



# Batonga



## QUARTERLY IMPACT REPORT

September - December 2020



Washington D.C., December 2020

Dear friends,

It always amazes me what our incredible team and the Batonga mentors are able to achieve in four months. Our quarterly impact reports document the changes and impact we have on the ground each quarter of the year.

For this last one of 2020, you are going to be astonished by the work that we delivered to wrap up what has been an incredibly challenging, yet rewarding year. Since September, we:

- **launched the Young Women Business Circles**, a safe space where young women above 18 can meet, get support to launch and maintain their business activities, and get access to business leaders and a community of support. We also launched a small Business Start-Up Fund to help launch a new round of small women-led enterprises through the circles.
- **trained over 1,000 community members in GBV prevention.** Gender-based violence is a show pandemic, and COVID-19 has only increased levels of violence, all the while decreasing access to services and support for women and girls. With this new training and focus, Batonga is looking at girls and women's lives in a new holistic way, ensuring they have safety and opportunity in all levels of their lives.
- **continued to put power and resources in the hands of girls to see them change their communities.** We launched a radio sketch competition, and continued to run our community project competition as well.

All in all, it was a busy quarter!

I hope you enjoy reading about our impact in this report.

Thank you!

EMILY BOVE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



## KEY MILESTONES (Oct.- December 2020)

### Launching Young Women's Business Circles, a program for young women aged 18 to 30 years old.

Batonga is proud to have built a new program for young women: the Young Women Business Circles (YWBC's), for young women between 18 and 28 years old. In October, **50 YWBC's were created with just over 800 young women recruited as members.** These Circles will deliver a holistic package of technical and transferable skills, mentoring, connections to employers, and access to professional training to young women. In addition, young women part of this program will receive services and learning opportunities on other issues that are relevant to their lives as young working women, whether linked to motherhood, time management, or personal health and hygiene, etc.



*Young woman operating her sewing business and members of the Young Women Business Circles*

### Establishing a small business start up fund for young women



Batonga launched a fund in November to provide Young Women Business Circles with seed funding for the small businesses designed and pitched by young women entrepreneurs themselves. Following the announcement of this fund, young women worked together to design business plans and pitch them to Batonga Mentors for feedback. So far, **50 business ideas have been approved and launched.** Each of these 50 YWBC's have received their seed funding (\$200 per circle) to begin their Income Generating Activities.



## Hosting a training for Batonga Mentors on Gender Based Violence prevention

# 1000

Community members have been trained in gender based violence prevention

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a parallel pandemic of violence against women and children, as families across the globe are trapped together at home and placed under and immense financial and emotional strain. Understanding this, Batonga chose to partner with an expert consultant this quarter to develop a training for Batonga Mentors on Gender Based Violence (GBV) prevention as well as a Resource Referral Network for Mentors and girls to use in the event of a case of GBV.



*Mentor training on gender based violence prevention*

Batonga's GBV expert consultant conducted a training of 30 Batonga's mentors in early November. The training covered the informational manual written by the consultant as well as an introduction to the referral network that she has helped Batonga to create for those who have experienced GBV.



*GBV expert consultant, Ahouefa Françoise*



Following the training, the GBV consultant worked with Batonga staff and Mentors to plan and execute a series of community engagement events on GBV prevention in **all 15 of Batonga's communities** in late November. There were approximately **1000 participants total across these 15 events.**



## Funding girl-led and designed community projects through our Community Service Project Competition.

Launched and concluded in October, the Community Service Project Competition received **61 project submissions from girls across our 15 intervention communities**. From these submissions, a panel of Mentors and staff worked to assess projects' impact, feasibility, and sustainability. One project was chosen from each village as the winner (15 total). Projects included: purchasing new tables and chairs for local schools, facilitating clean water access at local schools, planting trees at local schools, helping local girls pay exam fees, building handwashing stations in marketplaces and schools, among others.



*Girl with new desks provided by her project, and drinking water stations for schools funded by Batonga.*

## Hosting a COVID-19 Radio Sketch Competition

Following the conclusion of the Community Service Project Competition, we launched the Radio Sketch Competition to engage young women and girls in the creation of short informational radio sketches to help communicate accurate information about COVID-19 transmission and prevention to local radio listeners.

This competition concluded in November as participant girls submitted their COVID-19 related information sketches for consideration. There were **submissions from 360 girls** which are currently being considered based on:

- 1) the accuracy and completeness of the information conveyed in the sketch, as well as
- 2) how creatively, entertainingly, or engagingly the sketch conveys said information. Winners will be announced in mid-December and their sketches will be recorded and played on the radio.



*Scene from a submitted sketch*





# MEET OUR MENTORS!

Our mentors are at the heart of the trust and impact we have built in the communities we serve. They are on the frontlines, and work hard everyday to support the girls and young women we work with! They are incredible women and we want you to know them! This quarter, meet Richemine and Rita!

## Meet Richemine, Mentor in Lokozoun village, Bohicon



“My name is Richemine, mentor to the SONAFA project in Lokozoun and I work with girls aged 12 to 13 years old. With the work I have done, I have seen that I can transform the behavior of my children on how they see themselves. Together with Batonga, we work to increase their self-confidence so that they can trust themselves, speak more and change their lives for the better. My favorite lesson to teach through the radio lessons is on puberty as the lessons increase awareness

among young people of the changes they go through and what is happening in their bodies. I've noticed that the strategies that are suggested to help with dealing with the bodily changes help the girls greatly. In regards to how COVID-19 is affecting my work, I have noticed that this virus has brought a lot of stress to the girls in my clubs. However, I am proud to see the progress the girls are making in my clubs and I feel that the lessons and home visits are helping them deal with these negative effects.”

## Meet Rita, Mentor in Tovigome village, Bohicon

"My name is Rita, I am a mentor in Tovigome and in charge of 5 clubs for those aged 10 to 18 years old. Being a mentor in my locality has made the children and I bond well. Together we are like sisters and when they see me they call me big sister; other girls call me mom. This gives me more confidence in my community. I've really appreciated the lesson this quarter on girls' rights. It is important for all of the girls and young women to know their rights and recognize what they have to do when their rights are being infringed upon. Knowing they have this knowledge makes me very happy."

