

# UGANDA ETHICS NETWORK OUTREACH (UENO)



END OF PROJECT REPORT ON ENHANCING COMMUNITY  
PARTICIPATION IN PROMOTING TRANSPARENCY AND INTEGRITY IN  
SCHOOLS.

Submitted by

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## Acronyms

ACCU	Anti-Corruption Coalition of Uganda
DEI	Directorate of Ethics and Integrity
ESA	Education Standards Agency
KCC	Kampala City Council
PPDA	Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Authority
UENO	Uganda Ethics network Outreach
SFG	Schools Facilitation Grant

## **1 Introduction**

Uganda Ethics Network outreach with support from Partnership for Transparency fund(PTF) implemented a project aimed at increasing public participation in the activities of monitoring school construction projects. The theme of the project was: *Promoting Citizens Involvement in Public Management*. This report covers a brief summary of the activities that were implemented in a period of one year, commencing in August 2008 to December 2009

### **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 public awareness raising, in partnership with government institutions and CSO's. The strategic objectives of the organization are;

- 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 CSO,s in the fight against corruption and unethical behavior
- To improve access to information sharing on issues of Ethics and Good governance

The purpose of UENO is to create a responsible society where each individual will grow up with an idea of self policing other than being policed by others

### **1.2 Patnership for Transparency Fund**

Uganda Ethics Network outreach requested for financial support from the patnership for Transaparecy Fund (PTF) to fund the project and PTF granted us USD \$24,000 towards implementation. These was disbursed in three tranches

of \$12,000, \$10,000 and \$2000, that is to be disbursed after receipt of the project completion Report

### **1.3 Goal of the project**

The overall goal of the project was to contribute to promoting community participation in governance of schools, in order to improve classroom construction and promote accountability for funds in government aided schools. The main focus of the campaign was to improve supervision through greater transparency and openness in bidding and procurement system, improve building standards, as well as greater community participation in school management so as to improve the quality of service provision

The project was intended to supplement government effort (ESA) in their supervisory work of school management with improved community oversight and involvement of school management committees

The pilot project was implemented in ten government aided schools in Kampala district in the central region of Uganda, five of them primary and five secondary. The major stakeholders included; the Ministry of Education and sports (MoES), the Directorate for Ethics and integrity (DEI), Local Governments, Public Procurement and disposal of Public Assets (PPDA), CSO's and the school community .

### **1.3 Proposed Strategies**

UENO had four implementation stages, namely;

- A baseline survey
- Formulation, testing monitoring tool and training of monitors on implementing the tool
- Actual observation and monitoring of the bidding, procurement of materials and the construction standards
- Evaluation stage

## Specific Objectives of the project

1. To increase community oversight/supervision in the tendering and procurement process
2. To promote transparency in the bidding process, procurement of construction materials and construction of school buildings
3. To promote community participation in school affairs
4. To empower children to act as change agents in promoting integrity and fighting corruption

### 1.4 Implementation procedure

The key activity to kick start the project was to identify ten schools in Kampala district that were undertaking construction work. With support from the Ministry of Education and Sports through the Office of the Principle Inspector of Schools Kamapla City council(KCC) , the following schools were identified

**Table 1: Schools under the project**

<b>Primary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>
St Paul Ggaba Demonstration	Old Kampala secondary school
Kibuli Demonstration	St Dennis Ssebugwawo Ggaba SS
Kamwokya KCC Primary school	Mengo SS
Wandegeya Muslim Primary shool	Lubiri SS
Shimoni Demonstration school	St Peter's SS Nsambya

The sample was determined by (a) schools that were government aided (b) schools that were undertaking construction works by the time of the survey

Although it was key objective of the survey to cover classroom construction,it was discovered that construction was taking place for varied reasons including teacher's quaters, latrines, libraries and renovations on old structures

## **2 Project activities**

### **Activity 1: Survey to identify Gaps in bidding and procurement in schools**

#### **2.1.1 Baseline Survey**

The first phase of the project proceeded with a survey to identify gaps in the bidding and procurement procedures in schools. The baseline assessment set out to:

