

There is no better and gratifying experience than that of trying to solve global problems affecting humanity; overcoming all barriers raging from language, cultural beliefs, economic status, level of education, technology, communication and many other diverse challenges.

GEE gave me insights on the challenges that both men and women in my country are facing in their endeavor to earn a living. My team and I selected my country Zambia to be the site for our Snail Farm Project, and in particular Matero residential area as the specific site. As I collected background information on the site, I encountered real life experiences that my country colleagues, especially women are going through. I interacted with many women that had experienced gender violence, children that have stopped school because they could not manage a pair of uniform and many other touching experiences. I will therefore always cherish the GEE moment because through it I am in talks with the area Member of Parliament on a possibility of adopting a government abandoned building and turning it into a community school where I, and many other friends that I shared the experience with, can go and volunteer during our long vacations to teach children in the community how to read, write and inspire them to rise beyond their challenges and have successful futures.

Further, this experience was also personally enriching and worth every moment I spent as it has not only has boosted my confidence but has also strengthened my ambitions and desire to participate in strategizing the road map to a better world; a world where women are respected and treated as equals, where children enjoy basic human rights and have the ability to dream and where no human being will die from hunger. It also gave me a platform to teach or give insights on Africa to my colleagues who had little information on Africa and my country, Zambia in particular. Additionally, the experience enriched my scope and knowledge about other countries such as New Zealand and Columbia through the interaction with team members and also through research on culture, people and language that I did on these countries when I was given the team.

Inevitably, the experience did not come without challenges or constraints. During one of the most crucial weeks (11th to 18th May) in the development of the proposal, students at my University staged protests against some economic and social policies introduced by the government. With this protest, the University was besieged by the police to the extent that tear gas canisters had to be used to disperse the students and suppress the protests. This invariably affected the University academic programs. In spite of this, I managed to do my part especially with help from my team leader and other team members as well.

In conclusion, my GEE journey challenged me to be open minded, it taught me the value of upholding team work, the indispensable need to always meet my task/s on time, how vital it is to respect other global leaders ideas and above all importance to do my best to the service of humanity. The experience has left me with a desire to go an extra step in helping women be considered as equals and help children through empowerment with basic needs and an education to dream of successful lives that they are entitled to. I will therefore remain especially grateful to the GEE leadership in New Zealand for this wonderful and inspirational experience.