

# UGANDA ETHICS NETWORK OUTREACH



Enhancing the Capacity of School Management Committees in  
monitoring Education service delivery

END OF PROJECT REPORT

Implemented by:

Uganda Ethics Network Outreach in conjunction with,  
The people's Anti corruption organization and  
Manafwa district local government



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## List of Acronyms

CSO.....	Civil Society Organization
DEO.....	District Education Officer
DIS.....	District Inspector of Schools
LCV.....	Local Council Five
SMC.....	School Management Committee
PTA.....	Parent Teacher Association
PACO.....	People’s Anti Corruption Organization
PRDP.....	Peace Recovery and Development Program
SNE.....	Special Needs Education
UENO.....	Uganda Ethics Network Outreach
UPE.....	Universal Primary Education
USE.....	Universal Secondary Education
SEED.....	Refers to community schools funded by government
NAADS.....	National Agriculture and Advisory Services
PTF.....	Partnership for Transparency Fund
IEC.....	Information Education and Communication materials
WB.....	World Bank
ADB.....	African Development Bank

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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- ✚ People's Anti Corruption Organisation (PACO)
- ✚ Office of the LC 5,Manafwa district local government
- ✚ The District Education Officer, Manafwa District, Mr. Mudangi .E. Zaddock
- ✚ The Education Inspectorate department, specifically, Mr. Mabuya Patrick and his team
- ✚ Head teacher of the respective 16 schools
- ✚ The School Management Committees of the various schools
- ✚ The Parent Teacher's Associations of the various schools
- ✚ Media houses in Eastern Uganda
- ✚ UENO staff
- ✚ Project Focal persons and volunteers

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The PTF funded project on **“Enhancing the Capacity of School Management Committees(SMC’s) in monitoring Education service delivery”** was commissioned in January 2011, by Uganda Ethics Network Outreach (UENO) to examine the underlying factors that influence the performance and involvement of SMCs in the education sector and analyse their benefits and added value towards education.

The project targeted the District of Manafwa in the Eastern Region of Uganda which has for long been ranked so low in Human Development ( UNDP report 2008). This is manifested in different ways like poor health, low levels of education and poor infrastructural development.

The project which seemed the first of its kind was received with a lot of support and enthusiasm by the school administrators, local communities and the district authorities. This greatly laid a smooth foundation for UENO’s intervention in revitalising the functionality of school management committees.

The underlying challenges highlighted by the community that affect service delivery include; low public awareness of procurement laws and procedures, poor record keeping, influence peddling, limited public participation, incompetent contractors and lack of transparency, which undermine good governance and effective services delivery.

The project helped to train and institute new management teams, comprising of eight members who were mandated to oversee activities in the respective schools. These members conducted monthly meetings at the school level, discussed issues of concern and forwarded reports to UENO and other stakeholders.

Within a period of eleven months, atleast several schools have succeeded in holding meetings with parents, some of which were attended by UENO. The project has had an impact in that after continued discussions with relevant authorities, Manafwa district education office has come up with an education ordinance which has been forwarded to the office of Solicitor General so that it is passed into a law. Among the major issues considered, is for the parents to make a compulsory contribution towards the feeding of their children while at school.

Additionally, all management teams in the project schools have been vigilant in holding service providers accountable. We have had instances where contractors have had their contracts halted pending further investigation by the district authorities, while at the same time the project has tried to unveil some of the scandalous procedures in procurement involving top district officials. Parents at one school have declined the hand over of a classroom block by the district authorities, while in another, the contractor was ordered to re do the building after the district engineer declared it unfit for completion.

Another remarkable contribution has been the involvement of corrupt district officers in the implementation. The project provided an opportunity for local communities to interface with their leaders in meetings and through the media, in which they brought them to task to account for the loopholes in their administration. This has also deepened the collaboration between the leaders and the led. Much appreciation was made to the fact that there had been limited opportunity for the district leaders to mobilise a large group of people from schools for a discussion, which was made possible.

Through out the project, UENO together with its partners have worked closely in enhancing transparency and accountability in education service delivery. Most members were appreciative that the knowledge given to them through training and radio programmes has been an eye opener not only to the monitoring teams but to the general public, who have recognized the importance of community participation in restoring accountability and transparency in allocation and distribution of public funds and resources.

## 1. Introduction

The report gives an overview of the activities implemented by Uganda Ethics Network Outreach (UENO) with support from Partnership for Transparency Fund (PTF). The one year project aimed at increasing community participation in the activities of monitoring education services delivery in schools. The major areas of concern were procurement and construction of school infrastructures and the general teaching and learning processes. This was triggered by the fact that management committees are not functional and have left the responsibility of running schools to the headteachers. Lack of effective supervision leads to mismanagement of school and poor academic performance.

The major achievements of the project highlighted in the report include revitalised and functional school management teams, a sensitized and knowledgeable community and a commitment from the district education officers and reduced absenteeism of both teachers and pupils. The report gives the lessons learned and a few recommendations that may be adopted by PTF for enhancing sustainability of projects

### 1.1. Institutional Background

Uganda Ethics Net Work Outreach is a registered NGO, with a **vision** to see a Uganda with citizens who uphold ethical values and integrity. Our **mission** is to enhance integrity and social values through advocacy and raising public awareness, in partnership with government institutions and CSOs.

UENO's **strategic objectives** are in four folds which are as follows;

- To enhance national level advocacy on matters of Ethics.
- Contribute to capacity building in ethics and good governance.
- To network with other stakeholders both Government and CSOs in the fight against corruption and unethical behaviour.
- To improve access to information sharing on issues of Ethics and Good governance.

The purpose of UENO is to build character of the Uganda citizenry so as to create a responsible society where each individual will grow up with an idea of self consciousness and policing .

### 1.2. Partnership for Transparency Fund (PTF)

Uganda Ethics Network outreach requested for financial support from the Partnership for Transparency Fund (PTF) to fund the project and PTF granted us **USD \$25,000** towards implementation. The funds were disbursed in three tranches of **\$11,750.00 \$11,250.00 and \$2,000.00** that is to be disbursed after receipt of the project completion Report.

