

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES TO BE PRO ACTIVE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

PROGRESS REPORT: January – March 2009

Introduction

The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda bestows upon the citizens a duty to fight the abuse of office and public resources (Article 17(i)) and confers power to the people to recall or demand for action to bring to book those who engage in fraudulent and scrupulous practices that affect the effective delivery of services to the target audiences. While there is an elaborate institutional and legal framework to fight corruption in Uganda coupled with a conducive environment for civil society to operate, the missing link has been for the local communities (victims) to become effective actors and pave the way for a tripartite web of actors to foster transparency and accountability in the management of resources at Local Government level. It is from this background that TI Uganda is implementing this project funded by New Partnership for Transparency Fund in Kakuuto County, Rakai district.

The Purpose

This project seeks to empower local communities with knowledge and skills to create vigilant communities to actively demand for transparency and accountability in the development processes at Local government level for better service delivery. Through; Promoting awareness about corruption and its effects and create civic responsiveness among local communities to participate in its eradication; sensitizing communities about their rights, duties and obligations in the implementation of development programs; and building the capacity of local communities to effectively participate in public decision making processes and to detect, expose and deter corruption among others.

The objectives

1. To increase the number of people actively engaged in monitoring and reporting corruption cases in the priority sectors of the Poverty Eradication Action Plan.
2. To form and train Voluntary Accountability Committees in social mobilization

Project Administration and Management

The project is being implemented by Transparency International Uganda (TI Uganda) through a partnership arrangement and is being coordinated by a Project officer through the entire project period.

Activities undertaken within the specified period;

- A radio talk show has been organized in Radio Buddu and the panelists were the residents of Kakuuto Sub County one of whom was a Voluntary Accountability Committee (VAC) member and the other a TI Uganda Board member. The talk show was conducted for the people living in Kakuuto to air out the problems they identify in the running of development projects in the county and what they expect their leaders to do to redeem the problems.

One of the panellists for this radio talk show was supposed to be the Chief Administrative Officer of Rakai district. He confirmed his attendance but declined at the last minute after asking with whom he would be in the studio and yet his presence would have added a lot of value since he would be providing direct answers to the issues raised as the Chief Administrative Officer of the district.

- An auditing has also been carried out for the period 1st January 2008 to 31st December 2008 to ascertain whether the funds obtained for the various activities met their targets or were used to achieve the set goals and objectives. The independent auditing firm 'Price & King' was contracted to express an independent opinion on the financial statements presented and this also involved performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the activities under audit and disclosures of financial statements. The funds from PTF contributed 40% towards this auditing.

Major Achievements

1. Increased public awareness about corruption in the project area and beyond (its manifestations, effects, the roles of communities and other stakeholders in fighting corruption) and responsiveness to demand for transparency and accountability in the provision of social services.
2. More IEC materials have been disseminated to facilitate the campaign against corruption in the project area
3. The VAC members have been noticed by other local organisations and the organisations have begun to involve them in their development activities concerning the welfare of the local communities. For incidence FONIRAD, an NGO based in Kyotera County Rakai district called VAC representatives from Kakuuto County to a district meeting to discuss the budgeting process.

Challenges faced

The project implementation faced challenges which affected its effectiveness:

The organisation continues to face transport problems to carry out its activities in the project area. This implies that TI Uganda has to hire a car each time a field activity has to be undertaken which makes it expensive and challenging to implement project activities.

The VACs created and trained by TI Uganda in the entire county feel competent and show a lot of enthusiasm to mobilise other members and report incidences of corruption in their areas but lack transport to move to the concerned authorities especially at the district headquarters. And this poses a challenge to TI Uganda's project as well because these people were not catered for in terms of facilitation and yet they are expected to deliver.

Visibility for the PTF contribution in the project area

- TI Uganda continues to display the banner with the words "Project supported by the *Partnership for Transparency Fund*" to all target audiences of all the project activities.
- TI Uganda also continues to disseminate the information, education and communication materials that were produced with similar messages to a wider community in the project area.
- TI Uganda ensures that information about the funds from PTF is reflected in the invitation letters.
- The mention of PTF occurs at all project activities e.g. workshops, radio talk shows among other project activities.

Outstanding Activities

- Conduct one Budget & Monitoring skills workshop on conditional and non conditional grants for the Voluntary Accountability Committees and school and health management committee representatives from all the sub counties of Kakuuto.
- Conduct Monitoring and Evaluation of all the project activities
- Stage ten (10) anti-corruption drama shows in schools and community centres to sensitize the masses that have not been targeted for other project activities about corruption, its effects on attainment of services from leaders and how corruption manifests itself in the communities in which they live.
- Conduct monitoring and evaluation visits to Kakuuto to assess the impact made with the project activities on the effectiveness of service delivery as well as ascertain whether the communities have started demanding for transparency and accountability from their leaders.
- Conduct two case study monitoring trips with the VACs; to monitor different community projects
- Training in community needs identification and advocacy; Conduct one training session for target community members in report writing, petition drafting, and mobilization of communities for action

- Hold a review meeting with the key stakeholders in the project area (Kakuuto) to evaluate the project's achievements and challenges in empowering the communities on how to mobilize, monitor, detect and report corruption in Local Government Development Programmes (LGDP).
- Organise the last Radio Programme in the project area
- Conduct Monitoring and Evaluation of all the project activities
- Submit quarterly reports as well as final project reports to New Partnership for Transparency Fund

QUARTERLY ACTIVITY PLAN FOR THE NEXT QUARTER RUNNING APRIL - JUNE 2009

No	Activity	Months of Activity Implementation			Responsible persons
		April	May	June	
1	Coordinate the staging of anti-corruption drama shows in all the Sub Counties of Kakuuto Sub County. This will involve; Identifying the drama group, Drafting terms of reference and sharing with the group, working together on the drama script, and ensure that actual performance commences	X	X	X	Project Officer, VACs, Drama group
2	Conduct two case study monitoring trips with the VACs; to monitor different community projects	X	X		Project Officer, Contact person
3	Organise a review meetings together with the key stakeholders in the project area (Kakuuto)			X	Project Officer, Contact person
4	Conduct Internal Monitoring and Evaluation of all the project activities			X	Project Officer, Contact person
5	Preparation and submission of Progress report	X			Project Officer

Prepared by the Project Officer
TI Uganda