

2021

Mtree

GCE Report



CONTENTS

MTREE & KIVUKONI INTRODUCTION	3
PROGRAM OVERVIEW	5
CURRICULUM	8
PROGRAM OUTCOMES	10
STUDENT REFLECTION & NARRATIVE OUTCOME	14
LETTERS FROM GCE TEAM	20
GCE TEAM BIO	22



Mtree, short for mustard tree, is a non-profit organization that promotes innovative thinking and a sense of community as global citizens among youth in Kenya.

By addressing community-specific needs, the Mtree Global Citizenship Education (GCE) team advocates using independent and interdependent ideas and activities to positively influence situations in developing communities. In the past four years since Mtree's first GCE program was implemented in Kenya's coastal Kilifi region, we've been thrilled to see achievements made each year among participants from both Kenya and other developed countries.

The summer of 2020 will be an unforgettable time for both Mtree and Kivukoni International School of Kenya since we made the first online GCE program possible together even during the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. We all believe that our students' passion for making the world a better place where everyone has access to quality education will continue to inspire more people and make changes.



KIVUKONI SCHOOL

“Where children
love to learn.”

Kivukoni School is an international primary school located in Kilifi, Kenya, focused on their students' natural curiosity and environmental consciousness.

Founded in 2011, Kivukoni School serves as a center of education and inspiration for 170 students. Mtree's partnership with Kivukoni School and the students' participation in Mtree's GCE program was made possible through students' access to electronic devices.



2020 GCE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

THEMES OF THE 2020
GCE PROGRAM WERE
**INTERDEPENDENCE AND
INTERACTIVE
RESPONSIBILITY.**

Instead of teaching about the hierarchical binary perception that is often accepted, a horizontal and multi-directional relationship as global citizens was taught, creating a sense of shared responsibility for various global issues and allowing the interaction to resolve them. The participating students achieved this relationship and shared responsibility by discussing the interdependence between global citizens from different backgrounds, cultures, and resources and how we are all connected and dependent on each other. Moreover, by interacting to create a solution, our differences led to a more diverse and unique solution that may not be created with similar people.

THE 2020 GCE SUMMER PROGRAM WAS A FIVE-DAY PROGRAM where students from Kivukoni met online with a GCE instructor and guest speakers from Mtree for 90 minutes each day.

Students discussed our primary GCE themes and other topics during these meetings, including education disparities, climate change, and leadership roles. They also created a practical action plan to make the discussed solutions come into reality. These meetings were also an opportunity for the Kivukoni School students and other youth activists worldwide to interact and share how they have actualized their ideas as global citizens. Throughout this program, three guest speakers joined each day to share their own experience as global citizens and how they created changes in their local and global communities. This program also included self-reflective activities to reflect on their roles as global citizens and create an action plan.

Kivukoni students and Mtree staff during online class.



GCE PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

The six GCE participants from Kivukoni were aged from thirteen to sixteen and recruited voluntarily from Kivukoni beforehand. All of the students were either current students at or alumni of Kivukoni School.



CURRICULUM

DAY 1. HOW ARE WE INTERDEPENDENT AS GLOBAL CITIZENS?

1. Getting to know each other's background and history

- Ice Breaker Activity: Different perspectives towards the same picture. Students learn that different perspectives as global citizens can contribute to resolving global issues.

2. How has youth been impacting the world as global citizens?

- What does it mean to be global? What does it mean to be a global citizen?
- Introducing Maya village, a rural community in Kilifi
 - Preceptor Presentation: Amy Park
 - How are we similar to and different from our peers from Maya?
 - How are we interdependent/interconnected as global citizens?

3. Self-Reflection: How do you see yourself as a global citizen upon completion of the program?

DAY 2. THEME 1: EDUCATION DISPARITIES AND COVID-19

1. Guided discussion

- Quality Education: How do you define quality education?
- Access to Education: education as basic human rights and access to education

2. Current global issues and education disparities

- How has COVID-19 impacted the world? In the education sector, what are we witnessing?
 - Article: "How School Closures for COVID-19 Amplify Inequality" by Sarah LaFave
- How has COVID-19 caused education disparities in your community?