## 2. Goal/ Objective of the project

The overall goal/ objective of the project was enhancing the capacity of SMCs in monitoring education sector programmes. The purpose was to have functional SMCs that take active part in the management of schools in their jurisdictions. The project envisioned that effective participation of SMCs and community members in monitoring services delivery would lead to improved management of school funds and resources.

### 2.1. Specific Objectives of the project included the following:-

- Establish cordial working relations with different stakeholders in the education sector including government technocrats/ DEOs, political leaders, SMCs and the public
- Revitalize functional SMCs
- Improve public awareness on procurement and disposal of public asset authority guidelines, finance management and create awareness among school management teams of their roles and responsibilities
- Identify a team of 3 volunteers per school to boost the functioning of SMCs
- Establish mechanisms for information sharing and reporting through proper documentation, media, workshops and meetings with all stakeholders

### **3. Proposed Strategies**

The project adopted two main strategies (community mobilization and advocacy strategies) which targeted the community and district level education duty bearers and stakeholders in pursuit of its objectives:-

- Establish mechanisms for dialogue and collaboration with local education authorities (DEO, SMCs) and a local CSO (PACO)
- Identify and select community members to volunteer on the school inspection team
- Train the SMCs/ inspection teams on their roles and responsibilities, and also teach them the basics in procurement and finance management
- Actively engage the SMCs and volunteers in monitoring school projects
- Establish mechanisms for information sharing and reporting for further action
- evaluation

### **4. Implementation procedure**

The project kick started by holding meetings with district education officers between 15th to 17th December 2010, to sell the idea, establish mechanisms for dialogue and get community buy in. We held discussions with the district education officer, Mr Mudangi, the district inspectors of schools, Mr. Mabuya, Mr. Wasike, and Mr. Khaemba, and the Lc five secretary for education Mr. Wabuya. Through these meetings the officers disclosed to the UENO team some of the challenges facing the education sector in the district. They reported that monitoring and inspection of school activities remained a very big challenge because of the limited resources. At the time of visiting the district, the education department were in possession of one old motorcycle that was donated by Mbale district. One would read from their submission that there was low morale and motivation to work. This had been worsened by the fact that there was limited support from parents and the community to education sector programmes and poor attitude to education in general. Other officers visited included the Ms Kakai, the procurement officer and Mr Makai Soita, that agreed to work with UENO to facilitate the training. While we had intentions to meet the CAO, we did not succeed because the district was awaiting to receive the new COA Mr. Rwabuhororo in 2011.

### **Achievements**

- UENO secured an authorization letter introducing the organisation to the schools in Manafwa district which established mechanisms for collaboration.
- There was a lot of compliance from the district education authorities who pledged full support to UENO. We also received overwhelming response from the schools which were contacted while those that were left out expressed strong need to be included in the project.
- The visit was a basis for information sharing and networking which established an initial relationship for collaboration.

### **5. Project activities**

During the course of the project, a number of activities were implemented as planned. These activities were as follows:-

#### **Activity 1: Holding meetings with local authorities**

After conducting a series of informal meetings with stakeholders, between 15th- 17th December 2010, one joint meeting was held at the office of the district commissioner boardroom on 10th January 2011. In attendance were, Mr Mabuya Patrick, Mr. Wasike John, Mr. Wabuya Peter, Mrs Masinde Annet and a team from PACO, who had full knowledge of the administrative challenges in different schools. In the meeting, the project proposal was discussed in order for the stakeholders to get the full grasp of what it entails. Their suggestion was to conduct training for all school administrators in the district but were reminded that the funds were limited. After deliberating on the need and relevance of the project, it was

agreed to raise the number of schools from the initial ten to sixteen, in consideration of the total number of schools in the district and to ensure equal representation at the sub county levels. By the end of the meeting, we selected sixteen schools 6 secondary and 10 primary. A consensus was reached to work with schools that had received grants through the Uganda government from the World Bank and African development Bank towards rehabilitating school infrastructures.

The meeting was a success because it brought together the local education authorities, district inspectors, political leaders and civil society, with the main goal to forge way for collaboration and involvement. By discussing the proposal openly and engaging the stakeholders in the planning, this helped to win their support and enthusiasm from the start to the end of the project, to the extent that by the end of the eleven months, a cordial working relationship had been established with both political and technical leaders at the district, the school managers, the volunteers and the general public who were all keen in following up on the progress.

### **Activity 2: selection of SMCs/ volunteers**

A total of 48 volunteers were selected, 3 from each of the 16 schools and these formed part of the new school management team to assist the already existing SMCs. Five members from the old SMC were selected to comprise the new school management team and these included headteachers, 1 teacher representative, 1 contract committee member and 2 members from the SMC selected from the community most preferably chairpersons and treasurers of the committee. The criteria for selection of volunteers was that they had to be parents in the respective school, had to be staying within the proximity of the school for easy accessibility and monitoring, and one had to be female to cater for gender issues in governance because previously only three schools had a woman on the SMC. Low representation of women in governance of schools remains a big challenge, and yet at the grassroots level, mothers have great influence in determining whether the child should go to school or not, as the responsibility of looking after children rests on the women. The approach used to win the mothers was by engaging in discussions together with their husbands who were initially reluctant to permit them to participate in community work.

One important outcome is that the project embraced women into community participation because we managed to get 16 women on the schools management teams. There was a high spirit of voluntarism and teamwork exempted by women during implementation.

### **Achievements**

- 8 members were selected from each of the 16 schools to comprise the new school management team bringing the total to 120 members.
- A memorandum of understanding was signed with each of the 16 schools bearing witness that the old SMCs were to comply with UENO, PACO and the volunteers.
- UENO brought women on board with the new SM teams in place in all the 16 schools compared to previous SMCs where only 3 schools had a woman on their SMC. This catered for the gender issues in community participation which has been predominantly for men. Generally, the project succeeded in revitalizing the functioning of school management committees as envisaged in the proposal.

