PROJECT PROPOSAL

Involving schools and communities to achieve and strengthen sustainable farming and climate change adaptation

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Project title

Involving schools and communities to achieve and strengthen sustainable farming and climate change adaptation

1.2 Project location

The programme is envisaged to serve Northern Uganda for two main reasons. Firstly, it is home to over 1 million refugees from South Sudan a result of which has been devastating to both the arable land as well as the environment. Secondly, and most importantly, poverty, poor agricultural practices, and low level of education underlines these communities because of the two-decade Lord's Resistance Army insurgence in the region led by Joseph Kony.

1.3 Implementing agent

Multi-stakeholder Platform on Education and Environment (MPEEN) is registered as a non-profit making Indigenous Non-Governmental Organization in Uganda

1.4 Mission

Honest, active, and deliberate youth and community engagement for sustainable food production and sustainable environment.

1.5 Vision

To build communities which are self-sustaining, self-reliant, poverty-free, well-informed and environmentally conscious.

1.6 Core values

To create communities that work for both the present and future generation, we are guided by the following values: honesty, integrity, information sharing, teamwork, action-oriented, and accountability.

1.7 Long term goal

Build self-sustaining, self-reliant, poverty-free, well-informed and environmentally conscious communities.

1.8 Objectives

To empower communities and the youth to create a safer, healthier, cleaner, and greener environment.

To alleviate poverty through building, strengthening, and empowering the communities to produce adequate amounts of food without destroying the environment.

1.9 Activities

Sensitisation and Awareness creation

Tree planting

Training of farmers

Follow-up of farmers

Information sharing and network

Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

1.10 Beneficiaries

The primary focus of this project are the communities and the schools. The farmers in these communities constitute over 75% of the region's population, with over 77% of this population being the youth who are less than 30 years of age and women constituting about 60%. Agricultural practices in this region are largely subsistence and marked by traditional approaches such as bush burning, deforestation and uninformed use of fertilizers. The explicit zones to be covered by this project will be Lango sub-region, Acholi sub-region, Teso sub-region and Karamoja region, all in the Northern part of the country.

1.11 Amount requested and Project Period

The project will require £30,000 for the three years and we are raising £9,000 towards the project and requesting for £21,000 from Global Giving to help cover the overall cost of the project for the three years. The breakdown is in the budget item provided in this proposal.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Human and community survival is inextricably linked to the natural environment in many ways. But, human activities in Uganda and most especially the Northern part of the country is probably responsible for the degenerating level of the natural habitat and the general environment.

Population explosion due to the refugee influx from Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan are partly to blame for the massive pressure placed on the natural environment

in search for settlement and arable land. This has encouraged drastic felling of trees and loss of green cover and subsequently resulted into uncontrolled erosion and desertification.

Additionally, the two-decade long war in the region is partially responsible for the high level of poverty and hunger experienced by these communities. This in effect has resulted into extreme cutting down of trees for both firewood and commercial purpose as seen in the increased trading of coal and timber. Thus, exacerbating the level greenhouse gases in the atmosphere as the green cover is reduced.

Further, the displacement of these communities during the war also accounts for the low level of education often demonstrated in poor agricultural practices such as bush burning, deforestation and excessive use of fertilizers. These communities show demonstrable lack of awareness and information on the agricultural scientific inventions as well as the dangers elicited by the use of agricultural chemicals on both the agricultural products and the environment.

The rampant use and poor disposal of plastics and polythene accounts for the reduced food productivity in the region. This is directly linked to the effects of plastics and polythene disposed of on arable land and thus degenerating its fertility. Therefore, such uninformed practices expose the soil to dangerous poisonous chemicals and consequently reduces its productive quality over time thus poor yields and eventually subjecting households to food insecurity, poverty and hunger.

Pollution of air, soil and water due to the uninformed human activities inextricably results in poor human health. On the other hand, the burning of plastics and polythene in open spaces is responsible for air and water pollution in this region especially given that they depend on open water sources such as rivers, streams and wells for domestic use. This is responsible for adverse health effects such as disruption of the hormone, nervous and immune systems. We acknowledge that some of these activities are undertaken due to extreme poverty that leaves these communities with no alternative options.

As such we take a deliberate and a more action-oriented approach with the youth and the communities to remedy these challenges. Our approach seeks to inform, sensitise and empower the youth and the general population on the practical and context-specific sustainable mechanisms of food production and environmental management.

Therefore, through our partnership, we hope to improve this situation by raising communities' and youths' awareness and understanding of their responsibility towards themselves, the ecosystem and the future generations.