3. Preceptor Presentation: Michelle Lee

- Youth activist: How has my peer around the world been impacting the world to resolve the global issue of education disparities?

DAY 3. THEME: 2: CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

1. Guided discussion

- What environmental issues are we witnessing today?
- How have environmental issues affect your local community and a global community?
- How should we view climate change as global citizens?

2. Greta Thunberg's speech at the UN COP25 Conference in 2019

- Reflection on the video
 - Youth activist: How has my peer around the world been impacting the world to resolve environmental issues?

3. What can we learn from Kenya's plastic bag ban policy?

DAY 4. THEME 3: LEADERSHIP

1. Guided discussion

- How do you define leadership?
- What qualities do good leaders have?
- How do leaders impact the world?
- In what area do you see yourself as a leader?

2. Guest speaker: Linda Kemoli (Director of Partnerships and Communication of Mtree)

- Sharing her story of serving her own community and a global community
- How has the guest speaker been impacting the world as a global citizen/leader?
- What did you learn from her?

DAY 5. MOVING FORWARD: PRACTICAL ACTION PLAN

1. Open Discussion

- How did your perspectives towards global issues, the concepts of interconnectedness, and interactive responsibility change over the program?

2. Student presentation

- Workbook: What practical action plan can you come up with to resolve a global issue that you selected during the GCE program?
- What changes can you make to address them?

3. Self-reflection

- Workbook: How do you see yourself as a global citizen now?

4. Hoping

- Now, we HOPE for a better world
 - What is your hope?
 - What can we do to make your hope become a reality?

PROGRAM OUTCOME NARRATIVES

In this section, we highlighted students' major take-aways from each day with a specific topic discussed during each session.

DAY 1: HOW ARE WE INTERDEPENDENT AS GLOBAL CITIZENS?

The first day's discussion focused on the necessity of interdependence and interactive responsibility and the consideration of various perspectives towards issues when working with others in a global community. Participants' reflections on the first day's lesson explicitly stated their understanding of the concept of interconnectedness: They viewed themselves not only as citizens of their community but also as citizens of the world. Students defined being global means encompassing the whole world, being aware of what is going on around the world, and continuously sharing ideas and learning from each other. Their cognition of being interconnected with others worldwide regardless of their personal backgrounds of race, color, or socioeconomic levels led to their responsibilities as global citizens. The majority of students stated that a global citizen is someone who "cares for others" and should view others' issues as their own even though they are not directly affected by them. Furthermore, students mentioned that global citizens should care for the environment and keep in mind that their choices affect other people.

DAY 2: EDUCATION DISPARITIES AND COVID-19

Education Disparities and COVID-19 was a topic of the second day. Students openly discussed how educational disparities are exacerbated by COVID 19 and how students from a lower socioeconomic status have less access to resources that are needed for online education, such as internet connection and technology.

Furthermore, we discussed a John Hopkins University article titled "How School Closure for COVID-19 Amplify Inequality" was conducted to scope out the effects on education all around the globe during the pandemic. Most students learned for the first time that schools with students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds could not focus on providing online education to their students since they had to first focus on getting nutritious foods for the students.

Students defined a quality education as access to the necessary materials needed, good teachers who were patient with the students and invested in the students' future, and a good environment to study. When asked to define quality education, students' answers include education that is accessible to everyone regardless of their personal backgrounds because

education is a basic human right. Given that most students in Kenya are left without any education due to the pandemic, they doubt that the country is providing quality education. Also, students related a quality education with good teachers whom students feel comfortable with and provide guidelines and the right resources to lead students rather than just delivering knowledge. The necessity of materials for education to be implemented was mentioned as well.