### **Activity 3: Developing training materials**

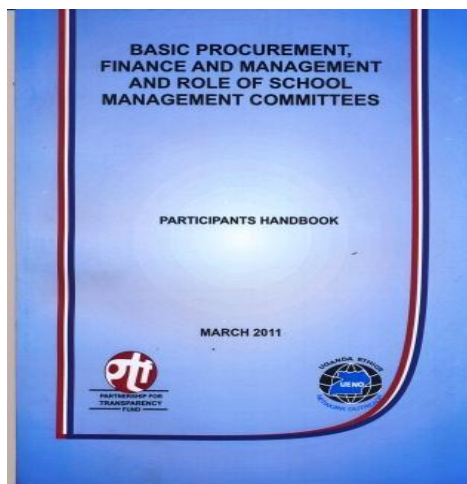
UENO contracted the service of Data house certified Public Accountants, to localise the training materials on procurement, basic finance management, corruption and ethics. Here, Data house worked closely with the district procurement officer, the district finance officer and the district inspector of schools, to localise the training materials, and later on in conducting the training. The school management now boasts of a document of reference during decision making processes, as regards to procurement and finance management. Such documents are necessary for breaking the information



gap and in building the capacity of public servants many of whom are naive about what is expected of them while in public offices.

### **Achievements**

- By January 31st 2011, a simplified version of the training manual had been developed.
- 300 copies of a participant hand book were produced with themes grouped under ethics, corruption, procurement, finance management and roles of SMCs.
- 1000 posters with ethics messages were also produced and are pinned up in offices and classrooms
- The participants confirmed that the materials provided were useful to their work. They were also pleased with the informative couptions on the posters that call for joint monitoring and restoration of moral integrity



*Cover page of training manual*

### **Activity 4: Production of IEC materials**

In order to enhance communication by SMCs on education service delivery, 420 T shirts with catchy messages were produced and distributed to the schools and stakeholders. While some money was used to procure 1000 pens which were given as rewards to the students of the ethics and integrity clubs. These have acted as tools for information dissemination and motivators for participants.

The implication for IEC materials is that they helped bridge the communication and information gap on important knowledge that is necessary for the public. It would be useful if school managers were provided with literature to guide them in conducting activities and yet this is largely lacking.

### **Activity 5: Training of SMCs and volunteers**

A two days training workshop was conducted on the 21st and 22nd March 2011 with a total of 132 people on attendance. This was aimed at equipping the SMCs with basic knowledge in areas of ethics, corruption, procurement, finance management and their roles as school managers so that, they could broaden their capacity in performing their duties in line with education service delivery. The training was facilitated by Data house consultants, in conjunction with the district officers that included, Ms. Kakai the district procurement officer who conducted a session on procurement, Mr. Mabuya the district inspector of schools who handled the role of school management committees and other stakeholders in managing schools and, Mr. Makayi Soita the district internal auditor who handled a section on finance management. Other sessions included presentations on ethics and corruption by UENO and PACO, after which participants engaged in brainstorming sessions and plenary presentations on what they perceived to be ethical conduct and the various manifestations of corruption at the community level.

They were also tasked to outline measures that should be undertaken at the community level to curb the vice. Their suggestions ranged from community neighbour policing and reporting, to instituting strong watchdog committees at the village and district level. The enthusiasm during the training was a clear indication that the communities were willing to support any effort to fight corruption. The workshop was largely successful and met the objective of having a revitalised, knowledgeable and functional school management team that is committed to fulfilling their obligations. The lesson learnt was that a project that is based on information, participation and dialogue is likely to generate support.

The workshop was attended by high profile people at the district. These among included; the district education officer Mr Mudangi Zaddock who, actively participated for the two days. In his opening remarks, he lamented on the low levels of education standards in the district, and explained the relevance of parent's support to their children's education. He lashed at the parents for spending most of their time at drinking joints and for being a force behind early marriage of their daughters. He cautioned that unless parents in Manafwa value sending children to school, they will die with them, implying that, such children will not be valuable citizens to carry on their family names. He also reminded the parents that the fight against corruption in education services delivery starts with community members because they leave with, and have full knowledge of the corrupt who are instead cherished. He appealed to the participants to lead the crusade on fighting corruption, or else prepare to continue lagging behind in development. He applauded UENO for the project saying, it is going to help supplement his work given the difficulties he had been facing from the time he was posted to the district in 2009.

At the closing of the workshop on 22 March 2011, the chairman LC V Mr. Walimbwa Peke in the same spirit applauded UENO for the project. He reminded the beneficiary schools of the privilege of having such an important training. He commented that such programmes should be highly embraced because they pave way for improved academic performance in schools. He appealed to school administrators present to assemble and put in practice the knowledge and experience obtained from the workshop. He also called on participants to help the district leaders to fight corruption and misuse of government funds and time, which government has entrusted to them. He reminded them that even with SMCs in place, some teachers still report to school late and leave early, do not attend school regularly, under purchase scholarstic materials and falsify stock and records. He suggested that an arrangement be made among members of the new school management team to ensure that at least one of them visits their schools on a weekly basis. In his concluding remarks, he launched the project by commissioning the motorcycle bought by UENO and called upon participants to make effective use of it so as to go out and collectively promote good governance.

The presence of Mr. Colby Pacheco on 22nd of March at the training workshop boosted the morale and commitment of the participants. Their comment was that a number of briefcase projects are at times started only to discover when they have conned the residents. This in some way gave them confidence and assurance of sustainability of the project.

### **Achievements**

- Headteachers, SMCs and volunteers gained a deeper understanding of their roles in procurement and the basic knowledge of procedures to be followed as recommended by the PPDA guidelines. Many of them are now trying to follow the guidelines as provided in the handbook when carrying out transactions at the school.
- The workshop brought together different stakeholders that included the district education officers, the district commissioners, members of the school management committees, headteachers and the volunteers. It provided opportunity for the different categories of citizens to interface which was good for information sharing. The participants expressed appreciation for the skills received as being useful for both personal and career development. Both head teachers and the SMCs revealed that they did not have knowledge of their mandates which had for long either resulted into conflict between the school administrators and SMCs, while

often a time, ignorance of their roles and responsibilities had resulted into conflict of interest, manipulation and corruption. A case in point was Lwandubi Primary school where the Chairman SMC had mobilised the parents against the headteacher because of a conflict over finances. The lesson learnt is that refresher courses are necessary for enhancing the functionality of different stakeholder at the local government. Increased awareness and knowledge of SMCs of their roles in monitoring education service delivery in schools has triggered demand for accountability for school budgets and resources, which in one way has created more transparency and lessened corruption acts in the respective schools.