3. JUSTIFICATION

We believe that active youth and community engagement and empowerment will not only stimulate productivity and environmental protection but will most importantly preserve the natural environment for generations to come.

We also believe that the empowerment initiatives will deepen the understanding of both the youth and the general population on how to sustainably use the available natural resources such as water and soil without straining it or depleting it.

We believe that active involvement of the population in activities such as tree planting and waste disposal will enhance community ownership and make it self-sustaining. Contrary to interventionist approaches that take services to the people, our strategies entail active participation of the youth and the communities. This approach is sustainable since it stimulates societal and individual responsibility for the environment.

We believe that by empowering the population with information on the contextual causes and effects of climate change, they will not only adjust their practices, but these pieces of information will guide their decision-making processes thus ensuring posterity.

We believe that through training of farmers specifically and the population generally, the communities will adopt farming practices which environmentally friendly and sustainable. Adopting these methods will restore and strengthen soil fertility, enhance ecosystem balance, reduce air, soil and water pollution and boost agricultural production.

We hope to create a youth population that is empowered and enlightened through school debates and sensitisation talks and create communities which are self-sustaining, self-reliant, productive, poverty-free environmentally conscious. These communities will result from our deliberate and active engagement of communities in trainings, farm visits and awareness talks. It is our commitment to promote sustainable farming and endear climate change adaptation strategies amongst the youth and farmers as a means of strengthening the communities towards self-sufficient living and ultimately sustainable development.

As MPPEN Uganda, we have involved over 20,000 students and over 500 farmers from 30 schools and communities respectively in Uganda in environmental activities such as tree planting, talks, debates, waste disposal, and renewable energies in partnership with the Ministry of Water and Environment, National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA), National Forestry Authority (NFA), Uganda Broadcasting Corporation TV, and EcoStoves Uganda. The partnerships have provided us with extensive experience and strengthened our bonds with the students and community members.

Collaboratively, we hope to foster the development of sustainable agricultural and environmental practices nationally and internationally, but financial limitation is our main challenge. Finding a financial partner with adequate capacity to fund our projects and activities will boost our potential to cover the entire country and beyond. Consequently, it will deepen our community and school penetration while effectively impacting society positively.

4. EXPECTED OUTPUT

We hope to organise quarterly (4) workshops annually for community members and leaders on sustainable farming and climate change adaptation. Through these workshops issues causes and effects will be discussed, management of plastics and polythene, and use of renewable energies will be extensively discussed.

This project aims to train 1, 000 farmers every year from previous figure of 500 farmers, and directly benefit about 5,000 members of their households. Follow up will be made to assist the farmers adopt and implement the ideas.

We hope to plant 25,000 tree species annually in different communities and schools. This will include both fruit trees and other tree species to improve the green cover as well as mitigate the level carbon dioxide (greenhouse gas) in the atmosphere.

We will train and encourage farmers to uphold agroforestry as a way restoring the lost forest cover. This will ensure sustained provision of wood products without damaging the natural habitat. We generally believe that this approach will create a safe, clean and healthier environment and atmosphere.

Improved food productivity due to a well-maintained soil fertility. We hope to increase food production by at least 10% and encourage farmers to diversify crop variety. Increased nutrition and food production will pave way for sale of surplus and therefore increasing the household income levels hence reduced poverty.

We hope to engage over 100 schools, form environmental clubs and organise writing competitions and debates amongst students on climate change and generally on environmental management. This will create a generation of enlightened citizens and future leaders.

5. MEASURE OF SUCCESS

Success of our projects will be measured based on the pre-set targets within the defined time frame and change in behaviour. These shall include the following:

The number of training workshops organised, and the number of farmers trained.

The number of awareness meetings conducted in schools and communities

The number trees planted in schools and communities

The number of debating competitions held in schools, and the number of participating schools

The number of environmental schools formed in schools, and the number students involved in their activities

Behavioural change in farming practices and waste disposal

Number of users of solar energy products

6. IMPACT

The long term success of our project will be defined by the following attributes.

Improved standards of living associated with reduced poverty, improved agricultural productivity, better health standards, and an informed society.

Increased tree cover, reduced levels of air, soil, and water pollution, improved methods of waste disposal and reduced incidences of floods and drought.

7. PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

The longevity and sustainability of our projects will be enhanced through the following ways.

Active engagement and involvement of farmers during the trainings will ensure that they master the skills to shape their farming practice. These practical skills will endear in the farmers a sense of ownership for natural resources and the environment at large.

Sensitisation and involvement of both the youth and community members in tree planting and general environmental protection will provide room for checks and balances. But most importantly, the youth as the custodian of the future will make informed choices which will protect the environment.

