

# **EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES TO BE PRO ACTIVE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION**

## **PROGRESS REPORT: October – December 2008**

### **Introduction**

The project seeks to empower local communities with knowledge and skills to actively demand for transparency and accountability in the development processes at Local government level for better service delivery. A baseline survey conducted in 2006 by TI Uganda in Kyotera County Rakai district confirmed corruption as a big problem in the district and shows that corruption manifests itself through bribery, abuse of office, nepotism, outright embezzlement of funds, political discrimination and falsification of documents - forms of corruption that greatly affect the ordinary person.

### **Activities undertaken**

#### **Project Administration and Management**

The project was implemented by Transparency International Uganda (TI Uganda) through a partnership arrangement. A Project officer has been assigned to coordinate the project through the entire project period.

#### **Development of IEC Materials**

A consortium of information, education and communication materials were produced that included PVC banners, fliers, posters, T-Shirts, These have been widely disseminated both in Kampala and in the upcountry district where the project is being implemented.

As part of the project, information; education and communication materials were planned for production to sensitize and educate the target audiences about corruption and its effects and to inspire them to take proactive actions to participate in its eradication. The materials that were produced included T-Shirts with anti corruption messages at the back, fliers, posters and stand banners were produced to provide information about the project as well as the TI Uganda in relation to the noble fight against corruption.

916 T-shirts were produced bearing the TI Uganda logo and a message at the back – ***Rise up against corruption*** these have been widely distributed to most target beneficiaries. 4000 copies of posters calling upon the ordinary people to take action on corruption have also been produced. These have also been distributed through the project area. 4000 fliers were as well produced to relay general information about the project, its objectives, expected results and general information on corruption and what the target communities can do to eradicate it and lastly, TI Uganda produced 2 stand banners.

However, it should be noted that the amount of money budgeted for the production of these Anticorruption sensitization materials was used to produce more quantities and some were doubled due to the fact that the market prices were much lower than the actual budgets as a result of fluctuations in the dollar rates. Therefore TI Uganda saw a need to readjust the quantities to suite the budget.

### **Planning workshop (meeting) with Stakeholders in the Project Area**

A planning meeting with key stakeholders in the project area was held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2008. Transparency International Uganda on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2008 organized a planning meeting for the key stakeholders in the project on corruption and good governance in Kakuto County, Rakai District. The planning meeting is one of the activities planned by TI Uganda to get the people of Kakuto and Rakai in general to appreciate and own every step of the project implementation right from the start.

The project is designed in a way that it will be driven by the communities together with their leaders so as to promote its ownership and sustainability. For this reason, all the key stakeholders had to be involved in the planning process of the project implementation and it further aimed at discussing with them the initiatives that need to be undertaken to address the concerns raised in the baseline study in light of the project objectives as a whole. TI Uganda's intended project activities were discussed and participants were able to give their views by way of comments and suggestions to enrich them. The meeting also discussed the likely roles of the various stakeholders and the timeframe in which the activities are to be implemented. A total of 33 people attended the planning meeting representing the following categories:

The planning meeting was attended by a cross section of the stake holders, who included various civil and political leaders from all the Sub-counties of Kakuuto County that included; County Chairpersons, LCIII Chairpersons, Vice Chairpersons, council speakers, Sub county chiefs, representatives of the CSO's operating in the county, religious leaders, representatives of both the private sector and the local community among others.

During the workshop, the project work plan was discussed and commends from participants incorporated, monitoring strategies drawn, documentation and reporting formats worked out, and ethical issues discussed and agreed upon.

### **The planning meeting enlisted the following suggestions from the participants:**

- That TI Uganda opens a coordination office in the project area.
- That there are a number of NGOs and CBOs in the project area already with trained staff that TI Uganda could make use of in the course of implementing the project as resource persons or information disseminators. It was also felt that there was no need for TI Uganda to create VACs at a county level but go to individual sub counties to target larger number of participants than originally planned.
- That there is a need to translate the intended sensitization materials into the local language of the project area given the high illiteracy levels.

## **Creation of Voluntary Accountability Committees**

TI Uganda planned to carry out one activity to create VACs at a county level targeting 60 participants but this plan was readjusted but the participants during the planning meeting and they opted for TI Uganda to visit each sub county and their view was considered vital. TI Uganda then organised the formation of VACs between 26<sup>th</sup> November to 29<sup>th</sup> November 2008. As the monitoring activities progressed the implementing team members visited Kakuto County to acquaint themselves with the situation on the ground. Each sub county was visited VACs created at sub county level. These visits led to the creation of monitoring groups (VACs) and a training them in community needs identification and advocacy. The formed Voluntary Accountability committees were also told to work as monitors at sub county level. These were 3 VACs formed in each sub county giving a total of 15 VACs.

## **Mobilisation Skills workshop**

This Mobilization skills training workshop for the Voluntary Accountability Committees as one of the activities, to build their capacities in preventing, detecting and mobilizing the communities against corrupt leaders and their acts was held at Kakuto Sub County Hall, Kakuto County on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2008. The activity mainly targeted the 15 Voluntary Accountability Committees and therefore it was attended by all the VACs plus five others invited local leaders giving a total of 15 participants.

## **Major Achievements**

1. The project opened a new chapter in Kakuto. An attempt has made to promote integrity and transparency in the service delivery by putting focus on how services are delivered
2. Public responsiveness to demand transparency and accountability in the service delivery has been initiated.
3. A number of ICE materials have been produced and disseminated to facilitate the campaign against corruption
4. 15 VACs have been created in Kakuto County to act as flag bearers in the fight against corruption in Kakuuto during and after the implementation of the 14 months project funded by Partnership for transparency fund.
5. The Sub County VACs have resolved to work together and stop looking at themselves as sob county VACs but combine forces to work as one body to represent the county and look at corruption issues in all corners of the county and work out how to eradicate it together.
6. The VACs have identified a number of corruption incidences in Kakuuto County and the next activities will focus on tackling the issues identified especially during the radio talk shows and case study monitoring trips with VACs.

## **Challenges faced**

The project suffered the following setbacks which affected its effectiveness:

The organisation does not have a car to facilitate its movements to the project areas. This implies that TI Uganda has to hire a car each time a field activity has to be undertaken which makes it quite expensive and challenging to implement project activities.

## **Visibility for the EU contribution in the project**

TI Uganda has been keen in ensuring that it mentions at all its functions in the project area the source of funding for the project. This has not only been in the speeches but even in the invitation letters the organisation has written to the target audiences of all the activities. Our banner also has the Partnership for Transparency Fund Logo with the words, "Project supported by the ***Partnership for Transparency Fund***". TI Uganda also included such information in all the information, education and communication materials that have been produced.

## **Outstanding Activities**

1. Budget Monitoring workshop
2. Organise a review meeting with key stake holders
3. Budget & Monitoring of conditional and non conditional grants for community development
4. Conduct two case study monitoring trips with the VACs; to monitor different community projects
5. Facilitate the staging of Anti Corruption Drama performances
6. Facilitate Radio Programmes in the project area
7. Conduct Monitoring and Evaluation of all the project activities
8. Preparation and submission of reports
9. Auditing

Prepared by the Project Officer

**TI Uganda**