- The proceeds of the workshop gained publicity when two local media houses, Open gate Radio and Stepdown television run programs on the subject during news hour. A full record of the program was run on Open gate radio on Saturday 26th March 2011 between 10:00 to 11:00 am. In a nutshell, the objective of the training was achieved because of the large turn up of trainees, who have endeavoured to put the acquired knowledge into practice.

### **Activity 6: Media Breakfast**

A two hour media breakfast/ press conference was held at Green Gardens Hotel in Mbale town on May 11th 2011 with 3 main objectives which were:- to create awareness to the members of the media fraternity about the project, to flag off the media campaigns and to agree on best strategies for successful implementation of media programs. This captured the attention of all media houses that operate in the Bugisu region. These among included; Step FM, Open gate radio station, Uganda broadcasting station, the newvision newspaper, the daily monitor and step television. In the discussion with participants, it was observed that little has been done to raise the awareness of the communities on issues of corruption and community participation, decriing the gap in collaboration between grassroots CSOs and the media. They lamented that failure to disperse information gives way for impunity to flourish among the elite. It was therefore, agreed that radio programs are significant because they would serve a wider coverage to include areas like Budaka, Pallisa, Namutumba and the entire Bugisu region that is served by the radio signal. The radio programs have been effective in creating publicity of the project. The programs were strategically set for the evenings between five and six o'clock when people are retired to their homes or at social gathering, a time at which they tune to radio programs either as entertainment and getting news updates. We received callers not only from Manafwa district but from almost all districts in the eastern region . The callers were impressed that such an educative programme had been brought to them. The telephone number of the executive Director was given to the callers, many of whom continue to call to express the need for more interactive talkshows.



*Journalists and UENO staff at a media conference in Mbale*

## **Achievements**

- The conference paved a form of collaboration with the media houses in the region. A total of 12 people attended and actively took record of the proceedings, including an audition with UENO Executive director which has occasionally been broadcasted on Step FM and Uganda broadcasting station(UBC) . Following the press conference, UBC and Step FM run different programs on Thursday 12th May and Saturday 14th May, in which the listeners were connected to the Executive director for questions and further deliberations.

### **Activity 7: Radio talkshows**

UENO held 5 Radio talkshows in the local language (Lumasaba) as a strategy for popularising the monitoring project to the general public. Each program had a theme inline with the objectives of the project activities. The participants for each radio program were purposively selected.They ranged from the district political and technical leaders to headteachers, SMCs and the volunteers.

The first radio talkshow held on 11th of May 2011 came after the media breakfast and was flagged with the theme; awareness raising, in which a general overview of the project and its purpose was explained by Ms. Alice Wabule the Executive Director, UENO. The main discussant was Mr.Wabuya partrick, LC 5 secretary for education. He gave a detailed account on the challenges that face the education sector in Manafwa and appealed to the community to be supportive to school administrators in order to improve standards.

The second program which was attended by District Education Officer Mr. Mudangi and Inspector of Schools Mr. Mabuya, centered on the responsibilities of different stakeholders in education management. This drew a heated response from the callers who demanded that the officers explain the poor construction works which is allegedly attributed to the view that they are given “ brown envelops” to keep silent of the impunity that take place.

On the other hand, the third and fourth radio programmes were on sharing best practices and what activities the beneficiary schools are engaged in. Participants articulated to the listeners what transpires during the meetings, the different committees they initiated such as sites committees, mobilisers and focal persons who were overseeing different activities. Notable among these was Pastor Masaba the chairperson of Bugobero high school who has been influential in winning the support of the parents to contribute towards student’s lunches. Ms. Kakai of Butiru secondary school was brought on board to represent the voice of mothers, and she reminded fellow women to be proactive in lifting education standards because the burden of nurturing the next generation largely depends on them. She specified that she is the patron of the ethics club at her school as a way of promoting moral character and responsibility in the youths in preparation for future leadership.

The fifth programmes zeroed on impact of corruption on education services delivery. Participants included Mr. Micheal Wekalawo the newly appointed district secretary for education, Ms. Alice Wabule (UENO), Mr. Davis Wambette ( PACO) and Mr. Nambafu Massete, the chairperson of Bulako primary school who narrated the ordeal of what had transpired during the construction of a classroom block in his school.

The callers decried the high levels of corruption especially at the local government level. Many of them were concerned that the top district leaders who should serve as role models to officers of low cadres and the public were at the forefront in all corruption scandles. The leaders were blamed for awarding themselves tenders and contracts and for diverting public funds to personal development, which results into shoddy work. They were also attacked for soliciting bribes in return for services. The callers were particularly impressed that the project had brought out the district leaders such as the Education Officer, the Inspector of Schools and the political leaders to explain to the public about the inefficiencies in their administration. This strategy was effective in promoting social accountability in governance which is least practiced at the district.

The lesson learned was that radio programmes that run in local languages are very useful in awareness raising. The callers were able to follow through the discussions and freely expressed their views because of the medium of communication. However one hour allotted for each radio programme was not sufficient for all callers to give their views. Given the limited time, only five callers were permitted for each programme, which number was too small considering the catchment area.

