



MARCH NEWSLETTER 2023

LOCALIZING THE SDGS



ABOUT LOCALIZING THE SDGS

Open Space Centre in partnership with Crossing Borders and with support from Civil Society in Development (CISU) is implementing the Localizing SDGs project through a south-to-south focused collaboration platform with 3 project partner Civil Society Organizations and other stakeholders in Ghana, Uganda, and Zambia. This newsletter highlights the activities that were carried out during the period leading up to March 2023.



<https://sdgs.crossingborders.dk/uganda/>

PROJECT UPDATES

Uganda's Highlights



The University Debate Nationals' Dialogue

From the 25th to the 29th of November 2022, the Open Space Center convened the eighth edition of University Debate Nationals (UDN) at the Eureka Place Hotel in Ntinda. The Nationals hosted a total of 149 participants in total, comprising 84 University Students, 7 local media stations, members of parliament, and policymakers.

The overall objective of the University Debate Nationals was to provide young people in higher institutions of learning a platform to network, share

views, and exchange ideas around topical issues defining the governance landscape in Uganda and to build youth capacity as well in debating, public speaking, and critical thinking as key tools for active citizenship. The youthful panel of young leaders in the CSO space, academic institutions and debate organizations discussing the progress towards the achievement of SDG 16 in Uganda.

On 28th November 2022, during the course of the UDN, the center implemented a Youth Dialogue on Governance as a policy platform for over 140 youth, their leaders, and policymakers to come together to share views and generate policy ideas and commitments around SDG 16 on Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions under the theme "Uganda at 60: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions". The dialogue aimed to engage young people in debate and dialogue with their leaders and policymakers around SDG 16 on Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions.



The Mini-level SDG projects

In an effort to strengthen young people's ability to implement and lead action towards the localization of sustainable development goals, Open Space Centre facilitated the implementation of 6 mini-SDG projects led and initiated by the youth leaders from the community task forces within communities at the grassroots level in communities in Kampala, Wakiso and Mukono districts. The SDG projects empowered youth leaders to lead and take action toward the localization of the SDGs in their communities through practical innovative solutions that tackle pressing community issues.

A total of 12 youth leaders from within the community task force came up with innovative ideas that provided immediate and long-term solutions for some of the community challenges identified during the project youth parliament sessions.



Urban Farming Training at Emiti Emito Foundation in Kamwokya on SDG 2 & 12

On 21st December 2022, the center participated in a training session for young people on Smart Urban Farming with Emiti Emito Foundation in Kamwokya, Kampala. The mini-SDG project on urban farming was designed in response to young people's need to deal with the country's economic inflation and climate change which was responsible for community crises such as food insecurity, and malnutrition of children due to their poor feeding habits. Part of the center's goals towards achieving SDGs is the need to empower local youth groups to mobilize & implement activities that enhance their capacity & action to participate in SDG work. The training on smart urban farming was also facilitated by two trainers; John Paul Lwanga & Nasibwa Christine who educated the

participants on the use of organic fertilizers to enhance soil fertility for young people aged 11 to 24 years.

The mini-project also provided a unique opportunity for young people to understand how to practice agriculture on a small scale and increase supplemental food production to increase food security, nutrition, and income generation. The training on urban farming also helped the trainers to teach the children and youth about the critical role of nurturing gardens and crops so as to appreciate how to grow different crops and food sustainability in a safe way and with a limited amount of space.



Katosi-Mukono Health Camp

SDG project on SDG 3

Owing to the fact that Katosi parish in Mukono district is predominantly a fishing community that is heavily burdened by diseases such as HIV/AIDs and other sexually transmitted diseases, diarrheal diseases arising from improper hygiene, and risky activities such as prostitution, that arose through the youth parliaments, the youth leaders decided to respond to these challenges through the implementation of a health camp.

Open Space center facilitated and participated in the establishment of a medical camp on the 22nd of December 2022 in Katosi parish, Mukono district whose overall objective was to increase young people's access to health information and services in the parish and also provided health education talks through a trained health facilitator within the organization. The health camp in Mukono district, Katosi parish was designed to purposefully mitigate the community's health challenges



in by supporting young people with accurate and relevant information on HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, diarrheal diseases and equipping them with different life skills and techniques to protect themselves from poor health. The community members were also encouraged to take on different forms of employment outside prostitution which was one of the primary reasons why Mukono district had a high incidence of reproductive health diseases. In this regard, the young people and their leaders are committed to living healthy lifestyles and would take deliberate steps towards behavior change to curb the spread of communicable diseases across various fronts. In addition, the youth leaders from the community task force were urged to become health ambassadors in their communities to pass on health information to other groups of young people in an effort to improve their quality of life.



