

Reconciliation and Livelihood Goat Project

of the African Great Lakes Initiative of Friends Peace Teams

Report to the Goldman Sachs Global Leaders Program Social Entrepreneurship Fund
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I. Narrative

a) Results

First, a quick overview of the outcomes of the project, which was undertaken and the funds distributed according to the project proposal (see below for financial details). In May 2009 meetings were held with the committees of each of the groups in the five communities, along with Sarah Gakobwa. Then in June, the Project Director oversaw the distribution of goats in the communities, which also included a presentation of the rules for membership and care of the goats that each group had developed. During the year, contact was made to follow up on the progress of the groups, and finally in July 2010, the Project Director along with the Director of AGLI visited celebrations of the project in the communities in which the new goats that had been born were passed on to new participants to extend the project, and which also served as a chance to evaluate the project through interviews with participants.

The project proposal identified three goals which the project would aim to achieve: the first was the development of more positive relationships between people of different ethnicities who had been divided by the war. The second was that individuals would benefit economically from their goats, and the third is that the project would develop the social capital in these communities. These are each addressed in turn.

First, it is clear that the project did provide participants with an opportunity to develop ongoing relationships with members of the other ethnic group. This was apparent even from the day of the distribution, in which many people could be seen spending time and chatting with the partner they had been assigned, which was not a requirement of the project, but simply developed naturally. (See photo 1). A number of people reported meeting regularly with their partner for drinks or other social occasions, which in itself is not a trivial event since it often means traveling outside one's typical milieu to visit people in the internally-displaced persons camps or in the town which is predominately people of the other ethnicity. In Gwisabi, for example, one

set of partners explained how they collaborated when their goat was sick, including meeting together in the internally-displaced persons camp, in order to ensure it got the right medicine and treatment. Since then the goat had survived and was pregnant, and the relationship was cordial and both were proud of their collaboration.

Secondly, participants demonstrated that the project benefited their economic situation as well as their commitment to seeing the project continue. The goats served as an important source of additional income as well as providing some additional fertilizer for crops. This importance was seen at the goat distribution, in which there was an uproar over who would get the biggest, healthiest looking goat, until one of the facilitators devised a system in which they would be distributed randomly. Furthermore, in Mutaho, the groups themselves decided that each member should contribute a regular membership fee in order to participate in order to make the group more sustainable. Allowances were made to ensure that this did not exclude anyone, such as allowing people to pay late if they were waiting for the time when they would receive cash from selling their coffee harvest. This innovation is a good practice to adopt in future projects when possible since it encourages ownership in the group, although it also demonstrates that such an approach needs to be flexible in order to not exclude the most needy who have difficulty paying.

Finally, the project also had clear and important impacts on the social capital in each community. In Ryarunyinya, for example, one woman participant died, and the group of which she was a part decided that her daughter ought to continue on in her place within the group. Beyond just including her, however, the partner of a different ethnicity to whom she was assigned worked to ensure that extra resources were made available to her, thereby forming a social network of resources to help the girl (see photo 2).

In Mutaho, some of the groups began to involve the Communal administrator in learning about and promoting their work, thus building relationships between everyday citizens and leaders who are frequently removed from addressing the day-to-day challenges faced by their constituents since they are often selected by appointment by other party members.

Looking forward, the project plans to expand as possible according to the availability of goats and potentially of additional funding.

b) Lessons Learned

On the most basic level, the project did not grow as quickly as anticipated, because more goats died than expected, both before giving birth and among newborn kids. Similarly, some goats were perhaps too young to give birth, and thus did not give birth at all in the first year, which also reduced the number of goats distributed. These two problems were not so great as to prevent the project from expanding, but it does mean that the project will grow more slowly than projected.

The most important lesson from the project is the role that pre-existing social capital played in influencing the success of the project in different communities. While the project itself promoted

cooperation, trust-building, and the development of expertise in group leadership as noted above, some groups with greater existing social capital were more dynamic and effective than others that had not collaborated previously.

At one meeting in Ryarunyinya, for example, participants expressed the lack of trust they had in others, created by or exacerbated by the lack of institutions for ensuring the project carried on as planned. One member accused another of having sold a goat for personal profit, contrary to his claim that the goat had become sick and died. Although a rule had been set out for such circumstances stating that the dead goat ought to be seen by someone else in the group for verification, the man claimed to think it a waste of time and resources to have someone travel 8 kilometers to where he lived just to see a dead goat. Yet this incident raised considerable concern from the larger group as it threatened to undermine the collaborative group effort, as each individual considered merely pursuing his or her own self-interest. The leaders of the group were able to use this event, however, to reinforce the need for all to follow the guidelines and (as with other groups where social capital was greater) to suggest more regular group meetings to prevent such problems from recurring.

II. Financial

Expenditures for the project totaled \$9,309, of which \$9,120 was provided by the Goldman Sachs Social Entrepreneurship Fund and the remainder was provided by the African Great Lakes Initiative. Please see the attached report for more details.