### **Achievements**

- The radio talk shows provided an avenue for information sharing on the project progress. At the same time, it helped create awareness among the listeners of the importance of active participation in monitoring services delivery. Not only did this benefit the 16 schools, but it drew a wider coverage to include the five districts in the Bugisu region and the neighbouring districts of Budaka, Namutumba and Palisa, which are served by the radio signal.
- The programs provided opportunity to the callers to task their leaders to explain the deficiencies in service delivery as a way of promoting social accountability. To some extent this acted as a way of naming and shaming those officers that were involved in corrupt tendencies.
- UENO succeeded in bringing the district officials to the fore front in the campaign for better services delivery. We engaged the District education officers and the office of the district commissioner in discussions on corruption, well knowing that they are not clean either. During the life of the project, the community members acknowledged the impact of the project by revealing that district officials are more conscious when engaging in acts of corruption because of the fear of public criticisms.



*Participants during the fourth and fifth radio talkshows at Open gate radio in mbale*

### **Activity 8: Follow up meetings**

These were conducted monthly by UENO and PACO field teams through out the project with the objectives of monitoring and evaluating project progress as well as ensuring and assessing the functionality of the School management teams. Monthly meetings were conducted in each of the 16 schools. Each school elected a focal person who acted as contact person and coordinated other members for meetings. Physical observations, supervisions and interactions were made which formed the basis for project evaluation.

Though poorly facilitated, the members understood the purpose of their work and were committed to working as a team. The followup meeting paved way for accountability in that schools started updating records of the different transactions as they unfold, as this was one of the requirements by the monitoring teams. For example the SM team of Bubulo secondary school were invited to witness the hand over of a consignment of 50 computers that were donated by the Uganda Christian University Mukono, as a sign of transparency. In the same way, the bursar of Buweswa S.S was forced to resign

and a replacement was secured, after he was found to have tampered with the books of accounts. Such incidences, as noted by the monitors were non-existent before the project. Additionally, the meetings paved way for a collaborative relationship between the school administrators, SMCs, volunteers, PACO and UENO which is useful for promoting participatory governance at the grassroots communities. The parents started seeing the usefulness of attending PTA meetings and inspecting school projects as seen below:-



Community members inspecting construction in Butiru secondary (left) SMC members in a follow up meeting with UENO staff (right)

### Achievements

- In most project schools, SMCs continuously met once or twice a month to discuss issues concerning services delivery in their respective schools. It is through such meetings that school administrators were brought to task to give financial reports and other accountability for resources under their control.
- Most project schools have in place basic accountability requirements such as cash books to enforce better standards .
- There is increased transparency in accountability for funds in the project schools as information is shared freely and openly by the headteachers in regard to school funds and resources.
- Ethics clubs have been formed in most of the project schools with some leadership roles for both teachers and pupils though the schools expect UENO to orient them into activities, which can only be made possible with availability of funds.



Ethics club members entertain parents during the PTA annual general meeting On 25th November 2011 at Butiru ss

To this effect the project achieved its objective of having functional schools management teams. These teams constituted themselves into some sort of management structure that included the focal person, who served as overall coordinator and other committees like sites committee, and community mobilisers. This could provide a good basis for initiating sustainable system changes if they were facilitated to run for another one year and replicated in other schools in the district.

## Activity 9: Review workshop

The review workshop was on the 28th September 2011 in Manafwa and it was attended by a total of 59 participants. These comprised of 3 members of the management team selected from each of the schools, District officers and UENO staff. The objectives of the workshop were; to share best practices on what school managers and volunteers are doing to improve education service delivery and to review progress of project activities since inception in January 2011.

The meeting was attended by the District Education Officer Mr. Mudangi Zaddock. He commented that through personal observation, he had noted some changes in community attitude since the initiation of campaign. He applauded UENO once more for the meeting decriing the difficulties of conducting meetings at the school level, revealing that only 150,000 Uganda shillings is allocated for running board meetings in the budget, which is too little. He appealed to UENO to lobby for more resources so as to increase on the number of schools, noting that, the target of 16 schools out of the 145 in the district is like a drop in the ocean and does not create a big task force. He suggested for copies of the training manual to be provided to the schools that did benefit from the training for reference purposes. Unfortunately his request could not be met because a limited number was procured in accordance to the funds. He reported that at the time, only 77 students had been admitted to public universities from the entire Bugisu region for the academic year 2011/2012, which low number, he attributed to the many challenges that school going children face right from home, such as poor feeding, poor health and lack of basic facilities, which affects their level of concentration in school.

The LC 5 secretary for education, Mr Wekalawo Micheal who represented the District Commissioner called upon participants to openly speak out on impunity in their communities. Quoting the US President, Barack Obama he called for active participation of all members, saying that if one person is unwilling to participate, all of us will suffer and that silence of good people allows evil to grow and multiply. He hailed the participants for the progress so far made and pledged to be available for any other activity.

Mr. Rwabuhororo, the CAO, pledged to cooperate and work closely with the management teams to restore integrity and transparency in public service. He disclosed that a total of Shs 1.4 billion under the Peace Recovery and Development Programme (PRDP), has been allocated to Manafwa district education department towards construction of latrines and two classrooms in 18 schools for the financial year 2011/2012. Another 1.4 billion of the NUSUF funds has been earmarked for education development, while 3.3 billion has been allocated to NAADS, together with a consignment of high yielding coffee seeds that were to be given to farmers. He promised to work towards removing all the barriers that derail proper use of public funds and resources in order to transform the community of Manafwa. In advise, he encouraged members to elect people who have good lobbying skills in running schools in order not to miss out on this opportunity. He concluded by saying that he was struggling to learn the local language so that he could mix freely with the locals. He called upon UENO to always coordinate so that he is brought on board to rid the community of poverty.

The major lesson we got from this workshop was that local communities can play an active role if information is provided to them, which calls for a need to build the capacity of the citizens to enhance participatory governance. They also need to interface with their leaders because so many of them have issues to voice out but lack a platform to do so. Providing a forum for interface could bridge the information gap that is necessary for community needs assessment

### Achievements

- The workshop was a first joint platform for interaction between district officials and school management teams to air out their views on issues affecting the education sector in the district. The meeting came at the time when the teachers had just called off a strike because of low salaries. At the workshop, they openly spoke out their concerns to the CAO. The teachers expressed dissatisfaction on the way they were handled by government through issuing an

ultimatum for all teachers to report to work or get deleted from the government payroll. They were concerned that failure to respond to their unsolved needs will not lead to effective teaching and learning unless government comes out to sort the issue clearly.