- Find out the level of transparency in the procurement and construction of school infrastructure
- Find out the level of community involvement in monitoring school construction programmes
- Suggest policy recommendations that can scale up community contribution and participation in school affairs

#### **2.1.2 Major Findings of the baseline**

The findings revealed a number of key issues that include;

- Most construction works were not time bound due to erratic flow of funds
- Sources of funding varied between primary and secondary schools. While the primary school projects were being funded by government under the schools facilitation grants(SFG), secondary schools mainly got funded by parents and direct fundraising
- Information about project design and funding for primary schools was said to be kept with city council authorities and the school administrators had limited influence in the bidding and procurement processes. Therefore most of them were not keen in supervising the construction sites because they had no sense of ownership
- Parents and teachers especially at the primary level did not have adequate knowledge about finance management and procurement procedures

- School Management Committees and Parents Teachers Associations though in existence were not functional as most members were not sure of their roles and responsibilities
- Much as government has a department for supervising and monitoring school programmes and activities (ESA), some schools had never set eyes on any supervisor in the last five years

### **2.1.3 Achievements**

- The key achievement was that the study was conducted and a status report was produced and shared with other stakeholders at the dialogue meeting.
- A total of 140 respondents were drawn which among were headteachers, teachers pupils parents and members of the school management committees.
- This report was critical in guiding subsequent steps on the project. It highlighted areas for improvement as well as capacity development for procurement in schools

### **2.1.4 Dialogue meeting to pave wayforward**

The phase proceeded with a dialogue meeting with different stake holders to share the study findings. This was held on the 6th November 2008 at Hotel Equatorial in Kampala city and drew participants from schools, CSO's, Development partners, Church Agencies, Makerere University and the media fraternity.

The halfday workshop was officiated upon by Mr. Ashaba Aheebwa; the Director for Ethics in the Directorate for Ethics and Integrity, Office of the President, who lashed at headteachers for not enforcing the PPDA act. Ashaba warned that the Leadership code applies to all public servants as long as they are heads of departments, and that those school administrators who default would be implicated

He underscored the importance of teaching ethics in schools and promised to contact PPDA to build the capacity of schools managers on the subject of procurement

### **2.1.5 Recommendations from the meeting and way forward**

The recommendations drawn among others were that,

- UENO targets a larger population of teachers with the sensitization and go for cheaper venues where many people can be invited as much as possible, train teachers and administrators especially in the area of procurement, pilot a peer monitoring programme and also target adults for the project
- It was observed that though the PPDA act requires staffing of procurement staff in schools, these are not provided for in the schools management structure hence called upon UENO to recommend to the ministry of Education and Sports to add procurement staff to the school payroll

### **2.1.6 Achievements**

- A total of Seventy participants attended the meeting that saw a realization of consensus building
- The proceeds of the meeting were broad cast during news time on two local radio stations and Television stations, namely KFM and Central broadcasting radio(cbs), Record Television, Top TV and Uganda Broadcasting station(UBC). The programmes were both in English and the local language- Luganda
- Articles were run in the major news papers; the New vision and monitor
- The proceeds of the meeting led to general agreement that there is need to improve transparency and accountability in school procurement

processes. The headteachers pledged support to UENO during implementation of subsequent activities

## **Activity 2: Developing materials**

### **2.2.1 Monitoring tool**

**Developing monitoring tool/Checklist for tracking tendering and procurement**  
UENO with the help of a consultant developed a monitoring tool that was pretested in the selected schools. However, the tools performed well for some time before they faced some challenges. First, the school would not fully engage with the tool because the culture of school children monitoring and evaluating their superiors was never there, more so when it involved recorded observations. Secondly, although UENO explained in detail the purpose of the monitoring exercise, the school managers could not fully appreciate that the tool was a management not auditing procedure. This double-prolonged resistance prompted UENO to revise the tool several times and to seek more advice of the Education Standards Agency-ESA in order to popularise the tool