Formation of environmental clubs in schools and community farmers' groups will ensure that the vital information and knowledge continue to flow from one generation to the next.

The engagement of schools and communities will also ensure that the trees are nurtured and sustained. Though most importantly, the schools and communities will take ownership of the projects implemented in their jurisdiction.

Our engagement and involvement of local leaders and government agencies like National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA), National Forestry Authority (NFA) and the Ministry of Water and Environment enables government ownership of the projects and as such they are protected and sustained by legislations.

8. RISKS

The risks that surround the development of these undertakings includes:

Some of the trained farmers may revert to their old ways of farming

Unfavourable weather conditions such as long spells of drought and floods may impact the agricultural activities

Unchecked cutting down of trees by foreign agencies may change the community's attitudes towards tree planting

Disintegration of farmer groups and school clubs may pose follow up challenges and information sharing.

9. ASSUMPTIONS

The project assumes the following:

The community members will have an interest in sustainable farming methods

The social, economic, political and weather conditions will be favourable for sensitisation, training, and most importantly acceptance and execution of the ideas.

Our partnership with Global Giving will pursue the project mandate without changing the focus and the mission.

10. WORK SCOPE

Strategies

Below are the major activities involved and include:

10.1 Awareness Creation

The school children and community will be sensitized on the causes and effects of climate change and consequently, the community needs to be enlightened on environmental dangers associated with traditional farming, human activities, and the availability of alternative farming approaches. To achieve this, we shall employ different methods and media which will include: school talks, TV and Radio talk shows, public rallies, field days, church

gatherings, posters, social media, visits to existing farmers' groups. During this stage, interested students and farmers are assisted to form manageable clubs and groups respectively and the training details and action plans are set. This will also entail debates and writing competitions on climate change and sustainable farming by school children at different levels.

10.2 Tree planting

Tree planting activities will be done in schools and the communities within the region. School children and the community members will actively participate in the exercise and be encouraged to nurture the trees for posterity. Different varieties of trees will be planted ranging fruit trees to hard wood trees. Restoration tree planting in forests together with the surrounding community members will be part of this exercise.

10.3 Training of farmers

The farmers will be trained on varied aspects of sustainable farming, soil and water management, plastics and polythene management. The trainings will embody discussions, sharing of experiences, demonstrations of skills and best practices, and participatory on-farm experience. The key concepts for the training will include:

- Techniques for soil improvement
- Methods of Soil Conservation
- Crop Rotation and Farm Management
- Crop Diversity
- Agroforestry and Environment Conservation
- Water Harvesting and Home Technologies
- Animal Husbandry in relation to animal welfare
- Renewable energies
- Plastics and polythene management

10.4 Follow-Up of farmers

Continuous engagement with the farmers will enable smooth transition to sustainable practices. These regular visits will provide guidance, advice and motivation to the farmers. These will also boost the community members in coming up with varied sustainable livelihood initiatives. This follow-up exercise will open new ground for demonstration farm visits by different community farmers' groups and substantially enhance the sharing of best practices.

10.5 Information sharing and Networking

We hope to work very closely with other like-minded institutions and organizations to improve on efficiency in service delivery. Through these approaches, we will learn from the works of others which will enable us to play a complementary role to others and mitigate duplication.

We hope to participate in relevant meetings, conferences and workshops to gather knowledge and information, and strengthen our practice within the sector. We hope to be part of the policy preparation and change, advocacy and public awareness on topical issues across the different networks.

We will share the relevant experiences, ideas and information gathered during our discussions with the school children and community members through different strategies including print and online media and consequently enable the farmers to share their views, feelings and ideas.

10.6 Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

The project activities will be followed up regularly, documented, reported, and discussed by the management and staff on a progressive basis.

The records will be stored and prepared for auditing. Progress and general reports will be safely kept and only shared with the boards, the funding agencies, and other relevant partners and subsequently used for project evaluations.

We shall evaluate our project success annually and assess the extent to which the annual targets are met. During this stage, we will analyse the project enablers and challenges and lay ground for the following year.

If funds allow, we will invite an external consultant to evaluate our projects. The report and recommendations of the independent consultant will be used for project adjustments and help the funding agencies to assess the impact of the grant in meeting the community's needs.