- It was a forum for reviewing progress and sharing best practices. Participants exchanged ideas on how to better the management of school finances for better education service delivery.
- The workshop was an eye opener to participants as the chief administrative officer disclosed the amount of money allocated to different sectors for the 2012 financial year, and urged them to be vigilant at following up on how and where the money is going to be spent.
- At the time of writing this report, some of the pledges by the CAO had been fulfilled. It was established that the farmers have been given the seeds as revealed at the workshop and the CAO is willing to provide information to the public
- The CAO is spear heading the monitoring campaign at the district because he encouraged community members to report directly to his office. For example in December 2011, he had visited Lirima primary school on the invitation of parents. In this school a contract had been awarded for the construction of a pit latrine, but for three years running, there was no work. At the moment, a new contractor has been assigned to do the work.



Participants clapping after the Chief Administrative Officer's (CAO) speech **left**. Participants listening to one of presenters during the workshop **right**

### **Activity 10: Institutional development**

The objective was to enhance the capacity of the UENO secretariat to effectively carry on with the project. With funds allocated for coordination, UENO procured a motorcycle which has been useful in facilitating travel and coordination of activities by the UENO and PACO field team, a second hand Dell computer and some office equipment and consumables such as stationery were also procured. Some funds were used to facilitate the day to day running of the organization. The funds facilitated payment for office space to Cardinal Nsubuga Leadership Centre up to the month of November. The major challenge that UENO faced was that we never received any other funding for the year apart from the PTF grant which made the running of the organization challenging, amidst the high commodity prices and service charges.

### **Activity 11: UENO Coordination**

The objective of coordination was to ensure proper implementation of the project. This basically involved interface with different stakeholders through out the course of the project. The activities included communication, travel, mobilization and day to day duties at the office.

UENO's coordination has always been done through consultative and planning meetings and office reports on a weekly and monthly basis at UENO secretariat. UENO worked in collaboration with PACO and has also continued to network with partner organizations like the Directorate for Ethics and



Integrity(DEI), Development Alternatives(DELTA), Anti Corruption Coalition Uganda (ACCU), National NGO Forum, Transparency International among others, through information sharing about project progress. We participated in the national civil society fair that took place from 6th -7th June 2011 and the national anti corruption week from 5th - 8th December. Through these UENO has been profiled as one of the exemplary NGO's that uses a unique approach of character building to fight corruption. It is from this approach that partner NGOs are now advocating for integrity building as opposed to the policing approach which had for long produced minimal results. This has been helpful in reviewing strategies and sharing best practices leading to successful completion of project.

We conducted monthly follow up meetings at the school level in which we jointly visited construction sites and observed other activities in schools. To reduce transport cost and ease movement, we procured a motorcycle which was very useful, and is still in a very good condition.

The meetings conducted in the month of November at the school level were purposely to come up with school based sustainability plans. In the same way we held a meeting with the patrons from 7 beneficiary schools in Kampala district on 24th November. What came up clearly from these meetings was the issue of integrity clubs. Members suggested that clubs are easy to sustain and require minimal facilitation, since they follow within the existing school structure, and it is one way of ensuring active participation of school administrators and pupils in the project. These have kept the fire burning in schools in Kampala since the inception of the project in 2008. The ethics clubs have been actively involved in activities such as music, skits, poetry, essay writing and drawing competitions. Participants have been rewarded with small incentives such as pens, book covers and T shirts. However, more facilitation is needed for UENO field staff to followup and boost their morale.

Members also suggested that PTA meetings be organized in project schools every term so that parents and school administrators can plan the school activities jointly. The meetings should be attended by the UENO team and the district officers so that there is constant interaction. However, this can only be possible if such meeting are facilitated because most schools lack the logistics.



*Patrons of ethics Clubs in a meeting with Mr. Mark Namayo of UENO (extreme left)*

### **Activity 12: Auditing**

In order to track accountability and report of funds, UENO hired the services of ABC-Z company to carry out an independent audit of the organisation's financial accounts. For the last 2 years, ABC-Z company has been facilitated to do this task. UENO's financial accounts for the year ending, 30th June, 2011 were audited and a financial report was sent to PTF.

## 6. Reactions, purpose and Impact

- The community is now encouraged to support schools with additional resources. For example, at Bunyinja primary school the chairperson mobilised parents who contributed local resources towards construction of a library. While at the same time, Manafwa district initiated a policy in which parents are contributing food items or a cash payment of Shillings five thousand to schools to provide lunch for children. This has helped curb late coming and absenteeism of students especially those who would dodge afternoon lessons. It was also observed by the district education officer and an inspector of schools that, attendance by both teachers and pupils has improved by more than 80%.
- They also recognized that the slight improvement registered in the performance of schools in the just concluded primary leaving examinations could to some extent be attributed to the awareness raised through the media. The number of pupils that passed in first division slightly increased from 71 in 2010 to 89 in 2011. Though this is still poor in comparison with other districts, there is hope that with continued sensitization, parents may actively participate in governing schools which may go a long way to improve the standards.
- There is some degree of transparency in the allocation of funds right from the district. In a speech by the CAO Mr. Rwabuhororo, at the evaluation workshop in September 2011, he disclosed the amount of money that has been allocated for different development projects at the district. He cautioned the participants to be on the watch out on how the funds are going to be distributed, while at the same time, called upon headteachers and management committees to develop good lobbying strategies so that their schools are not excluded from the list of beneficiaries. While noting that these funds will not be for all the schools in the district, he said that each school management team should demand for an explanation on how the funds have been disbursed. When effected, this could go a long way to strengthen social accountability.
- Active community participation and information discourages corruption in schools. Equipped with information, the parents of Bulako Primary school have declined to sign a completion certificate and receive a classroom block that was to be handed over in October because it does not meet the minimum standards of construction. It is the same school that engaged the district authorities to stop construction after shoddy work was sighted. However due to reasons unknown to them, construction continued despite the district engineer having visited the site and recommended that the construction is halted. On a positive note however, some construction projects in beneficiary schools like Mayenze primary school are observing minimum standards for construction. (see diagram)



