



**Localising  
the SDG's**  
Uganda - Ghana - Zambia

# POLICY RECOMMENDATION II

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Anchoring a CS model toward  
localising the SDGs in Ghana,  
Uganda, and Zambia

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**UGANDA**



## END OF PROJECT TAKEAWAYS

- Young people and their leaders are highly motivated to lead social change in their communities once given the platforms and space to showcase their innovative ideas.
- Platforms such as the University Debate Nationals that converge young people across institutions of learning in Uganda bring forth varying perspectives on sustainable development goals and how they can be achieved in Uganda.
- The youth parliaments remain a critical milestone in bridging the gaps between youth and policymakers as well as amplifying young people's voices to larger audiences within decision-making spaces.
- There is a need for the project partners to frequently share feedback on the progress of the project particularly from Ghana and Zambia to appreciate the vision of the entire project.
- Engaging National bodies such as the National Youth Council and Uganda National Students Association goes a long way in enhancing mobilization efforts for the localization of the SDGs.

## (LOCAL) PRACTICES TO HELP ANCHOR THE LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF THE PROJECT'S GOAL

- Utilizing local leaders in the local government structure to define policy and legislation in regard to localizing.
- Utilizing local leadership structures to mobilize resources needed for community change initiatives through innovation.
- Through the community task forces, serve as a unique opportunity to create learning communities on the localization of sustainable development goals.
- Incorporating the use of gender-sensitive leadership to lead action toward the localization of sustainable development goals.
- Translating the SDGs into the local community's language.
- Use of media platforms; print and digital media.
- Use of local ambassadors and champions for the SDGs.

# POLITICALLY YOUTH-LED OUTREACH TO POLICY-MAKERS

Open Space Centre created 2 functional youth task forces with a total of 45 participants comprised of youth leaders, students, teachers, and community members from Kampala, Wakiso, and Mukono districts. The community task forces have taken the lead role in the implementation of all SDG activities including the facilitation of **15 youth parliaments that have engaged over 400 young people and their policy makers** to discuss pertinent community issues. By raising awareness of the SDGs, poor, marginalized, and vulnerable young people have the knowledge about the SDGs and key skills to be able to address their community problems and lead better lives.

**The Youth Parliaments:** Open Space Centre conducted a series of youth parliaments in Kampala, Wakiso, and Mukono districts. The youth parliaments are also attended by their duty bearers who have supported them to take action to localizing the SDGs. The youth parliaments provided the community task forces with an opportunity to mobilize fellow young people and members of their communities, to discuss pertinent community issues and as a means of normalizing conversations about the Global Goals. Community engagement and subsequent support is an integral part of our collective SDGs localization Agenda. Across all the youth parliament sessions, the community task forces managed to mobilize 400 fellow youth leaders, policymakers who represented the government, students, and community members to attend the sessions.

**Conducted Joint reflection platforms:** The center has conducted 15 Joint reflection platforms with 18 policymakers and professional bodies such as the National Youth Council, Kampala Speaker's Forum, and the Uganda National Students' Association (UNSA). The objectives of the joint reflection platforms were to introduce the localizing SDGs program initiatives by Open Space and further generate modalities for the involvement of the NYC Executive and members of the professional bodies in the ongoing Localizing SDGs program. Some of the key outputs from the joint reflection platforms were the chairperson of the National Youth Council stating that in a bid to continue youth-led action is the achievement of the SDGs, the NYC would plant over 60 million trees by 2025 to combat global warming in line with SDG 13. Additionally, NYC is also focusing on access to health and sexual reproductive health services (SRHR) to address teenage pregnancies and issues of menstrual hygiene.

**Development of the Localizing SDGs guide:** Through facilitating the sharing of success stories and best practices in SDG implementation, young people adopt various ways of localizing SDGs in their communities.

## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

In conclusion, all actors/stakeholders involved in SDG implementation should participate in the processes of implementation and monitoring in both schools and communities. The follow-up process of SDG implementation should be transparent in order that its results serve to hold local actors at the grassroots level as well as governments and other participating stakeholders accountable and to harness the best experiences to transfer knowledge to other municipalities, regions, or countries.

