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Mines Action Canada

Small Grants Program

Capacity Building of Youth Campaigners in Uganda

Final Narrative Report

The Uganda Landmine Survivors Association (ULSA) was established in 2005 and is the national organization for landmine survivors in Uganda. As a member of the Cluster Munitions Coalition and the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, it is our mandate to coordinate survivor groups throughout the country and to advocate for better assistance for survivors of landmines, cluster munitions, and explosive remnants of war. Our activities are focused on advocacy for full implementation of the Mine Ban Treaty and the Convention on Cluster Munitions, as well as working with survivors and victims. We are engaged in various support activities for survivors including capacity building, economic empowerment, and facilitating psychosocial support through peer to peer counselling.

Starting in January, 2011, ULSA has been involved with establishing a network of youth campaigners in Uganda. The aim of the project was to select and equip seven youth campaigners with additional knowledge and skills to empower them to play a productive role towards the implementation and universalization of the Mine Ban Treaty and the Convention on Cluster Munitions. The rationale and expectations for the small grants program were clearly laid out by MAC and guided the ULSA staff in planning and implementing this project.

Was the overall goal of the outreach event, training session or internship reached?

Yes, as the overall goal of the training session was to initiate and build a vibrant youth campaigner's network. Seven youth campaigners were selected from seven mine affected districts and equipped with leadership, advocacy and lobbying skills. This is meant to empower them to play a productive role in the ratification of the Convention on Cluster Munitions as well as the Universalization of the Mine Ban Treaty.

Did the design and implementation of the outreach event, training session or local internship ensure that the learning outcomes and professional development goals that

were established by both the youth campaigners and by the organization itself were achieved?

During the selection of the youth campaigners, ULSA sought to practice the principle of inclusiveness and gender mainstreaming. Indeed four of the seven campaigners were female, three were male and all of them were persons with disabilities.

The majority of the learning outcomes and professional development goals were established by the youth campaigners and ULSA. Advocacy, lobbying, campaigning, leadership and media skills were developed throughout the two days of training, and the youth campaigners received briefings on ULSA, the Coalition on Cluster Munitions, International Campaign to Ban Landmines and Mines Action Canada. Additionally, the aims and importance of the global youth network was the central theme to the overall training.

Each youth campaigner has been involved in creating an e-mail account for themselves through Gmail. Following the training, a list of contact information for each participant was sent out in order to easily maintain communication. Through e-mail, ULSA has requested to be kept updated on the activities each campaigner is carrying out in order to meet our goals. As well, additional training workshops will be held for the youth campaigners to continue building skills and enhancing knowledge.

Furthermore, a local journalist attended the second day of our workshop to observe the training in order to write an article on the youth campaign network. The journalist participated in the creation of e-mail addresses, and his contact information has been sent to all of the youth campaigners.

Was the project implemented in strict compliance with the objectives contained within the proposal? Or were slight changes made during the implementation phase to ensure that the objectives were met?

Slight changes were made during the selection of survivors. Initially, they were meant to be selected from the districts of Amolatar, Kaberamaido, Kasese, Kitgum, Lira and Pader. However this was not entirely possible because the youth in some of the districts did not meet the selection criteria. Instead youth from other mine affected districts of Agago, Gulu, Lira, Apac, Kitgum, Pader and Kasese were selected.

Will the mentoring and training of relevant staff or interns continue after the training opportunities or internship have ended to ensure that those who took part continue to have the appropriate skill level for their position and to ensure that the organization is developing its internal capacity to the fullest extent?

Through feedback and establishing our action plan, we learned that the youth campaigners believe that in order to best advocate, campaign, and lobby, they need to be equipped with a higher level of computer literacy. Although local activity goals can be achieved without these additional skills, the ability to network, share, and learn from campaigners in other

districts, and across the world, was seen as something of great importance. For this reason, we are currently looking for additional funds to provide this training.

Can the intern or other training recipients now be viewed as individuals who have the ability and professional skill set to achieve positive and lasting change in a challenging environment?

Yes, the youth campaigners can be viewed as individuals who have the ability and professional skill set to achieve positive and lasting change in Uganda. However, we hope that this is only the first step towards their on-going professional development.