A key implication is that the project could not assess performance of the tool in its lifetime. Accordingly, there would be need to at least observe its application in the first quarter of 2010. New strategies must be adopted in applying the tool, advocating for it especially with school managers and students in the monitoring cycle. This gap must be filled before the tool can stand on its own and be integrated in the school system. Nonetheless UENO is working to effect this

## **2.2.2 Production of leaflets**

A total of 1000 leaflets were produced and distributed to the ten schools. The information contained there in was about the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders in school procurement and the procedures for bidding and procurement in schools. The fliers produced created awareness among school administrators, majority of whom were not conversant with procurement procedures

## **Activity 3: Training of monitors**

### **3.3.1 Training**

A total of 140 school children were trained from eight schools in Kampala district on the 28th November 2008 at Cardinal Nsubuga Leadership training Center Nsambya. The training also included 16 teachers who are patrons of the school integrity clubs. An official from the Directorate for Ethics and Integrity Ms Tibawa Pheobe opened the ceremony.

A training manual was developed after consultations with several stakeholders, whose coverage was on ethics and transparency, Procurement and monitoring. This formed a basis for engaging the young generation in public affairs and building responsible character among them

### **3.3.2 Achievements**

- There is improved knowledge among school children on their roles and responsibilities in monitoring school construction projects
- UENO has strengthened collaboration with schools through the schools integrity clubs
- There is increased support to UENO from the community on her character building approach in the fight against corruption

On the otherhand, although the training was done and about 90% of the target population reached, the curriculum was not broad enough to target the teachers and

other school members. Besides the curriculum was not comprehensive enough being a one day event to include national and local policy implications as well as key procurement regulatory procedures

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

##### **4.4.1 Production of pens and T-Shirts**

In order to increase community awareness on enhancing integrity in procurement, IEC materials with integrity catching words were produced and distributed to schools and other stakeholders. These totalled to 200 hundred T-shirts and 4000 pens. The materials produced were motivators and effective communication channels especially to the pupils who volunteered in project activities

However the numbers were small given the high demand for the products

##### **4.4.2 Rewarding of best performers**

UENO conducted an essay writing and drawing competition for students and pupils in the ten schools on a theme; *Corruption in the school community*, and the winners of the events were awarded with prizes. These were in form of Flat irons, Plates, Mathematical sets, Flasks and Wall clocks. The prizes were meant to attract attention of participants and non- participants to the cause of ethics and integrity. UENO involved directly in announcing the competitions with the key objective of not winning but offering a learning point for the rest of the school members. Offering of the prizes happened in the presence of the entire school community to send message to the entire school

## **Activity 5: Capacity building for school administrators and School management committees on procurement**

### **5.5.1 Training**

Teachers and members of the school management and contracts committees from 10 schools were trained in procurement, monitoring and on how to counteract corruption in the school system. These was conducted between 2nd -20th July 2009

Facilitators were drawn from Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets(PPDA), Anti Corruption Coalition Uganda(ACCU) and Uganda Management institute. Trainings were conducted at the insitutional level in order to target a small group

In each primary school, fifteen people were purposively selected for the training as follows;1 integrity club patron, 4 teachers, 2 adminstrators and 8 members of the school management committee. In secondary the participants included 5 members of the school procurement committee, 2 student leaders , 2 school adminstrators and 3 teachers on the contracts committee, 1 patron of the Ethics clubs and 2 members from the accounts section. However in some schools, the number exceeded the target.

### **5.5.2 Objectives of the training**

- To educate and share information on the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders in the procurement process in the school institution
- Equip the trainees with skills of monitoring the construction programs in schools
- Help the participants understand the concept of corruption in its totality and appreciate the need for fighting the practice in schools
- Increase participation and activism of different stakeholders in school management