It is important to decentralize the monitoring of SDG activities and indicators, collect data and monitor progress at the subnational level. One of the important lessons from the MDGs was that progress should not only be tracked at the national level. The UN has undertaken a special effort to make monitoring at local and regional levels a priority in the case of the SDGs.

### **The implementation steps include:**

- Carrying out awareness-raising and communication campaigns using the local/native languages in communities.
- Involving both existing and new platforms (online and offline).
- Reaching out to all sectors of society through traditional and social media.
- Harnessing the power of cultural leaders/religious leaders to make the SDGs engaging.
- Include a gender perspective.
- Take advantage of the power of education and engage teachers in supporting youth to understand and localize the SDGs.
- Nominate SDG ambassadors to maximize impact.

**GHANA**



## END OF PROJECT TAKEAWAYS

- The project created a sense of patriotism, responsibility, and commitment among youth in rural communities with little experience in formal engagement processes to identify their most prioritized community need, design, plan, and implement a community-level mini-project using local resources and expertise. The youth exhibited a tremendous voluntary spirit. They changed the perception that youth in such communities are usually disinterested in the development of their communities.
- The youth in the 21 involved communities exhibited strong mobilization, leadership skills, and democratic governance potential. In some communities, the elders attested to the fact that they were experiencing such skills being shown by the youth for the first time in the history of the community.
- The project itself practiced SDG 10 by not limiting participation to only in-school youth and instead deliberately including out-of-school youth. The use of the various local languages as well as traditional community engagement methods like storytelling, songs, proverbs, riddles, and local quizzes done in the various local languages facilitated the inclusion of youth and other community members who are not formally literate. These also roused the interest of community members in learning and relating to the SDGs.
- There was diversity in the 21 Community Level Mini Projects that were identified, with a cross-cutting thematic focus. The most common and recurring being SDGs 1,3,4, 6,7,8,9,10, & 13 whilst SDG 16 was indirectly addressed by the promotion and advocacy for democratic governance among the youth as well as peaceful dialogues through debates, secret balloting, and consensus building in the process of localizing the SDGs.
- The Community Radio Station's (CRS) Focal Youth Producers (1 male and 1 female for each CRS) who serve as volunteers for the various CRSs served as model youth, leading the youth in the focal communities throughout the process. They showed leadership and project management skills, particularly by taking the Community Youth Task team (CYTT) members through the CYTT Review workshops where they trained the CYTTs on how to facilitate the Community Youth Fora and Community Engagement Dialogues. They also led and produced the radio programs for broadcast adding to the number of youths growing in skills in terms of leadership for the future as well as volunteerism. The level of commitment to the CR-L-SDGs project once more showed their spirit of volunteerism.



## (LOCAL) PRACTICES TO HELP ANCHOR THE LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF THE PROJECT'S GOAL

- Using local and indigenous communication materials and media to localize the SDGs whilst integrating the SDGs into the formal education curriculum to instill early the knowledge and interest of the SDGs in students. The CYTTs employed local storytelling to capture and sustain the attention of the elderly in the community and threw a local SDGs Talents and musical contest to unearth talents among the youth as well as keep their interest in learning and understanding the SDGs. These were recorded and constantly played on air- by the Community Radio Stations.
- Advocating for more youth-led initiatives in communities to sustain the interest and commitment of the youth to the well-being and growth of their communities. The recognition that the youth received from their communities has for instance boosted their confidence in taking up leadership roles in their communities.
- Continuous support and capacity-building for youth to be able to identify their challenges, barriers and solutions to their burning issues at their community levels and empowered to collaborate with local level stakeholders to implement these solutions. Through the CR-L-SDGs, the target and focus group is on the youth, therefore, the allocated resources in terms of capacity-building training, mandate, trust, and financial support given to the youth resulted in outcomes that have helped to achieve the project objectives.
- Encouraging the use of community Radio to advocate for the right to communicate and to continue to offer rural communities the opportunity to voice their lived realities. Through the CRS radio programs, assembly members, District chief executives, and other departmental heads opened their doors for dialogue with the youth and committed to supporting the youth initiatives. This was well appreciated by the CYTTs and they attributed these successes to the CRSs.
- Promoting the use of local resources, knowledge, and experience to solve community problems. In most instances of the CLMP implementation, the youth were able to mobilize resources and support from the entire community. The community's own contribution helped towards the achievement of the project. In most instances, they used the best local materials and human resources available for construction. In many of the Communities, chiefs and landowners donated land for the youth projects whilst the rest of the youth and community members contributed money, donated building materials, and volunteered catering services, labour and craftsmen also offered their services for free to support the youth projects.