- SMCs are aware of their roles and have pledged to continue monitoring the progress of school projects. Such awareness has prompted members of SMCs to take serious action towards undesirable service provision. A case in point is at Buweswa secondary school, where the bursar was forced to resign after the parents sighted inconsistency in accounting reports. This indicates that community effort to demand accountability and transparency in the management of education sector resources has been enhanced.
- There is better teaching and learning that has been influenced through the new education ordinance that was initiated by the district education department following the several interface meetings with the parents and teachers.
- Transparency in financial management of funds is enhanced because the finance committees are more knowledgeable of their roles. Besides, the volunteers have acted as external auditors for checks and balances. It has also enhanced the finance management skills of the headteachers in beneficiary schools in that they now have proper records of income and expenditures in their schools and many have been acknowledged for preparing timely reports to the district education office. An example in point is the headteacher of Bulako who by the time of the workshop (March 2011) had not submitted accountabilities for 2010. Consequently he had not received the capitation grant for 2012. However after the training he has been able to make a timely submission of the accountability for 2011 at the time of writing this report.

## **7. Lessons learnt and Implications for adaptation**

- Engaging the stakeholders right from the start of the project is one of the best approaches to win their support. UENO established a cordial working relationship with the stakeholders at the district and the schools through dialogue. The goal and objectives of the project were explained. At the same time, we shared and discussed the proposal during the planning meeting with the stakeholders as a sign of transparency. This meant that they all gained a deeper understanding of the project right from initiation to completion. Working with the district authorities and the local communities through a friendly approach explains the sense of ownership, support and commitment that we have enjoyed.
- Communities can have a strong sense of ownership of projects if they are sensitized and are fully aware of the benefits, for example parents of Manafwa are now actively taking time to know about what goes on in schools and the welfare of their children after the radio communication. Head teachers observed improved attendance of PTA meetings at Butiru, Bunyinda, Buweswa and Buwagogo at the end of the year, as revealed to UENO field team.
- Media campaigns play an effective role in creating community awareness, for example the numerous radio talk shows that run during the course of the project acted as a platform for listeners to air out their views on service delivery in general. The radio programmes were very instrumental because they run in the local language that was clearly understood. More so, a lot of publicity was created because of the limited number of radio stations in eastern Uganda. This therefore benefited a big catchment area.
- Fighting corruption in the public starts with creating a vibrant community of citizens that can hold leaders to account. Through increased sensitization and awareness, SMCs now understand their roles and responsibilities and play an active part in holding the head teachers or persons concerned with handling school funds or commissioning school construction projects accountable, as seen from Bulako, Buweswa and the schools that conducted PTA meetings at the end of the year. It was realised that many leaders had taken advantage of the ignorant communities to manipulate and exploit the citizens. The project to some extent helped bridge the communication gap that had been created between the leaders and the ordinary

citizens to the level that a common man could think what the educated people do is always right. Therefore we need to sensitize the communities so as to demand for service provision as a right. Through a rights based approach we can enhance accountability and transparency in service delivery

## 8. Challenges

- Slow response from district authorities on issues raised from the schools, for example UENO forwarded reports of shoddy work in schools such as Bulako, Bubulo mixed, Wekele etc to the office of the district inspector of schools. However much as they acted by sending the engineers to the sites, no serious action has been taken on the culprits despite constant reminders.
- There's shoddy work in most schools due to influence peddling, for example most people who win tenders always bribe or are related to the people in big offices at the district. At most the tenders are given to the administrators at the district. This has proved difficult for the culprits to be brought to book.
- The time frame of one year is not enough for the project to fully realise the intended objectives given the fact that the idea of applying concerted efforts in monitoring education and school projects is new. The project is winding up before the desired outcome which can be fully sustainable
- High expectations from members of the management teams. The facilitation given was not motivating enough much as they have been actively involved in monitoring
- There is a problem of limited funds because the PTF grant basically caters for project activities without consideration for the welfare of the field staff .

## 9. Recommendations

- PTF should facilitate the process of forming village education committees and a community based communication strategy through which information about the flow of funds and resources is communicated to the public. This could be through community noticeboards, radio programmes and village meetings , which must be attended by district leaders. This will be opportunity for interface and may prompt the public to demand for accountability from public officers.
- PTF funded projects should be extended to atleast two years, if we are to create a sustainable impact at the local level. Despite the fact that the Manafwa project was embraced by both the political, technical and local community, the first year of implementation was a learning process. The project helped raise awareness on the importance of active participation by citizens, which helped stimulate their morale and what remains now is to engage them so that we can create a system that they will hold on . We do acknowledge the financial constraints at PTF but would wish that even if minimal funds were advanced to UENO, we would be able to push the project a little further before we leave it to the community members
- Intensify media campaigns for public awareness . Members suggested having two hour radio programmes so that they can get enough opportunity to call in and report issues in their communities.
- It would be good to have more IEC materials, especially more copies of the guidelines on procurement and basic finance management which was issued to participants at the workshop. Such documents are a valued motivation to the schools and the community because they bridge the information gap. Those who received the T/shirts with ethical messages were a source of admiration and inspiration for hard work. It was observed that small incentives are likely to promote morale and at the same time spread informative messages to the public.

