addition, awareness-raising meetings on environmental protection were successfully held in five more primary schools. Moreover, a competitive interschool environmental promotion exhibition was held, in which students performed music, dance, and drama, and the best school and individual children received a prize. Stakeholders including government officials, namely the district environment officer, school inspector of schools, district education officer, and chief administrative officer, also participated and shared awareness on the importance of environmental protection.

Further, meetings on policy making of environmental protection to assess laws and regulations were held, and local leaders pledged their support to environmental conservation efforts and the immediate suspension of wetland encroachment by arable farmers. The district level dissemination meeting to share project impact and learning made an influence on accelerated implementation and enforcement of laws related to environmental protection.

Also, SORAK successfully initiated a business for producing “SORAK” mosquito repellent jelly made from SORAK’s distilled lemon grass essential oil which helps to prevent malaria.

As a result, the project supported both women and youth to grow lemon grass and plant trees as well as equipping them with the necessary knowledge and information that are crucial in promoting environmental protection. Sixteen primary schools that had formed environmental promotion and protection clubs were able to plant trees at schools and make fellow children and their parents more aware, hence promoting school-based environmental education. Further, under this project SORAK worked with local leaders to

monitor and enforce laws and regulations that protect the environment including wetlands. Mubende district made a charcoal ordinance regulating cutting down trees for charcoal production in the district. Finally, land which used to be barren in Mubende was allocated for 20 acres of lemon grass growing and 224 acres of tree planting.

This project was sponsored by ERCA and GBN as a representative party that supported the project carried out by SORAK. * Refer to GBN webpage for detailed activity reports.²

- Project Name: “Environmental Protection through Expanding Lemon Grass Growing and education in Uganda”
- Date: 2019/4/1～2020/3/31
- Location: Uganda Mubende district and Kyegegwa district
- Beneficiary: more than 13,000 persons including women, youth, school children (16 schools), local officials, and neighboring famers
- Expenditure: 3,000,000 JPY



Environmental education and awareness training at school



Tree planting by environment club



Received cabbages from environment club



Handmade craft from



competitive interschool environmental promotion



Gathering nursery bed by women group



Monitoring and supervision of environment with local leaders



SORAK mosquito repellent jelly made by essential lemongrass



Promoting a product by SORAK staff

² <http://globalbridgenetwork.org/en/works/>

② International Exchange Project

1) Holding the event “Sanyu!_3rd”

The international exchange event "Sanyu!_3rd" was held at MOANA in Yokohama. It was a collaboration event between GBN and the African-style dance group STUDIO BARJARA DANCERS and African drum school Djembe players.

GBN introduced the organization and activities in Uganda with a video, followed by a performance session with a powerful djembe rhythm and African-style dance. At the end of the event, all participants enjoyed the Ugandan beat by dancing in a circle. Through this event, everyone was able to experience an aspect of Africa.

The collaborators are as follows:

- Coordinator: STUDIO BARJA (African-style dance)
- Performers: African Dance STUDIO BARJARA DANCERS
African drum school Djembe Players

(Date: March 21, 2019; Time: 13:00-15:30; Location: Yokohama; Number of participants: Approximately 30)



Introducing GBN's activities



African drum Djembe players



STUDIO BARJARA DANCERS performance



Dance together in a circle to Ugandan music



Group photo with participants and cast

2) Gathering together to enjoy Ugandan food

A gathering to enjoy Ugandan dishes was held with the employees of ECS Co., Ltd. who are supporting GBN. Participants were able to experience Uganda's local cuisine

made by Ugandan staff of GBN and enjoy Uganda's music while communicating with Ugandan people working in Japan.



Mr. Arafat cooking Ugandan dishes



Ugandan cuisine



Uganda's staple food "Pocho"



Stew, Pilau (Ugandan-style rice)



Group photo with participants

(Date: September 28, 2019; Time: 13:00-15:00; Location: Tsurumi, Yokohama;
Number of participants: Approximately 15)

3) Participation in Yokohama International Forum

"Let's Know about Uganda Culture, Lifestyle, Differences from Japan"

At the 1 session on the second day of the Yokohama International Forum, held at JICA Yokohama, GBN introduced projects implemented in Uganda, exchange activities in Japan, and the lives of Uganda people, including food, dance, traditional costumes, sightseeing spots, activities, and lifestyles.

With the cooperation of Ugandan colleagues living in Japan, we tried to introduce various (beautiful) aspects of Uganda with humor because Africa has serious problems such as poverty and conflict which are often broadcast in Japan as "Africa."

Many people participated in this event, including those who were new to GBN and our activities, or students who were interested in Africa. During the Q&A session, we received many questions about GBN's activities, Africa, and Uganda. Ugandan panelists answered those questions to give participants an opportunity to learn about Uganda's attractive points in a congenial atmosphere.



Introduction of GBN's activities



Mr. Ruf explained about Uganda's



Quiz session



Sales of hand crafts

(Date: February 16, 2020; Time: 12:00-12:50; Location: JICA Yokohama; Number of participants: Approximately 20)

4) Ms. Hadijah, a member of SORAK, completed a training course for rural leaders at ARI

Ms. Hadijah, project manager of GBN's partner, SORAK Development Agency (SORAK), participated in a nine month training course (from March 2019) for rural leaders at the Asian Rural Institute (ARI) in Japan.

During the training at ARI, she was able to experience various methods of learning, including classes, various field trips, extracurricular training, and individual projects (creating devices that can hatch eggs without using electricity). Ms. Hadijah had an intensive Japanese language course, leadership training, and agricultural training such as organic farming and natural farming. She was also able to learn various topics such as the dangers of chemicals, the effects of climate change, disease control, seed collection and nursery, livestock management, and biogas, as well as acquire hands-on skills.

During a field trip in the rural area through a homestay at a farmer's house in the Tohoku region, she interacted with Japanese farmers and learned about Japanese agricultural cooperatives. Reflecting on this occasion, she made an analysis on gender issues in her country (women are socially vulnerable in the agriculture field). On a study tour to western Japan, she learned about Japan's social problems (homelessness), visited the Peace Memorial Museum in Hiroshima, and had an opportunity to learn about various aspects of Japan.

Through this training, in addition to acquiring the skills and knowledge of organic farming and livestock breeding that can be practiced in Uganda, she learned the idea of adding value such as processing and sales of agricultural products, thus aiming to increase the income of women engaged in agriculture. She was able to get an idea for various activities such as the creation of a mechanism like an agricultural cooperative. She completed her training with a strong motivation to put her skills to use in Uganda after returning back to Uganda.

We are very grateful to ARI for giving her valuable learning opportunities such as interacting with other foreign trainees and visiting farms and related facilities around Japan. Also, from GBN's perspective, Ms. Hadijah's nine months of learning and growth were very beneficial. Therefore, GBN will continue supporting her activities to enable her to enhance her skills for projects in the field.



Opening ceremony attended by training participants from 14 countries



Working at ARI's rice



Taking care of chickens



Participants with one of the pioneer organic farmers at Tsuruoka city



Handing present to the staff of fertilizer center in Tsuruoka city



Celebrating Ms. Hadijah's completion of ARI training with Ugandan people in