How many people attended your training session or outreach event?

Seven youth campaigners attended the training session. A representative from the District Community Development Office attended on the first day to officially launch the training and the network. A local journalist from *Rupiny* Newspaper joined us during the second day of our workshop. The workshop was facilitated by two ULSA staff and one support staff from Mines Action Canada. In total, twelve people participated in this training.

What was the gender breakdown of those in attendance?

Of the seven youth campaigners, four were female and three were male. Of the three facilitators, two were female and one was male. The official from the District Office and the local journalist were both males.

How many people in attendance were persons with disabilities?

Each of the youth campaigners had a disability, four were landmine survivors and one acquired a disability as a result of armed conflict, one became disabled as a result of illness and one was born with the disability. The journalist from Rupiny newspaper had a disability too. In total, 8 of the participants were persons with disabilities.

How would you rate the impact on direct and indirect beneficiaries?

The direct beneficiaries of this project include the seven youth campaigners who developed their professional skills throughout the two day workshop.

Indirect beneficiaries include the members of the survivors groups in the seven districts, as well as persons with disabilities and people affected by the conflict. Further, ULSA, the ICBL and the CMC will benefit from having these seven youth campaigners trained through the future work they will engage in, advocating for the complete implementation and universalization of the Mine Ban Treaty and Convention on Cluster Munitions.

What types of new partnerships were you able to develop?

- A partnership between ULSA and the District Authorities through the Community Development Office. The representative from this office, Hon George Okello Ayo pledged to support and work with ULSA in implementing activities and in empowering the youth with disabilities in addressing issues that concern them.
- A link between ULSA and the local media was also created.
- A partnership with the different districts that the youth campaigners represented. This is enhanced by the fact that majority of the youth campaigners hold leadership positions at their respective districts.

Were the costs associated with this project in-line with your budget? Please explain any cost overruns that occurred.

As a result of depreciation of the shilling in favor of the dollar, we were able to utilize some additional money. However this fluctuation in the shilling also translated in to rising costs of fuel, food, and all other costs, leading to an increase in expenditures on those items than what was anticipated. Additionally, we had two extra participants to cater for (The journalist and the District Representative).

Further still, since our grant fund was wired in two transactions, we lost some money to high bank charges such as commission and withdrawal fees.

Did your organization experience any disappointments during the implementation phase? If so, please explain and comment on how these were addressed.

What lessons were learned by you and your organization that need to be shared with others?

ULSA experienced minor difficulties throughout the training project. The main difficulty experienced was around logistics and planning. As ULSA is based in Kampala, the reservations of rooms and conference hall were done through telephone communication, and the facilities had not been seen by the ULSA staff prior to our arrival in Lira. Upon arrival, we came to realize that the conference hall was not accessible to people with disabilities. Immediately, we began looking into alternative options and were fortunate to find another hotel where we held our workshop. This was the greatest lesson learned during the two days of training, as with future bookings, accessibility is an area that will not be overseen again.

Were the project rationale and expectations that MAC established for this round of small grants clearly laid out and easy to adhere to?

Yes, the rationale and expectations from MAC were clearly understood, although the youth campaigners expressed a lot of skepticism as regards the upcoming "*in our life time legacy*" project. According to them, fundraising for a project in Cambodia may not be feasible since they themselves need fundraising for their local projects.

Describe any follow-up activities related to this project.

At the end of the training, the youth campaigners collectively established an action plan to guide their activities. The action plan consisted of realistic goals that complimented the national priorities of Uganda; total mine clearance by August 2012 and ratification of the Convention on Cluster Munitions before the second meeting of states parties in September 2011. Furthermore, the action plan was divided into four time slots, indicating the possibility and priority of each goal.

<p><i>Month 0 – Month 3</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Form youth groups and pass on to them their newly acquired skills - Media outreach to increase visibility of the network activities - Collecting signatures as a sign to urge government to ratify CCM. - Lobbying and advocacy 	<p><i>Month 3 –month 6</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Youth training in computer skills - School out reaches - Lobbying and advocacy
<p><i>month 6–month 9</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Acquire equipment like laptops/ camera for each district - Lobbying and advocacy 	<p><i>Month 9 – month 12</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lobbying and advocacy

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