Be clean! Be healthy! Campaign in Makerere Katanga on SDG 6 & 3

Makerere, Katanga in Kampala district is an urban slum community where the majority of young people reside due to its high rate of urbanization that stems from the community's proximity to the biggest institution of learning; Makerere University, and the town center.

Due to this high rate of urbanization, the majority of people in this community reside in slum areas marked by dilapidated structures, pollution(both air and water), and a high disease burden. In recognition of these challenges that arose through the community youth parliaments, the youth leaders led by the youth councillor Kemigisha Sharon designed & implemented a health awareness campaign on 23rd Dec 2022 to curb the problem of water pollution within the community by ensuring that all inorganic waste like polyethene bags are effectively collected and removed from drainage routes. Open Space Centre participated in Campaign and facilitated the garbage collection process through the community Garbage Trucks and distributed 5, 30-litre garbage bins to the communities as one of the ways to sustainably foster good waste management practices in the community and prevent the disposal of polyethene bags in water trenches which ultimately leads to blockages and flooding.



PROJECT UPDATES

Zambia's Highlights



Youth Parliament at Ahmadya Community School

In this month of March, the Circus Zambia Youth Task Force facilitated a Youth Parliament meeting with Representatives from Ahmadya Community School in Chibolya.

The Youth Task Force members split the participants in breakout groups and took turns in making presentations on the work that they have done so far on the project. The meeting was also an opportunity for the youth at Circus Zambia to share what they had learnt from the capacity building workshops, their views and solutions with regards to SDG 3 - Good Health and Wellbeing.

The participants had an opportunity to ask questions about the Localizing SDGs Program and how they can get involved. The teachers accompanying the participants expressed their pleasure with the work that was being done through the project. They further pledged their support for the project and expressed a need to collaborate with the education sector - through schools in localizing the Sustainable Development Goals.

The meeting ended with Presentations of major takeaways by the participants guided by the Youth Task Force.



PROJECT UPDATES

Ghana's Highlights



Community Engagement Dialogue



The ultimate aim of providing a platform for the youth in these focal communities to facilitate and deepen the understanding of their community, and members on the SDGs using a community dialogue approach was reported to have been met by all CRS engagements so far.



Nine (9) of GCRN's 21 member stations completed their 1st Community Engagement Dialogues in February. The first round of CEDs aims at bringing the youth and their communities together in their further discourse on the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly to validate the chosen priority SDGs and Community Level Mini Project (CLMP) with the entire community. The Nine (9) stations include; Radio Afram Plains, Radio Bongo, Radio Breezy, Radio Gurune, Radio Nabina, Radio Peace And Development (PAD), Radio Progress, Radio Royals, Radio Sang Zoyayili, and Radio Tawasul.

These Radio Stations generally reported the great impression the youth made in facilitating the Community Engagement dialogues by adopting the guidelines in the Community Engagement Dialogue guide and making it altogether participatory, educative, and entertaining. The youth in the 1st CED informed the whole community of all the activities they have been carrying out among themselves in localizing the SDGs since implementation began in their communities. They also got the community members to validate their prioritization of the SDGs according to the community's burning needs and the choice of a Community Level Mini Project as arrived through the 2nd Community Youth Forum and democratic process.



Production of CED Demonstration Video & Review via Zoom

A Community Engagement Dialogue, or CED, is a key activity on the GCRN component of the project, or CR-L-SDGs for short. In the CED activity, the Community Youth Task Team (CYTT) of each Community Radio Station (CRS) engages its focal community to enable community members to select and/or validate a Community-level Mini Project (CLMP) to meet their priority SDG.

It is the second step in a three-stage process, the first being the 2nd Community Youth forum for the youth to debate and select a CLMP and the second, being the 1st CED.