### **5.5.3 Key issues that emerged**

- Secondary schools have procurement and contracts committees but members are not oriented to their duties, roles and responsibilities
- Members agreed unanimously that they lacked skills in procurement
- Headteachers and Bursars manage all the financial transactions and procurement. There is limited involvement of teachers in the process apart from making requisitions and yet the final vetting and decision making is taken by the headteacher
- Financial matters are only known by the Headteachers and the bursar
- Financial and procurement documents are considered confidential and not given to other stakeholders
- Most members of the school management and contracts committee are not appointed on merit but on personal grounds
- Many teachers and students were not concerned about the progress on school construction projects apart from Old Kampala secondary school which had a sites committee in place
- There are no procurement and contracts committees in primary schools
- Primary Headteachers procure everything and handle finances solely
- Some headteachers are so “powerful” that teachers fear to critic them for fear of being victimised

### **5.5.4 Achievements**

- One hundred sixty seven (167) stakeholders were trained on procurement
- The teachers and administrators appreciated the role of the training and pledged to form procurement and contracts committees and also support activities of the Ethics clubs. This is hoped will create a system of school construction monitoring that brings together different stakeholders

- UENO school collaboration in Ethics and integrity was commended and strengthened
- There is Increased awareness among the school contracts committees and students to demand for accountability and monitor corruption, which is a good preventive mechanism

## **Activity 6: Radio and Television talkshows**

### **6.6.1 Radio talkshow**

UENO with support from Anti Corruption Coalition Uganda was hosted for a one hour radio talkshow on a local radio station, popularly known as KFM “hot seat” during the anti corruption week 2008 . UENO was co-hosted with a member of parliament for Moroto county Lira District, Hon.Obua Ogwal Benson. This was an opportunity to air out views on school construction projects and highlight the gaps that have been ignored by both government and other stakeholders in the monitoring exercise

The public gave their views and opinions on the subject by calling in and sending SM messages. It was quite an interactive and interesting forum for information sharing

### **6.6.2 Achievements**

- The outcome of this programme triggered the police and inspectors of schools to start carrying out abrupt visits to schools to ensure that the school administrators try to follow the minimum standards as laid down by the Ministry of Education and Sports
- Some schools were temporarily closed and only re-opened later after satisfying some of the requirements
- The public showed appreciation of UENO's effort in the monitoring exercise, recommending that the project should be strengthened

On the other hand, much as the talkshows are good, the coverage was small and being a one time event was not adequate. Yet carrying out effective media campaigns is very costly. Overall the budget was under estimated, which UENO had not anticipated

## **Activity 7: On-spot monitoring**

### **7.7.1 Followup activities**

UENO, deployed three(3) field staff members to undertake the exercise in the ten schools under the supervision of the Executive Director. The follow up was programmed for three times in each school each term.(a school calender year is divided into three terms).

A program was drawn basing on the calender of activities in each school in order not to interfere with school programmes

A self administered monitoring tool was served in each school and was to be filled in by students/pupils and teachers who had been trained on procurement. Some of the questions were based on; classroom space in relation to number of students, the construction specifications,ventilation, shutters, and general workmanship at the construction sites

The exercise was evidence based in that during every visit, the field team would be taken around to observe progress on the infrastructures under construction and relate it with the responses of the monitors

### **7.7.2 Findings from monitoring**

- Constructions in most schools were not inline with the construction standards set by the ministry of education and sports, especially in schools were projects are donor funded.

- At St Paul Ggaba Demonstration primary school the structure under construction reflected shoddy work
- In the same school, The chairperson of the school management committee was the sole implementer of the project and the funds were deposited on his personal account
- At Mengo secondary school, though the workmanship appears good, the structure under construction is already under use and does not have any shutters
- In old Kampala SS, the floor of the structure under construction has worn off before completing and commissioning the building
- Ventilation in the same new building at old Kampala ss is said to be poor. The windows are so high with no shutters.
- At Wandegeya Muslim the structure under construction was declared complete but with no shutters
- Overall, the exercise established that majority of the schools had inadequate structures that lacked facilities such as ventilators, shutters, fire fighting equipment and lightening conductors and where such facilities were available, they were non functional

### **7.7.3 Achievements**

- Though there were no concrete cases of corruption identified and documented, the constant presence of UENO field team at the schools had an implication on the school administrators who became more conscious of their actions
- The School management committees, teachers and pupils too gained a sense of responsibility and concern about the construction plans which was not the case before the project