## 10. Sustainability and replication

- The project has received support and there is a commitment from the CAO Mr Rwabuhororo, the district education officer, Mr. Mudangi the district inspectorate Mr. Mabuya and Mr. Wasike and the political leaders, that include Mr. Walimbwa Peke the district commissioner and the new secretary for education, Mr. Wekalawo. During the review workshop conducted on 28th September 2011 the CAO Pledged to engage the school system for self management. He promised to conduct a meeting with all SMCs and PTAs so as to come up with a forum for chairpersons, in which they will be tasked to give weekly reports of what is transpiring in their schools. The system will condition chairpersons to have time for the schools, and failure to comply will mean dropping one. He suggested system changes so that all chairpersons of SMCs are parents in the respective schools, in order to have functional and committed committees, adding that when the chairperson is a parent in the school, it will task him to mobilise fellow parents for action when things go wrong. It would therefore be good for UENO to coordinate and follow up to ensure it is implemented
- The CAO and Secretary for education pledged to form village education committees because at the village is where everything is found such as parents, teachers, schools, poverty. The chairpersons will be required to give monthly statistics of attendance, service provision and information on the flow of funds and service provision. This will be followed with a village based communication strategy in which information will be extensively disseminated to the public. This may trigger the public to speak out and express their needs and task their leaders to respond. The strategy may be useful in improving the management systems at the community level. To kick start the campaign, UENO has at the moment obtained information from the CAO and the district Education Officers on the funds allocated to various schools for the year 2012. It would be necessary for this information to go public through the media so that every local citizen is aware.
- Equipped with this information, UENO intends to initiate a budget and expenditure monitoring exercise at the schools so that the management teams can participate in the planning and budgeting processes before they embark on the tracking expenditure. We intend to mobilise the monitors once more and our target is to have conducted joint planning meetings in 23 schools in Manafwa and Kampala by end of March 2012, that is to say sixteen schools in Manafwa and seven schools in Kampala if funds are available. It is hoped that through collaboration and teaming up with the district leaders, we may succeed in creating system changes which could be replicated to other schools and districts through sharing and documenting the good practices

## Appendix 1: Cases on school based sustainability plans

### Case one: Lwandubi Primary school

#### **The impact of the project**

- Stake holders now visit the school regularly to monitor teaching and other school projects and give advice. For example on 10/1/2012 the Engineer, Mr. Sande William visited the school construction site and ordered the school to get a site book for the monitors and gave instructions of the specifications to be followed by the contractors as below;

Gauge boxes 300x300x366mm, to be used when batching and that contractors should ensure proper mixing of concrete as follows;

Foundation 1:3:6

Ring beam 1:2:4

Floor 1:3

- There is an increase in the population of pupils in school because parents are now sending their children to school i.e. 2010 they had 326 pupils in all classes but by term 2 of 2011 the number had increased to 444 pupils
- Proper teaching that follows the syllabus and time because SMC and parent are now monitoring teaching and learning of pupil
- There is an improvement in pupils performance in class because of minimal automatic promotions from one class to another. These has been possible because parents have been sensitized and they take advice from teachers
- Good relationship between teachers and parents and community around school through sensitization
- Improved the relationship between school managers, SMC and stake holders through open platforms like workshops and radio talk show where we speak to other freely
- Transparency in financial management of funds at school because the finance committee knows that they are being monitored
- Improved collaboration between school managers and SMC since each section knows its roles and where its powers stop
- Has made SMC active in school and now own school projects

#### **What is going on in school?**

- They have created a parents welfare scheme in which they are now feeding pupils and all teachers
- They are monitoring the report and departure of both teachers and pupils as agreed in the PTA annual general meeting
- Pupils of p6 and p7 are now having remedial classes
- Are monitoring the construction of a two classroom block which has issues like cracks and the matter has been reported to the inspector of schools
- We are having regular meetings for SMC and school managers
- Teachers are getting materials for scheme teaching
- Proper planning for UPE funds through budget reading and allocation of funds received
- Monitoring of teaching and learning in school by parents, SMC and stake holders
- Plans to have monthly assesment of pupils of all classes
- Monitoring teaching and learning can help in improving education standards in our school
- That as SMC we are full managers of our school
- That education of our children is a shared responsibility that gov't, teachers, parents and the community at large
- That we have a right to ask and task stakeholders for good services

#### **Challenges**

- Poor response from some parents on issues of welfare of their children e.g. contribution for feeding of their children and teachers at school
- Delay in disbursement of funds to school from the ministry leads to poor planning for school programs and projects

## Cases two Bubulo mixed primary school.

### What impact has the project had on the school

- Teachers are more serious with class work like checking books of pupil for any work given
- Parents are monitoring their children education by visiting the school during lesson hours to see if their children are in class
- Good work on the construction site because there is a site committee that monitors things like cement to sand ratio
- SMC now know all the property of the school and the projects taking place
- There is an improvement in the reading culture of the pupils since the school now has a library
- Access to financial information quarterly (improved transparency)
- Change in morals for pupils that is respecting their teachers and parents

### Lessons learnt

- There should be cooperation between teachers and parent for good education service delivery
- We are free to face stake holders for assistance if there is anything wrong going on in our school
- Parents have learnt that they are part of the school programs
- Monitoring school property is every body's responsibility

### What we are doing now

- We are monitoring the construction of the three classroom, we have been involved right from choosing the site up to where its now (roofing stage)
- Monitoring teachers attendance i.e. teaching in class
- Financial management is exposed to all members of SMC
- Change in ethical behavior for both teachers and pupils through the ethics club
- We have lobbied for more teachers to reduce on pupil teacher ratio
- Introduced a library which is functioning and is now helping pupil in extensive learning
- Reduced school drop outs by sensitizing parents of the need to educate their children
- Reduced late coming and abseentism for both teachers and pupils
- Plan to conduct regular meeting to check on progress of performance of pupils
- We have grown a hedge around the school to control in and out movements of pupils and also intervention by the surrounding community
- Registers for attendance for both teachers and pupils are being used to check absenteeism
- Having remedial classes for upper primary
- Improvement in information flow between SMC and the district authorities e.g. the DEO pledged to deploy two staff members to the school and this has been fulfilled.and informed

### Challenges

- Some parents are not cooperative towards the welfare of their children in schools for example they don't want to contribute for anything when school asks them to do so.
- Lack of security at school leading to vandalism and thefts of school property for some one of recent come and stole tree seedling that we had just planted in the school compound
- Lack water and few toilets leading to poor hygiene in school
- There is still some fear in some members to face stake holders
- Lack of housing facilities for teachers which makes it hard for some teachers to arrive early for lessons
- Monitoring is partially a problem since there is nobody who stays at school after lessons
- Access /flow of information on projects in the school is still a problem as contractors do not release