**Summary of the charcoal project by the Collective of Youth Organizations for Solidarity in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Provincial Coordination of North Kivu,**

Background information

The Democratic Republic of Congo is globally known as a country that produces refugees towards neighboring countries and in other countries in the world, but less is said about said about refugees inside DRCongo.

The reality is that the Democratic Republic hosts millions of refugees, who remain unknown yet they do exist, many among them come from Burundi and Rwanda among other countries. For various reasons among them security and survival reasons, they are either living alongside the forests or inside the forests in DRCongo. That has severe consequences on the deforestation, the mostly affected in Virunga National Parc, located in Nyiragongo Territory, North Kivu, which hosts thousands of refugees mainly from Rwanda. One among the major activities on which these refugees survive on is to cut trees in Virunga National Parc in order to make Charcoal which is highly used in all forms of cooking in Goma, the main city of North Kivu Province.

Organizations working towards the protection of Virunga National Parc do estimated to millions of USA Dollars that Charcoal generates from the Parc, and that has put the forest reserves at high risks. Various efforts have been put in place by various actors including the international community but not much has really addressed the cause as it remains a big challenge.

In order to reduce the cutting of the trees in Virunga National Parc we have therefore proposed this Project to Refugees and the host Communities amongside Virunga National Parc.

Project: Recycling the rest over in order to produce cost effective charcoal for the local people in Goma

Location of the Project: Goma town and Nyiragongo Territory, North Kivu, DRCongo,

Targeted people: Refugees and host communities alongside Virunga National Parc

Consumers of the products: Host communities mainly in Goma Town

About the project

After trying this project during the year 2022, we observed that it can work and can produce great results in terms of responding positively to the challenges of charcoal in Goma. At first the project will focus on collecting all the wastage from charcoal that has been made over the years, we shall recycle it in order to produce a new form of charcoal that will be used by the local population. The wastage of charcoal in Goma and around Virunga National Parc is found almost everywhere thrown in outside and affects the fertility of the soil.

Objectives of this project

This project will focus on five main objectives which will be evaluated from time to time for a period of two years and then pass to the second phase.

To reduce the cutting of trees in Virunga National Parc at 70% by the end of the year 2024,

To create jobs for more than 15,000 directly by the end of the year 2024 in Goma and in Nyiragongo,

To reduce home expenses to 30% for every household by at least 60% of families in Goma and Nyiragongo by the end of 2024,

To make free and useful at least 80% of the land where the rest over the charcoal is deposited in order to make it useful for the agricultural activities by the end of 2024,

To participate to the protection of refugees in North Kivu and make them valuable to the host communities,

Activities

Objective One

This will focus on showing people that as per now we can only reuse the remains of the charcoal from the trees we cut over the years, and therefore no need to cut more trees. Everything that was thrown away from the trees that were cut over the years will be collected, everything that remained from the charcoal that was used over the years will collected, will be recycled and make more innovative and good charcoal. We shall then observe that people are no longer using the charcoal from the forest but instead are using the charcoal which is made from the remains which we are making, and that will reduce pressure on the forests in North Kivu,

Objective Two

Activities

This will create jobs in Goma and in Nyiragongo and people involved in identifying where the remains of charcoal is, bringing it to us, transforming it, creating stores, selling it, will benefit financially and the activity will continue for a long time as it generates money. On top of that all those who will benefit directly from the money of this project will be encouraged to form Saving Groups, and learn more other alternatives in order to fight against poverty and more options for income generating activities,

Objective Three

Activities

Generally the least among the households in Goma does spend at least 2,000 Congolese Franc, which is 1$ per day on charcoal alone in order to cook mainly food. Because charcoal is highly expensive millions of people in Goma do not even boil water to drink and that creates so many diseases which are a big problem to many families including even the loss of life, especially Cholera from unclean water.

The charcoal we are going to produce will reduce the household expenses by 4, per day. That means each family will be able to spend only 500 Congolese Franc per that means ¼ $, on our charcoal and that will be enough to cook food, and boil water to drink and even boil water to bathe, but also cook tea for the usage in the morning for those who have children going to school.

This will help families to serve money for other needs for the family especially school fees for the children, and other basic needs.

Objective Four

Activities

A lot space for agricultural land is no longer used especially where the remains of charcoal is thrown, it destroys the land and everything that is vegetal, once the remains of charcoal is removed, people will once again use the land and also plant trees which will help them to gain economically. As consequence people will produce more food and will also get money for their activities.

Objective Five

This activity will portray a positive image of refugees, will make refugees more visible and bring them to the public as a human resource that should be protected and developed more. Such visibility will also help refugees to highlight their key problems and seek solutions from the authorities at all levels. And in the process such activity will be also expanded to other areas which host refugees in DRCongo.

PROPOSED BUDGET

For this year 2023 we propose this budget which will help us to start the project and then evaluate it after 6 months.

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| No | Items  | Quantity  | Amount  |
| 1 | Materials for making the charcoal  | To produce at least 2000 charcoal per day | 6,000$ for a period of six months  |
| 2 | Hiring the space  | At 3 centers for making charcoal, and 10 centers for selling it  | 2,500$ for six months  |
| 3 | Human Resource  | 50 Workers and volunteers  | 5,000$ for six months  |
| 4 | Equipment  | Various tools  | 1,500 $ six months  |
| 5 | Communication  | This will help to coordinate  | 500$ for six months  |
| 6 | Field Visits  | To identify where to get the remains of charcoal  | 500$ for six months  |
| 7 | Other documents from the Government  | In order to operate stores  | 1,000$ |

 **Total: 17,000$ for six months**