DAY 3: CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Students were very enthusiastic about discussing climate change and other environmental issues on the third day. They all agreed that climate change is a global crisis. It was lamented that many people are still not aware of this issue's urgency. Students also discussed other environmental issues, including water pollution, air pollution, deforestation, overpopulation, and overfishing. Given that Kenya is one of the very few countries that ban plastic bag usage, students discussed how well this policy had been implemented. A recent problem was brought up that people, especially from a lower socioeconomic status, are struggling with the adjustment since they cannot afford fabric bags, an alternative to a plastic bag.

During the discussion around the topic, the concepts of interconnectedness and interactive responsibility were highlighted in their statements.

“PLASTIC USE IS AFFECTING US IN MANY DIFFERENT WAYS.

IT IS A CYCLE.

We throw away plastic; animals eat them, then they die, then the animals that we eat will reduce, which means not much food for everyone.”

- Rahma -

Inspired by Greta Thunberg's speech at the UN COP25 Conference in 2019, students discussed what changes they could make to resolve many environmental issues as a fellow teen environmental activist. They criticized that not much action is currently taken and made a critical point that education is essential to enlighten people. Furthermore, their role as global citizens is essential since every small effort eventually brings a big change.

“We should not wait for the government to make a change.

CHANGE STARTS WITH US.”

- Sharyne -

Students highlighted that more affluent countries should take actions to lead less privileged countries to follow interactive responsibility since they are more susceptible to environmental issues. Some students made comments on making changes within their local social circle.

“Time is not on our side, and as we waste time doing nothing, it's not going to resolve the problem. That's why I've decided to help my local home to start beach clean-ups ... I would also like to educate people here about what is happening because it's disturbing to see that nobody is taking action.

WE NEED TO SAVE OUR EARTH.”

- Shuki -

DAY 4: GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP AND LEADERSHIP

The program's last sub-topic was leadership, a perfect fit after discussing specific global issues in the three previous days. Linda Kemoli, Director of Partnerships and Communication for Mtree based in Kenya, joined the meeting as a guest speaker to help the students explore the components required to be influential, communicative, and collaborative.

On this day, students were encouraged to use their leadership skills to solve various global issues previously discussed. When asked to define leadership, students came up with several definitions. These included providing guidance towards goals, recognizing problems and providing solutions, standing up with people, and allowing others to give constructive criticisms and opinions.

Students also discussed what qualities good leaders should have: integrity, persistence, positive and open-mindedness, good listening skills, confidence, ability to inspire and embrace others. They saw themselves as leaders based on their responsibilities at home or in their community. Students regarded their participation in the GCE program as an opportunity to educate others. For example, they wanted to share the use of makuti, a local palm leaf structure, instead of plastic.

DAY 5: MOVING FORWARD: PRACTICAL ACTION PLAN

Students shared how they could implement what they learned about their identity as a “global citizen.” They identified the impact they could make on their immediate circles and on a larger scale in the long run. *As a final farewell, GCE participants were encouraged to spread the knowledge of how to be a responsible global citizen and use what they have learned to help others and the world.*

STUDENT REFLECTION & NARRATIVE OUTCOMES

After they completed the whole session, they were asked to reflect on how their perceptions towards global issues and the concepts of interconnectedness and interactive responsibility have changed.

In these reflections, all students claimed that their participation in the GCE program helped to broaden their perspectives and that they came to learn more about what was happening outside their local community. One student mentioned the responsibility they felt about the necessity of educating others who are not aware of urgent global issues: **"I could start telling people real facts and information about what's going on in the world. And how we can work together as one to help each other make the world a better place"**. Other students also felt this responsibility and believed that **"[their] identity has really changed so much over the course. [They] realized that we are all leaders in our own way"**. This newfound sense of duty led to creating practical action plans to start acting and making changes in the future as global citizens.