## POLITICALLY YOUTH-LED OUTREACH TO POLICY-MAKERS

GCRN facilitated the youth participation in the larger national dialogue on the National Youth Policy Revision at the first-ever National Youth Conference in August 2022. The National Youth Conference brought together a lot of policymakers and other stakeholders, particularly the institution in charge of managing the affairs of the youth nationally, the National Youth Authority. Selected Youth volunteers from various community Radio Stations were brought for the first time to participate in such a national program. They were offered the opportunity which they used to engage policymakers and stakeholders in their review of the National Youth Policy to include their views, challenges, and tailored needs and solutions.

At the larger and more general project implementation level, the radio broadcast programs have been a channel that gave voice to the youth who advocated at length and engaged local government officials at the various district levels to support the prioritized youth SDG Projects developed and initiated by the youth. The youth sourced help for their CLMPs from their Municipal and District Assemblies by holding meetings and writing letters to them for support.

The community Fora and Community engagement Dialogues also brought the youth up close with their local policymakers and implementers of national policy at the local level for engagements and dialogue. Policymakers participated in the youth programs, particularly in the launching of the CLMPs.

## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

Even though the majority of youth engaged in the project live in poor and rural areas and do not have formal education, their disadvantaged situations do not mean disinterest in the SDGs or an inability to help realize or localize them in their communities. This has been proven by the experience to date of the GCRN component of the Localizing the SDGs Consortium project.

In 21 Districts across nine Regions in Ghana, 21 Community Radio Stations worked with youths in 21 different focal communities to localize the SDGs. The youths comprise both those in-school and out-of-school with the majority being those out of school.

They democratically selected 12 gender-balanced model youth leaders according to their cultural context and perspective, and by using their own criteria, and called them the Community Youth SDG Task Team. The selected model youth leaders were trained by their Community Radio Station in an intensive capacity building on the project and radio.

The most common of the criteria for the selection of Community Youth SDG Task Team members that reflected from all 21 CYTT selection process were youth with the following traits quoted as: “Respectfulness, feel for others, not quick to judge, make peace with others, have good communication skills, not quick-tempered, be a good observer, have respect for young and old, be able to make good decisions, be able to bring people together to discuss”. Among other qualities, these were the topmost qualities ranked by the youth during the CYTT Selection. They then constituted themselves into informal community youth fora. With the facilitation of their Community Radio Station, they reviewed the National Youth Manifesto and discussed it in line with the SDGs in the first Community Youth Forum.

The youth in defined age groups, debated on and prioritized the most significant SDGs for their respective communities in the second Community Youth Forum. In the debate, they also had recourse to reference group members, pro-youth adults engaged in various community and development work. Informed by the debate, the youths then selected a priority mini-project for their community.

In the first Community Engagement Dialogue (CED), they presented the selected mini-project together with their analysis of the SDGs for validation at a forum by the entire community. With the respective mini-project having been validated, the youths then drew up an implementation plan in the 3rd Community Youth Forum.

They again presented this implementation plan to their entire community before launching what is referred to under the Consortium project as the “Community-level Mini-project (CLMP)”. For the 21 focal communities, their CLMPs cut across the different SDGs.

**A few of these projects include the following:**

- The Wurompo Community Youth working closely with Radio Royals in Wenchi in the Bono Region set out to construct a 10-unit toilet facility to solve the WASH-related issues that the community has faced for years, which raised other social issues. The community has been using a bush to ease themselves, the only river that serves the community water runs through this bush. This intervention is on SDG 6.

- Ajumako Anyinasu Youth working with Radio Breezy in the Central Region is on target to construct a computer laboratory to enhance ICT and learning in their community. The objective is to contribute to SDG 4 Quality Education.
- Anafobisi Community Youth working with Radio Bongo in the Upper East Region has set out to construct a 3-unit basic classroom block to enhance basic education in their community. They also focused on SDG 4.
- Korania Community Youth also working with Radio Nabiina is to achieve a cost-sharing target to have a water extension project for their community coupled with a Community Youth Resource Center where youth can always meet to deliberate on community development issues. This initiative addresses SDG 6 & SDG 10 to reduce inequalities.