- Ethics and integrity clubs became formalised and more functional and attracted more membership. Students and patrons engaged actively in activities such as Music, dance, drama and poetry with themes on the topics of ethics and corruption, as potential activities to create awareness in the community
- The field team also reached out to grassroots communities in the five divisions of Kawempe, Rubaga, Nakawa, Makidye and the central region of Kampala district to sensitize them on the need to demand for accountability from the service providers. UENO specifically engaged into a close working relationship with the office of the Local council one (LC1) chairperson, Makidye Division on issues of community mobilization and sensitization
- The project attracted public interest and the number of schools interested in UENO activities went up. This saw the launching of integrity clubs in more schools in the district as most stakeholders appreciated the effort of UENO as being timely

The monitoring exercise though will be a continuous process and will not cease with the end of this project. Most construction projects are still on going because of the erratic flow of funds, which makes the projects to stagnate for sometime in most schools

### **Activity 8 : Production of comic leaflet**

UENO produced three thousand (3000) copies of a comic leaflet with eye catching illustrations and key messages that can trigger the school community to be concerned about the schools construction projects. This has been distributed to the ten schools and also other schools within the district

It has been realised that IEC materials are strong advocacy tools and can send messages far and wide

## **Activity 9: UENO Overall coordination**

### **9.9.1 Planning meetings**

This basically involved interface with different stake holders through the life of the project. The activities here included communication, travel, mobilization and day to day duties at the work station

Consultative and planning meetings were held through the life of the project. The meetings were both at the institutional and external level. Before we kick started the project, consultations were made with the Ministry of Education and sports. We had a meeting with the commissioner for Education Mr. Agaba, the Director for ESA Mr. Otyek Moses and the Engineer for ESA. Other meetings were held with the Director of Education and sports, Kampala Mrs. Galiwango, prior to the implementation of the project. We also held meetings with the office of the Directorate for Ethics and Integrity and partner CSOs such as Anti Corruption Coalition Uganda and the school administrators

Issues that came out of the meetings included; Securing permission from the relevant authorities before the project, selecting the schools and other stakeholders to work with, including sourcing of external service providers and advice and information sharing on how to go about the project. We also conducted one Board meeting to discuss progress of the project and to lay new strategies for implementation

UENO also had two meetings with representatives from PTF, one in April and the other in October 2009 as a followup on progress and to offer advice on new strategies and approaches

We were in position to network with different partners such as the Ministry for Water and Environment in order to start a hand washing campaign in schools. It was necessary for this because our findings revealed lack of adequate water and sanitary facilities for children while at school.

### **9.9.2 Achievements**

- The meetings provided avenues for information sharing and networking
- UENO was able to secure the support of the different stakeholders in the monitoring and training exercise. Letters permitting UENO to work with the schools as independent monitors were secured. These letters were copied to all relevant authorities such as the principle inspector of schools, Kampala, Kampala City Council and the headteachers of the affected schools

## **Activity 10: Documentation of school management reports**

### **10.10.1 Report writing and auditing**

UENO constantly wrote progress reports and shared them with different stakeholders

### **10.10.2 Auditing**

In order to track accountability for funds, UENO hired the services of TAAKA Group consultants who carried out a financial audit after the first phase of the project. An agreement was reached with the firm to carry out the exercise in two phases. The first audit report was produced and was shared with PTF while the second phase is being conducted

### **10.10.3 Other activities**

### **10.10.4 Institutional Development**

To enhance the institutional capacity of UENO, the institution purchased a Toshiba windows Vista Pentium dual core laptop to facilitate the daily activities for the

organization. The laptop has enhanced performance in field activities as well as office work

These funds often times enabled UENO to pay for office space to Cardinal Nsubuga Leadership Training center(CANLET) as the organization has not yet acquired an own permanent home. Moreover part of the resources were spent on office consumables like stationary, repairs and replacement of office equipment and postage among others

### **3 Reactions, purpose and Impact**

The project met to some extent the needs that were projected in the target population. However, one year of implementation was rather too short to notice major changes in behavior and attitudes of the target population given that the project intended to introduce new attitudes and culture of monitoring and evaluating school construction performance. There had not been any effort before in this direction in the country and UENO was a pace setter