Another question that we asked the students was: How has your identity as a global citizen changed? A recurring response was a new awareness of global issues and a strong passion for creating change starting from themselves. A prominent change in the students' attitude was the simple but strong idea that **"change starts with us."** The students also included in their reflections the issues that they would like to create change for.

Some students stated that they **"learned that big changes start with small changes,"** while others learned the value of working together. The students also mentioned the importance of passion and doing, **"everything by heart, not as if you are forced."** Another common theme was the idea of leadership and the idea that "we are all leaders in our own way" and can bring unique ideas and perspectives to the table.

INTERCONNECTEDNESS AND INTERACTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

Big Changes Start with Small Changes

by Baraka Kitsao

To be interconnected means a lot. It means that it's not only you or that the world is all yours and you can do anything you want. What it really means is that you and others that live on the earth breathe in the air and you are connected to the rest of the world as one. Therefore, you don't only think about yourself or your country but the others as well. This also means that we do not think of or treat others differently because of their color or race.

Being interconnected with others also keeps us alive. For instance, when some places cannot grow crops, others can and support those in need, which eventually makes everyday life easier and fair for everyone.

Therefore, we should expand our boundaries and should not only connect to the places that are rich but also to those places that lack much. As a global citizen, you should not forget to be grateful and mindful of what you have already but also keep encouraging yourself and others to consider those who do not have what you have.

Lastly, to make changes and help others, it doesn't have to be something big. It can be small because you never know it could mean a lot to others. We are all in this together from the start to the end as global citizens.

EDUCATION DISPARITIES AND COVID-19

Dream Big, Start Small!

by Lindsay Nard Matolo

Quality education includes literacy, numeracy, and life skills. It is directly linked to such critical components as teachers, contents, methodologies, curricula, examination systems, policies, planning, management, and administration. It also includes having a quiet environment to study, getting support from teachers, students, and friends, and having the right resources to learn more.

However, educational inequality is still prevalent in many places around the world. The unequal distribution of academic resources, including but not limited to; school funding, qualified and experienced teachers, books, and technologies to socially excluded communities, still exists. These communities tend to be historically disadvantaged and oppressed.

During the GCE program, we discussed how COVID-19 revealed the educational disparities around the world. First of all, not all students have access to studies as they do not have access to the internet and gadgets as if a school was not hard before COVID. There are about 300 million

children all over the world who are not going to school because of COVID. The financial crisis caused by COVID-19 made many parents have trouble affording their children's online learning.

Furthermore, there has been the stress of using technology. Schools that were able to get access to the internet and gadgets reverted to online learning soon after the pandemic started. However, students attending schools that do not have the right resources for remote learning have not been or will not be learning at all until schools reopen. To make matters worse, most teachers in Kenya and other underdeveloped countries are not educated on using technology to offer quality education during the COVID-19 crisis. Besides education, some children from poor families have nutrition issues by not going to school since their school food was the only nutritious food they can get.

Discussing how the current pandemic has exacerbated education disparity with my peers encouraged me to make a difference. I can always help people in need by sharing knowledge and experiences. I can start tutoring small groups to provide children with free learning opportunities while schools are not in session. I understand that change takes time, but I believe that as long as I do not give up and constantly make small efforts, I can finally help everyone in the best way possible.

Together, We Can Make an Amazing Team!

by Rahma Mbala Juma

I do realize that not everything in the world is fair since some people have more than others. The Coronavirus outbreak revealed urgent global issues of education disparities. I learned that almost 300 million kids worldwide are not going to school and either stay home idle or help their parents with house chores. Also, nearly 36 million children are forced out of classrooms and into online learning environments due to closed schools. Some students had a smooth transition, while others had the opposite due to a lack of educational resources. This is not limited to specific places in the world but happening all around the world.

However, we cannot just sit and feel hopeless about the current situation. Mtree's GCE program taught me that together, we could make an amazing team. As a global citizen, I want to encourage other global leaders to make changes such as presidents from different countries can work together to make education accessible for everyone in their countries. Even during the COVID-19 crisis, their cooperation can make online classes available for everyone.

