



Collaborative Strategies for Sustainable Development in Conflict Zones

Introduction: In regions affected by ongoing conflict, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) play a pivotal role in promoting stability and facilitating the reconstruction of communities. This proposal outlines recommendations for NGOs to collaborate with corporations and educational institutions to foster local economic self-reliance in conflict zones. (We are a Japanese NGO working in DRC, Uganda, Myanmar, Syria, and so on.)

1. Partnerships with Corporations:

• Skill Development Programs:

We collaborated with the Japanese company Tamiya Models in the Goma project, North Kivu Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo, to develop an educational program for learning the mechanics of automobiles. Through this initiative, we trained automotive technicians and conducted the disarmament of child soldiers. Establish collaborative initiatives with corporations to provide skill development programs for local residents. Tailor these programs to match the skills demanded by industries, ensuring employability and contributing to economic growth.



@DRCongo 2019

• Microenterprise Support:

We have actively sought partnerships with Japanese companies that aim to collaborate with the local economy. Our approach involves engaging these companies not merely as supporters but as social business partners, intervening in the local context. Encourage corporations to invest in microenterprises within the conflict zone. These small businesses can generate income, stimulate local economies, and empower individuals to support themselves.

The number of Japanese corporations we collected

Year	number	Social situation
2019	8	Starting covid19

2020	26	During Covid19
2021	37	Volcano eruption in Goma (DRC)
2022	40	Conflict in Goma
2023	44	Conflict in Goma

2. Engagement with Educational Institutions:

• Curriculum Integration:

When a volcanic disaster occurred in Goma, we commissioned an investigation by experts from Kyoto University, renowned globally for their expertise in Nyiragongo volcanic disasters. Additionally, we sought collaboration with two municipalities in Japan known for their expertise in disaster prevention, Kagoshima City and Shimabara City, and established a disaster prevention school in Goma. Collaborate with local and international universities to integrate practical, market-relevant, and governance skills into the curriculum. This ensures that graduates are well-prepared for the job market, fostering a skilled workforce.



@DRC 2021

• Entrepreneurship Education:

We are nurturing local leadership candidates and engaging them as key players in social business through small-scale transactions with Japanese business partners. Several of them have successfully progressed to handling larger transactions. Promote entrepreneurship education to inspire local residents to start their own businesses. Provide resources and

mentorship to help them navigate the challenges of establishing and maintaining successful enterprises.



@DRC 2023

3. Technology and Innovation Hub:

Establishment of Tech Hubs:

- We have installed solar panels in impoverished areas, establishing power plants. Additionally, we have opened computer classrooms to promote the integration of local ICT skills and to design an environment that ensures sustainable use of digital devices. Collaborate with technology companies to establish innovation hubs in conflict zones. These hubs can serve as centers for training, creativity, and technology-driven enterprises, driving economic diversification.



@DRC 2022

- Digital Literacy Programs:**

Partner with educational institutions and tech companies to implement digital literacy programs. This equips the local population with essential skills for participating in the global digital economy.

4. Infrastructure Development:

- Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):**

Since the eruption of Mount Nyiragongo in 2021, we have been conducting disaster prevention education projects in collaboration with the local National Institute of Volcanology and institutions such as Kyoto University's Volcanic Research Institute, Kagoshima City Crisis Management, and Shimabara City Citizen Safety Division. Facilitate collaborations between NGOs, governments, and private companies to invest in critical infrastructure projects. Improved infrastructure not only supports local businesses but also enhances overall living conditions.

We have also provided policy recommendations to the local government, including introducing the disaster rescue capabilities of the Self-Defense Forces.

The list of Japanese local government supporting us

Year	Name	Remarks
2021	Disaster Prevention Research Institute, Kyoto University	For volcano disaster prevention
	Citizen Safety Division, Shimabara City, Nagasaki Prefecture	For volcano disaster prevention
	Unzendake Disaster Memorial Hall	Nagasaki prefecture
	Kagoshima City, Kagoshima Prefecture, Crisis Management Division	For volcano disaster prevention
2022	Great East Japan Earthquake and Nuclear Disaster Museum	Fukushima prefecture
	Tohoku Regional Development Bureau Earthquake History Museum	Japanese government
	Minamisanriku Town, Miyagi Prefecture	
	Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture	
	Tagajo City, Miyagi Prefecture	
	Kesenuma City, Miyagi Prefecture	
	Yamada town, Iwate prefecture	
	Rikuzentakata City, Iwate prefecture	

• Sustainable Energy Initiatives:

We are constructing power plants in economically disadvantaged areas susceptible to terrorist recruitment, aiming to generate employment through renewable energy and establish social infrastructure. Work with renewable energy companies to implement sustainable energy solutions. Access to reliable energy can significantly boost productivity and improve the overall economic landscape.



@DRC 2022

5. Community-Based Agriculture:

• Agricultural Partnerships:

We are currently advancing a social business that involves fair trade of local agricultural products in the Congo. Through agricultural technology support from Japan, we aim to establish efficient agricultural partnerships. Our focus extends beyond cocoa beans and coffee, encompassing local food processing using freeze-drying technology.

Collaborate with agribusinesses to enhance local agricultural practices. This includes providing training, modern farming techniques, and connecting local farmers with markets to ensure a sustainable income source.

• Value Chain Integration:

Concurrently with the development of local agriculture, we are establishing a model for processing Japanese agricultural products on-site. Currently, we have introduced a food manufacturing industry processing

Japanese 'konjac' in the Congo. Similarly, we engage in agricultural trade, connecting countries, including Congo, through products such as Japanese sake and wine. Through these initiatives, we are building a mechanism for local people to benefit and promote agribusiness.

Support the development of value chains that connect local agricultural products with national and international markets. This fosters economic resilience and reduces dependence on external aid.

Conclusion: By fostering collaborations between NGOs, corporations, and educational institutions, we can create a holistic approach to sustainable development in conflict zones. This model empowers local communities, stimulates economic growth, and establishes a foundation for long-term stability and self-reliance.

Furthermore, the implementation of these approaches by NGOs engaged in educational support on the ground becomes a crucial innovation hub, spanning from basic education to human capacity development, and further extending to job creation and the facilitation of international trade expansion. By establishing trust with local residents at risk of conflict, we aim to foster long-term and sustainable social capital, building a foundation for lasting stability and self-reliance. We are confident that this approach not only prevents conflicts at their roots but also contributes to global peacebuilding efforts.

Yuichi Nakamura

Reference:

"Economic Reconstruction and Development in Conflict Regions" Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler

"Education and Sustainable Development Goals: Post-Conflict Recovery and Peacebuilding" Yuki Takemoto and Nigel Brooke

"Economic Reconstruction in Conflict Regions through International Cooperation: A Case Study Approach" Susan L. Woodward

"Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Strategies in Conflict Regions through NGO and Corporate Collaboration" James J. Kennelly and Laura L. Goff