



## Quarterly Newsletter 1-2019

Thank you for supporting our journey all the way. The first quarter of 2019 has visited us with greater responsibilities to protect mother nature and empower rural communities.

Walking into our craft village what you feel is a warm welcome from nature herself, and you will see a community of people committed to making a difference and a shift in perspective to make nature a closer friend and the responsibility to protect her no matter what. These are activities the first quarter visited us with.



Some of the staff of the organization at the bamboo unit



Making of mud bricks in the office for the hall

## Cocoa Pods to Black Soap!

Through the kind support of World Connect, we have been able to start up fully our trainings with women and girls in Imafon community on how to make African herbal black soaps from Cocoa pods. This is a 4 months empowerment program, which also includes, trainings on leadership, community development, team work, marketing, business management and lots more. So far, we are glad that all the women we are working with in this unit, have been able to learn how to make the soaps and also are running their own small-scale businesses in the community. These women and girls in the community also work as a group and is headed by one of the women. Esther one of the participants has this to say about the training; "Thank you World Connect for the support, since I joined this soap training my life is better. In the past sometimes I don't have money at hand, but since I started the training, I have some money. God bless you World Connect"



The women making the fire place for the black soap production



Participants learning how to make black soap

## Baskets from Bamboo and Canes!

Growing our knowledge on the different things we can make from bamboo will give us so much joy. During the first quarter, we were able to learn how to make baskets from bamboo. This is an indigenous knowledge that seems to be fading away in our communities. With this we will be able to make more products for home and market use.



Bamboo unit craft women learning how to make baskets



The bamboo unit craft persons making their own baskets

## Vegetable Farms!

Creating multiple streams of income are another way to encourage sustainable livelihood. Women and girls from all our units have started a small vegetable farm as a group. This small pilot vegetable farm we hope to grow, as another source of income for our participants during the training program. This income they share among each other. This development is as a result of the training we offered the participants in our black soap unit on how to make money.



Margaret harvesting vegetables from the vegetable farm



Participants from the black soap preparing the land for their vegetable farm

## Gender Based Violence Awareness!

We had the opportunity of having Omowumi Ogunrotimi, the founder of Gender Mobile Initiative talk to our women on the what gender based violence is and the need to speak out when domestically harassed. In the past most of our women did not see anything wrong in battering. They strongly believed men have the power to treat their wives the way they deem fit. To them this was a culture and tradition, they cannot go against. After the long conversation with Wumi, the women started having more conversations on what they can do differently, and they are constantly seeking more knowledge about their rights. We are looking forward to working closely with Gender Mobile, to seeing that we can create more awareness and programs around gender based and sexual violence in the community.



Wumi, the founder of Gender Mobile, speaking with our participants



Bamboo Incubation center in Rwanda

## Expanding Knowledge

As part of a learning and exchange experience, the founder of Durian visited projects in Rwanda and Tanzania. In Rwanda she was hosted by Dream village an organization that is giving life to the dreams of people living with HIV/AIDS. She also visited a bamboo incubation center, where she got to learn more and see more possibilities from bamboo. This learning she is carrying over to the bamboo unit at Durian. While in Tanzania she was hosted by Africraft. Africraft is a social venture that is committed to making crafts from waste. They create many products from waste bottles, bottle caps, waste papers, pet bottles and lots more. We are currently looking forward to having a knowledge exchange with the organization. Creating a south-south collaboration for development is one of the focus of this travel exchange. We are hopeful that in the nearest future the Africraft, Dream Village and Durian will be working together to create a stronger narrative in Africa.

## Toilet Construction

Open defecation is one of the problems faced in rural communities. This is because mostly there is no proper toilet put in place for them to use. We started working on a toilet facility within the office environment that will both serve the office and members of the community who need access to a toilet. From this toilet waste we want to generate biogas that can be used in the other units in the office.



A visit to the plastic house on the beach side made by Africraft in Tanzania



Production center- Africraft, Tanzania

### Progress on the Hall Construction

In the first quarter of the year, we were able to raise one part of the wall of the hall made out pet bottles and tires. This time we decided to make use of mud bricks. Mud is readily available in the community, but it is often seen as local and not sophisticated for building. We decided to break this ideology by using this material to beautify and create a safe wall. We also used a part of this mud bricks to beautify our toilet building. This serve as a constant reminder to the community about the value of what they have around them.



Wall made from mud bricks



Toilet building

### Durian in the media

Blog posts

<https://www.highschoolngoconnect.org/Curriculum.html>

## Some of our plans for the second quarter of 2018

- Complete the toilet project
- Commence the 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort training of the bamboo to value empowerment program
- Installation of the dove made from waste as a symbol of peace in the community
- Complete the 1<sup>st</sup> cohort training of the cocoa pods to black soap program
- Commence ICT trainings with all our participants- for this we need more desktops or laptops for training. We currently have one laptop that we will start using
- Start the first phase of training for the fabric waste to products program
- Increase the market base for the products made by our participants
- Commence a waste to music program with teenagers and young people in the community
- Launch our National community volunteers' program
- Create a game space for teenagers in the community where they can use table tennis, scrabble and chess as a tool for learning and discussions about development

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*Dear Friends/supporters,*

*Without your help, we would not have been able to achieve so much in the first quarter of 2019.*

*A very special thanks goes to the LB Foundation.*

*Therefore on behalf of our participants and the entire Durian team we say thank you very much for your ongoing support. Thank you also for helping us by sharing this newsletter.*

*Warm regards,*

*The entire Durian Team and Tony Joy*

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If you wish to support the work of Durian, you can do this [here](#).

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

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