Furthermore, as a global citizen myself, I think we should raise funds by organizing bake sales, car wash, lemonade stands, etc. These small efforts may lead to sponsoring many schools eventually.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

As Global Citizens, We Can Save Our Earth

by Shuki Kitsao

As every day passes, most of us think that everything is fine and the world is okay. Some people are not educated enough to know what is really happening. Some people throw plastic bags on the ground in my village, thinking they would disappear by tomorrow. They are wrong. There are big machines that are making quarries that make the land bare. They don't know that if it rains, no trees will be there to hold the erosion, and that also messes around with the tectonic plates. It's said that in 2050 our Kilifi County will be a desert.

There are many problems going on in the world, and climate change is our global crisis. The earth is warming the earth's surface, making it hot. Big factories pollute the air with carbon and other harmful gasses. It is suffocating to think about the damaged ozone layer, the heat that humans experience more heat than ever before, more wildfires than ever before, huge glaciers melting than ever before, and the rise of sea level. It's all because of us. We are greedy and not satisfied with what the earth has provided for us, and instead, we are killing it.

Mtree's GCE program this year taught me that there are similar situations around the world. I've also realized that younger people have the strongest voices. Greta Thunberg has motivated and inspired me that if people don't listen to you the first time, then you have to repeat it over and over again until they have your attention. I'm ready to educate people in my village and explain to them that we need to work together as global citizens to protect our earth.

I'd love to start making changes in my local community by telling my neighbors to help me with beach cleanups and using recyclable materials for our daily uses, like using makuti kikapus to save our earth. Big changes start with small changes, and as global citizens, we can save our earth.

It is up to You and Me!

by Sharyne Salima Serbastian

The GCE program has taught me so many things about global awareness. Before this, I knew about the basic things around us, but I didn't bother that much about them. Among many things I enjoyed learning during the program was about climate change and other environmental issues. Climate change is a very urgent global issue, and the impacts of climate change are global in scope and unprecedented in scale. We are facing shifted weather patterns that can threaten food production and raise sea levels, increasing the risk of catastrophic flooding.

As I learned in the GCE program this summer, we should always think of a solution rather than its problem. I, as a global citizen, thought carefully about some solutions that could help make a difference. First of all, we should use less plastic by buying less processed food, which most often comes in plastic bags. Also, we should use energy wisely and renewable things that help resolve environmental issues and save money. Also, eating your country's staple food helps while being keen to be green is critical. Using public transportation or walking and planting more trees are examples of living a greener life.

Finally, we should continue reaching out to our communities to solve environmental issues together since we cannot do that without finding common ground with those who may not share our perspective. There are many other ways we can help to achieve our goals. If we put our heads together and look ahead, I am confident we will reach our goal in no time. It is up to me and you to start changes.

LEADERSHIP

TogetherNESS Leads to ForeverNESS

by Darlene Wambui Kamau

Leadership is the art of influencing people in a specific direction, whether socially towards a given goal or practice, to achieve either positive or negative results. The GCE program in the summer of 2020 taught me that being a leader plays an extensive role in someone's life. Thus, it is important to be a great leader seeing that it would either positively or negatively affect their listeners.

At present, the world is going through a lot of adverse situations. One of the biggest current problems is climate change, which is a significant complication because it requires everyone's help. Most people say that it would be impossible to settle earth back to the way it was, and they would go about their days. However, if every individual plays a positive role towards the planet, we would be on our way to bring back the life we took away months after months.



Mtree has really helped me expound my knowledge regarding the globe. I will take a lot from this program, seeing that it has taught me that no matter how small you are, you could still make a difference that would change the entire future and that small changes lead to a big change. The GCE program also encouraged me to think that I am a global leader who can make changes. Even in everyday life, I can make changes by avoiding buying single-use plastic or heavily packaged products and reducing dairy food or red meat intake. Furthermore, I can encourage people to plant trees and go for beach cleanups together. Most importantly, as a global leader, I can continue to educate others on how we can all make a difference to make the world a better place together.