The youth looked beyond the funds available under the CR-L-SDGs project to support the achievement of their CLMPs to achieve even greater results with the support of their communities and external stakeholders.

In the fourth Community Youth forum, the implementation of the CLMP is assessed and tracked. The assessment and tracking of the CLMP is replicated in the 3rd Community Engagement Dialogue and the process of engagements and implementation of the activities and project as a whole is evaluated in the 4th Community Engagement Dialogue.

All these activities are interwoven with radio production and broadcast activities and complemented with other social media and digital activities on platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp platforms.

Through this process of volunteerism, the youths have both affirmed their competence for themselves and won the greater respect of their communities. The ties of the youths to their respective communities have deepened and their commitment to service for the larger good has grown. They have also acquired skills that serve them well in other endeavors including formal education and gained invaluable experience in leadership and governance.

# ZAMBIA



## END OF PROJECT TAKEAWAYS

- Developing the project as a school outreach project would increase sustainability and increase reach. This can be done through community schools which are usually access points for more.
- Involving civil society organizations that have more experience and connections with communities is vital in ensuring more communities are reached. These organizations must be initiated from the very beginning.
- Youth task members stand as “wells of knowledge” in their communities. To this regard, youth can establish hubs and stand as ambassadors in these communities.
- Curriculum can also be created with findings for all partners. This ensures that the project model is replicated in other areas with minimal effort.

## (LOCAL) PRACTICES TO HELP ANCHOR THE LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF THE PROJECT'S GOAL

- Establishing local clubs in communities for information dissemination is key. School clubs have proven to be an effective and widely accepted method of integrating key issues.
- The Zambian government disburses an amount of money through the community development fund which can also be used to establish localized approaches. This is a possibility because of our ties with local ward councilors who oversee the development of communities at grassroots level.
- Having town hall meetings as a form of evaluation helps reiterate and additionally gather information on the impact of the project on the selected communities. The project was implemented in communities where Circus Zambia has a strong network; this makes it easier for project participants to organize and meet with community members.
- Most of the partners that we collaborated with on this project are premised on achieving impact at grassroots level. This poses as a great advantage to the project because there are many opportunities to collaborate and scale impact.

- The youth task force members are a great source of knowledge and skills because of the training and exposure they have received throughout this project. Engaging them in platforms and ensuring they are on platforms outside of this project will enhance the sustainability and impact of the project.

## POLITICALLY YOUTH-LED OUTREACH TO POLICY-MAKERS

A big win during this project has been that most of the community leaders involved in this work have been youth themselves. The ward development council committees in the constituencies where Circus Zambia works are mostly comprised of young people. Because of this, the youth task force has been able to reach these leaders at grassroots level and engage them in the project.

Despite the success at ward level, the local youth have had a harder time reaching officials from select ministries. This is because of the bureaucratic nature of the Zambian government systems. However, we have had the privilege to host representatives from other ministries.

Additionally, the presence of ward councilors has granted the youth access to their area members of Parliament, who have shown interest in ensuring the youth are integrated in the development of their constituencies.

It is important to note that policies in Zambia are usually rigid and take years to change. However, the recent focus on Sustainable Development Goals has ensured that the youth are accorded the opportunities to network at platforms where policy makers and key stakeholders listen to them.

## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

We have attached a separate document with recommendations and findings from each cycle.

After reviewing and submitting the policies, we have decided to submit the policies as a recommendation document through the ministry of youth and sports. The printed and revised policies will be examined by representatives from the UNDP and SDG Center for Africa who have both pledged to assist in the pushing of the recommendations to higher authorities.

Additionally, Ward Development Committee members present at review meetings pledged to assist in creating a petition that will be signed by at least 100 youth from the three areas the project has been implemented in.

The recommendation document will also be present during the National SDG Summit and at an additional side event during the SDG Africa Summit.



# PROJECT PARTNERS

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Ghana Partner



Uganda Partner



Zambia Partner



Funding Partner



Danish Managing Partner