10.7 Implementing agent

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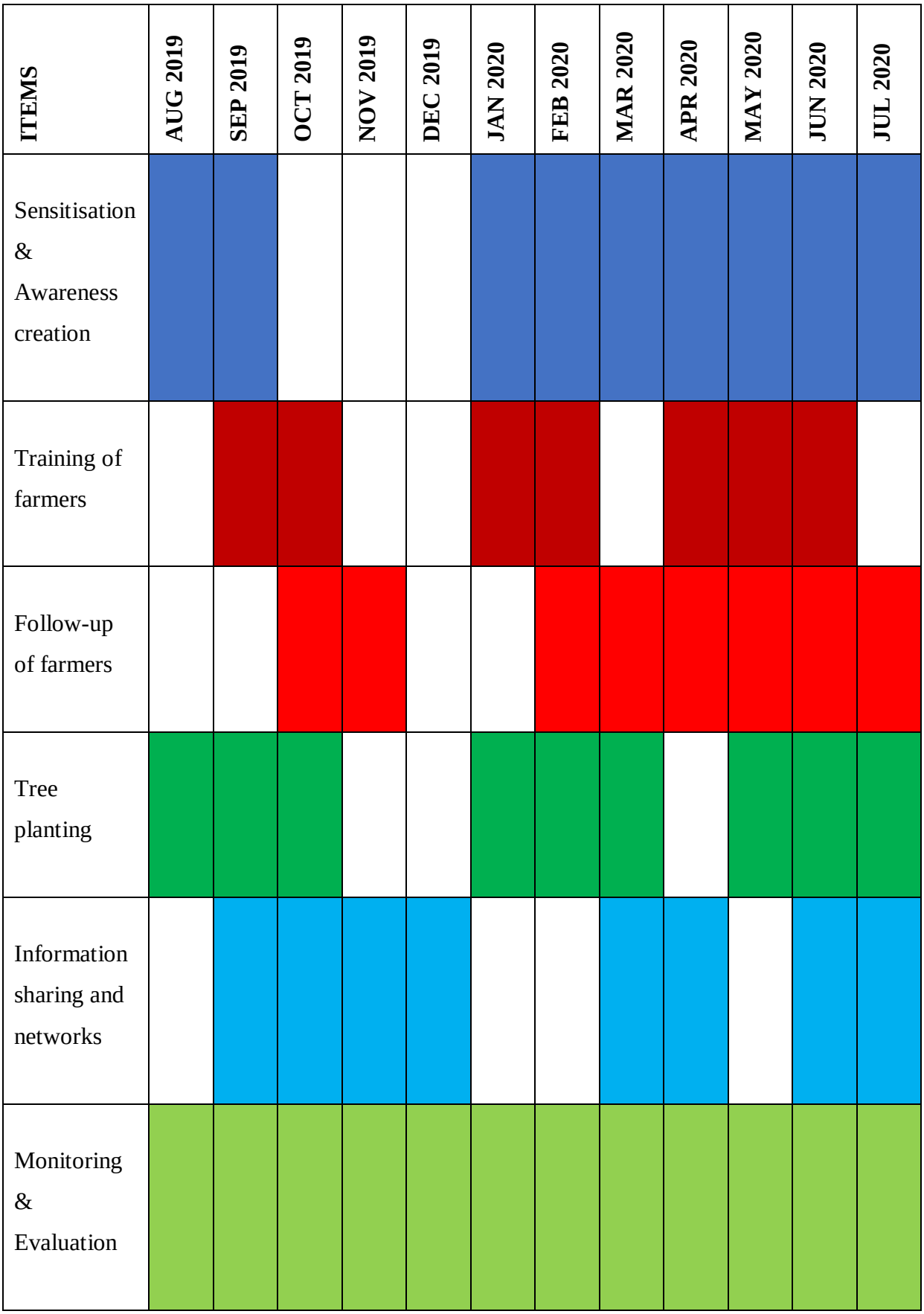
11. PROJECT ANNUAL WORKPLAN



12. PROJECT ANNUAL BUDGET

REQUIREMENTS		QUANTITY	UNIT COSTS (£)	AMOUNT (£)	ITEM SUMMARY
Follow-up of farmers		2	100	200	**200**
Sensitisation and awareness creation	Schools	10	200	2,000	**3,800**
	Communities	10	150	1,500	
	Other Media	3	100	300	
Training of farmers	Transport	4	100	400	**1,000**
	Stationery	Lumpsum	200	200	
	Communication & refreshments	4	100	400	
Tree planting	Seedlings	25,000	0.15	3,750	**4,150**
	Transport	4	100	400	
Monitoring and Evaluation	Stationery	Lumpsum	150	150	**550**
	Transport	4	100	400	
Information sharing and networks		3	100	300	**300**
TOTAL				**£10,000**	**£10,000**