LETTER FROM MICHELLE, Youth Preceptor

Rarely are we able to take a step back and contemplate how the world around us is connected. In my case, I got a whole week discussing this topic with students thousands of miles away from me. Discussing the importance of global citizenship and responsibility with the students in coastal Kenya reminded me that my life is in conjunction with the other billions of lives on this planet.

The GCE program grounds students and future leaders into a concept that needs to be discussed more: the responsibility everyone has as a citizen. Even though you are on the other side of the planet, your decisions have the power to dictate whether some citizens get clean water or they are able to find food to eat for the day. The decisions you make to help educate others can be the key to using the resources you are provided for the better. I am happy to say that the productive conversations and unique insights I was able to share with my class have blessed me with a new perspective of the world. I hope that they, too, can carry these lessons in their hearts and share them with their community and beyond. Knowledge is power, and when used right, can create real change.

LETTER FROM AMY, Youth Preceptor

Before we started the program with Kivukoni School, I was not sure what to expect. It was my first time leading discussions online. Moreover, it was my first time as a leader for the GCE program; For the last four years, I had been one of the Mtree GCE program students. However, I was very grateful to have the opportunity to have an online class with the students at Kivukoni School, even with COVID-19. I was also incredibly excited to meet the students around my age. In the previous years that I volunteered as an assistant teacher in the Brush with Hope classes, most of my students were much younger than me.

During the program, my primary role was to facilitate discussions with my small group for the day, and I tried to focus more on what they thought and what contributions they could make. During our open discussion, I was surprised at how similar our thoughts and experiences were. Although I am not ignoring the privilege I get just from living in America and do not want to get away from the hardships they have endured, there were many similar life experiences and thoughts shared in these small groups.

Participating in the GCE program as an assistant teacher and a group facilitator, I felt very privileged to learn from my peers. The program was only for a week, but I believe our meaningful discussions will lead us to make positive changes in our global community. As my peer Michelle stated, even though change takes time, we can all start with small things to bring positive changes.

NEXT STEP BY CHUNGMIN, Director of Mtree GCE program

ONE OF THE GCE PROGRAM'S REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE PAST FOUR YEARS IS PARTICIPATING IN STUDENTS' ACTIVITIES AS GLOBAL CITIZENS. These international students from the U.S. and Brazil learned about local and global issues through our GCE program, they organized fundraising, started global citizen clubs at their schools, and published global citizen journals. Their true endeavors to raise awareness of global issues in their local community made a way to make changes in other parts of the world. After successfully raising funds, some GCE participants could afford to provide new desks and chairs for rural villages in Kenya where they visited in previous years.

We would like to see this kind of change made by local Kenyan students, and that was the core reason we have implemented our GCE program among Kenyan students in 2020. We want the program participants from Kenya to become proactive global leaders ready to start movements to awaken people in their local community. Furthermore, we believe their talents and passion for bringing positive changes to the world will impact many areas in the world.

Mtree GCE team was very blessed to have partnerships with wonderful local organizations and schools in Kenya with whom we can share our passion and vision. Much great work has been done; however, we believe there is a lot more to achieve. We look forward to more sustainable partnerships with local organizations and partners.



GCE TEAM

DIRECTOR, PRECEPTORS, AND GUEST SPEAKERS SHORT BIOS

CHUNGMIN

Ph.D. Student in Education, University of California, Los Angeles
Director of Global Citizenship Education at Mtree

AMY

Student at Harvard-Westlake High School
Intern and preceptor for Global Citizenship Education at Mtree

MICHELLE

Student at Tenafly High School, Prospective Student at Wellesley College
Intern and preceptor for Global Citizenship Education at Mtree

LINDA

Former Director of Partnerships and Communication at Mtree, Kenya Office