To orient the various CRSs to the various project activities, GCRN has been using the demonstration/modelling workshop approach. To summarize, one CRS carries out the activity in full. The Project Coordinator supports the facilitation of the activity in person, starting out by going through the prepared guide with the station coordinator, the CR-L-SDGs Youth Focal Persons, and other CRS staff and volunteers. The CRS focal team then orients their CYTT, which engages with the focal community on the activity. The whole process is captured on video by a professional videographer.

The Community Engagement Dialogue demonstration/modelling workshop was carried out with CRS Radio Afram Plains (or RAP for short) from 31st January to 2nd February 2023. RAP is located in Donkorkrom, the capital of Kwahu Afram Plains North District in the Eastern Region of Ghana. Afram Plains is one of the most disadvantaged areas in the country. It is a group of islands on the Volta River isolated by the construction of the Akosombo Dam and the only way to reach it is by ferry boat.

The pilot Community Engagement Dialogue was held in the Odomase community in Afram Plains by the Odomase Community Youth Task Team on the 2nd of February 2023.

During the latter part of January through to the 1st week of February, a 50-minute demonstration video was produced covering the entire 1st CED process. The video featured all the different segments or stages of the piloted CED. It was shot by a videographer on the staff of GCRN member station, Coastal TV, so familiar with GCRN's participatory approach.

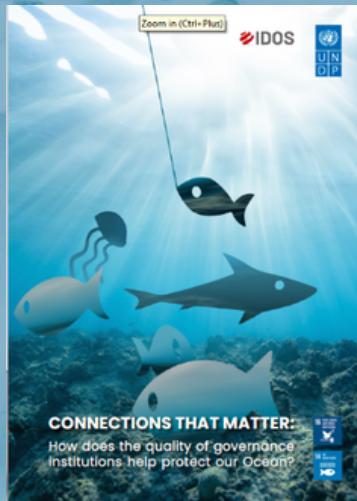
The demo video was then shared with all the CRSs and reviewed in our routine preparatory Zoom meetings in February, for feedback and adoption by all CRSs in their respective CEDs.

The general feedback from the CR-L-SDGs focal teams was that the 1st CED process and guide as visualized in the video was simple to understand and easy to follow.



https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1TlRC3BO17xCkAQTyGxnyIGoseqAVo7C5?usp=share_link

SDGs Publications



March 23, 2023

While 'SDG interlinkages' are increasingly studied, SDG 16 is rarely covered. This new publication builds on the first, ground-breaking study 'Connections that Matter: How the Quality of Governance Institutions may be the Booster Shot we need to reduce Poverty and Inequality' on the interlinkages between SDG 16 and SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequality). UNDP's Oslo Governance Centre and the German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS) have now released this second study on interlinkages between SDG 16 and SDG 14 (Life Below Water).



<https://www.undp.org/publications/connections-matter-how-does-quality-governance-institutions-help-protect-our-ocean>

Connections that matter: How does the quality of governance institutions help protect our Ocean?

With the SDGs, countries agreed that Peace, Planet, Partnership, Prosperity and People are connected. To maximise synergies and minimize trade-offs, their interactions need to be better understood.

UNDP publications showcase the organization's thought leadership and expertise and play a key role in fulfilling our mandate to support the realization of the SDGs and encourage global development.

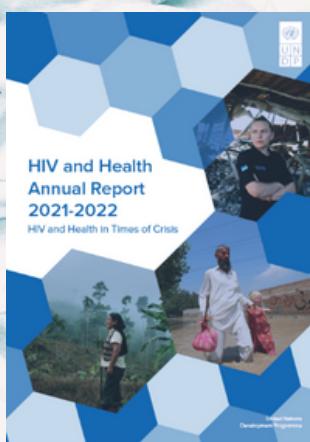
For democracy to thrive, it is critical that we have effective capabilities to counter information pollution in elections, yet in the context of elections this is a relatively new field. Promoting information integrity: global reflections from electoral stakeholders provides valuable insights from representatives of academia, civil society, media, private sector and governments in addressing the complex problem of information integrity in elections. They offer reflections on existing and emerging challenges, analysis of current programmatic approaches, programming considerations and recommendations for a range of stakeholders working on electoral assistance.

<https://www.undp.org/rg/publications/promoting-information-integrity-elections-global-reflections-election-stakeholders>

March 23, 2023

PROMOTING INFORMATION INTEGRITY IN ELECTIONS:
global reflections from election stakeholders

Promoting information integrity in elections:
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THE GLOBAL GOALS