Our assessment is that the needs of the project were achieved by a reasonable factor. In the project schools, there is evidence of knowledge and awareness about procurement issues among the staff members, the school administrators and the students. Much of this was reportedly acquired during the lifetime of the project. The levels of awareness can be gauged from the interest expressed in the subject during our seminars and on-spot inspections, the ability to articulate issues on procurement by students and staff as well as leadership capacity to overlook procurement and tendering activities in schools

As a result of our intervention, the target schools moved to re-align their contract committees and disposal entities to meet the national regulations. In addition, there was more interest expressed to obtain professional backstopping from PPDA

The project has promoted transparency in the bidding process and procurement of construction materials. We cannot however say that this has been fully attained because like for the case of primary schools, the process is managed by the district administration, which we would not influence. Nonetheless, a positive step was initiated to highlight this requirement among the stakeholders and to underline the dangers posed by non-compliance

The project also fairly succeeded in promoting community participation in school affairs. Much as it did not result in any litigation pertaining corruption cases in school construction, learning and sharing of best practices would be accepted and this is what UENO tried to adopt

### **3.1 Lessons learnt and Implications for adaptation**

An independent assessment of performance was undertaken by the Directorate for Ethics and Integrity(see attachment). The findings of this assessment fairly concur with the observations we have hinted on in terms of level of participation in procurement, functionality of procurement committees, monitoring and supervision of school construction projects public awareness, level of reporting and accountability for funds

The independent evaluator observes improved commitment of teachers to school procurement related activities in UENO pilot schools but highlights the challenges of involving the students in monitoring school activities. This observation is also made in our assessment but it should not be a deterrent to fostering this idea. Student involvement can be seen as a gradual achievement of mental capacity that can be attained with better training methodologies and advocacy approaches involving not only students but also their teachers and parents

Despite the good laws and many legal institutions in Uganda, corruption remains the leading evil behind under development. A lot of effort has been put by both government and CSOs to fight the vice, and though the policing approach is good in exposing and reprimanding the corrupt, it requires a mix of strategies to reap the act out of the public

In addition to exposing and reprimanding the corrupt, it is important that effort is put to sensitize the communities to understand their rights and entitlements so that they are not victims of manipulation out of ignorance. Above all there is need for a moral revolution in Uganda, where issues of ethics and integrity are respected in public service. This in the view of UENO can be achieved by reaching out to the grassroots communities and the young generation as a preventive rather curative approach

### **3.2 Constraints**

- There was poor cooperation from some schools and the city authority on account of suspicion of corruption investigations, busy school schedules and bureaucracy. This led to loss of time and adjusting the programmes several times
- The time frame of one year was not enough for the project to fully realise the intended objectives given the fact that the idea of applying concerted efforts in monitoring school construction projects is new and the stakeholders were not aware of their role on the subject
- There was difficulty in accessing official documents from relevant authorities, which in itself is a manifestation of corruption and contradiction to the Access to information act
- The cost of goods and services has increased given the fluctuations in the value of the dollar. This is reason why we have not yet conducted a television

talkshow because UENO had underestimated the cost. Nonetheless we tried to make the best use of the available resources to implement most activities

### **3.3 Wayforward**

- UENO intends to continue with the follow up activity with the school monitors on the monitoring campaign
- Intensify media campaigns
- Liaise with PPDA to build capacity of school administrators and management committees in more schools on procurement and their roles in monitoring school projects, in order to create a system of school construction monitoring
- Establish integrity clubs in more schools as a way of character building and moral rehabilitation
- Target rural areas for the monitoring campaign because conditions in rural areas are worse than in Kampala
- Pilot a peer monitoring exercise where each school monitors projects in the other and establish benchmarks for reforms
- Target adults for training to act as community monitors
- Collaborate and network with other stakeholders to trigger activism among citizens to demand for accountability in schools. This will be through use of citizen's score cards and integrity pacts to track progress of various transactions