Name of Project

Students’ Mock Parliaments

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Period of Project: 2016, April, 1 — 2016, September, 30

Date of Publication: 2016, September, 28

Taiwan Foundation for Democracy Publication

Acknowledgement

Students for Global Democracy Uganda greatly acknowledges and appreciates the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy for the support towards the implementation of the
Youth Mock Parliaments under the project “Strengthening Youth Participation in 2016 Elections and beyond.

As an organization, we look forward to working more closely as partners in the future with the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD) as an independent, non-profit foundation, that is dedicated to the study and promotion of democracy and human rights in Taiwan and abroad, and we hope that this report contributes to the foundation’s vision of advancing a new wave democratization worldwide.

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The Taiwan Foundation for Democracy
Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD) is an independent, non-profit foundation, that is dedicated to the study and promotion of democracy and human rights in Taiwan and abroad, and we hope that this report contributes to the foundation’s vision of advancing a new wave democratization worldwide.

The Foundation established in Asia is devoted to strengthening democracy and human rights in Taiwan and abroad. The Foundation's primary concerns are to further consolidate Taiwan's democratic system, to promote democracy in Asia, and to participate actively in the global democratic network.

The Foundation is committed to the vision of working together with like-minded organizations and individuals, building on Taiwan's experience to advance a new wave of democratization worldwide. The TFD three grants programs involve: international grants, domestic grants, and grants to Taiwan’s major political parties. The international grants program non-governmental organizations, academic institutions or think tanks is designed to assist organizations based outside of Taiwan to carry out projects to promote democracy and human rights.

Project Background

Why the Youth Mock Parliament Debate Programs
Democracies need active, informed and responsible citizens; citizens who are willing and able to take responsibility for themselves and their communities and contribute to the political process, citizens aware of their rights and responsibility and citizens informed about the social and political world through articulating their opinions and arguments that bring forth their active voice in their communities as citizens. If citizens are to become genuinely involved in public life and affairs, a more explicit approach of how issues that affect them can be dealt with like the Youth Mock Parliament Debates are needed.
**Participation in Democratic Life.**

Participation of young people in representative democracy entails standing for or voting in elections, and their membership to political parties and participation in participatory structures is paramount. Youth participation enhances active citizenship that fosters a sense of citizenship and makes policy processes more transparent and accountable towards young people. At the same time, it helps young people build self-confidence as many stakeholders and young people alike echo the important role of learning and education in improving participation in democratic life. In this regard, free political education is seen as a prerequisite for more participation. Most recognized that it would be most efficient to include a practical element in learning about democratic rights and responsibilities.

The National Youth Manifesto Mock Parliament Debate have created a new form of engagement because young people must not merely be given a voice, but also learn about the follow-up process and be able to further shape the debate. Young people must not simply be consulted but they must be an active effort on the part of the governing authorities to include them further in policy development, for example in the agenda setting phase or in the implementation of solutions to pressing social issues, especially those that affect them.

Young people have the right and should have the opportunity to have a real say when decisions affecting them are being made at local and national level. They should also be supported and given the space to be involved in all kinds of activities and actions. Of course, having a right is no good, unless young people have the opportunity, support and knowledge to use it.
Activity Summary

1. Mock Parliament Debate at Broadway High School on 30\textsuperscript{th}/04/2016
2. Mock Parliament Debate at Seroma Christian High School on 13\textsuperscript{th}/07/2016
3. Mock Parliament Debate at King’s College Budo on 15\textsuperscript{th}/07/2016

1.1 Mock Parliament Debate at Broadway High School on 30\textsuperscript{th}/04/2016

The Students Mock Parliament was organized by SGD-Uganda in partnership with Broadway High School. The debate was about education, which is Thematic Area 3 in the National Youth Manifesto 2016-2021 and Goal 4 under Sustainable Development Goals with the Theme “Government should Increase Funding to Education Sector over the next 5 Years to Promote the Education Sector”.

The government side led by Hon. Kasimu (Prime Minister), proposed that there is need to increase funding in the education sector to build capacity of young people in our country due to the increased number of pupils from 2.5million to 8.5million in primary schools, 26% in secondary schools, 5.4% in tertiary institutions and universities. In the National Youth Manifesto 2016-2021, the young people demanded for free skills training opportunities by the BTVET which provides opportunities for
creating new vocational centers and this calls for increasing funding in the education sector.

In addition, Hon. Mariam argued that most of the teachers are youth and not well remunerated and their salary is below the standard of living, classrooms are crowded and most infrastructures do not favor students with disabilities. According to the National youth Manifesto, Uganda shillings 2 trillions of government spending for the financial year (FY 2015/16) dedicated to education, Uganda is still falling further behind and millions of youth are too be consigned to unemployment and poverty. In order to achieve quality education, most speakers both from the government and opposition proposed that more funding needs to increased to cater for refresher courses for teachers, curriculum revision, and improved infrastructure will be required.

Hon. Suleiman, representing the opposition side, said that there is urgent need to first identify the policy gaps in the education sector and also focus on the public problem of youth being the majority in the education sector. Government should first create training centers for trainees in each district and the vocational training programs.

In conclusion, the opposition stated that, “We are not fighting education but rather redirecting it. Enough of what we have has done nothing, then why should we invest more.” We should therefore utilize the 2 trillion that we already have meant for the education sector for the Financial Year (FY 2015/2016).

**Date and location:** The activity was held at Broadway High School on 30th/04/2016 with 200 students in attendance, 6 SGD Uganda staff members and 1 teacher.

**Main outputs:**

- There was increased awareness about the National Youth Manifesto 2016-2021 among the reached out student community and their teachers.

- Students understood that they have a role to play in the implementation of the National Youth Manifesto 2016-2021 by holding their elected leaders accountable towards the demands of youth.
• Students were able to provide policy alternatives to education sector by identifying the gaps in the education policies i.e. students called for an education system that can provide skills relating to the current job market.

• Leaders are readers; students had an opportunity to internalize deeply the National Development Plan 11 to identify government commitments in line with SDGs relating to youth demands in the National Youth Manifesto 2016-2021 in promotion of the education sector.

• Students understood that their political disengagement was due to lack of platforms to build their knowledge and skills on how to participate in national issues hence the mock parliament was an eye opener to students and teachers to directly engage in civic debates that relate to national matters and holding their leaders accountable to fulfillment of the demands in the National Youth Manifesto.

• Students committed themselves to own and popularize the National Youth Manifesto 2016-2021, and see that they meet their demands as agreed upon with political leaders during campaigns.

• During the mock parliament, students were able to identify their own public problem, which was lack of relevant curriculum in Uganda’s education system by citing the lack of vocational training in secondary schools that would build their skills to suit the current job market as a way of fighting unemployment amongst the youth.
1.2 Mock Parliament Debate at Seroma Christian High School on 13th/07/2016

The students’ mock parliament on creative economy (Thematic Area 1 and 4 in the National Youth Manifesto 2016-2021, “Creative Industry as an asset to Economic Development” was held at Seroma Christian high school between Kawanda Secondary School and Seroma Christian High School. The activity was conducted by SGD-Uganda and Uganda Parliament Forum on Youth Affairs and the participants included students and teachers.

Uganda has the youngest population in world which is 78% and the most enterprise and on that note students called government to invest more creative industry to increase on job creation hence addressing the issue of unemployment in Uganda.

During the debate, Hon. Albert Cook (Prime Minister of the Government Side) from Seroma Christian High School defined the creative economy as the socio-economic activities that trade with creativity, knowledge, and information to generate income, and to create jobs and revenue for the Country. In addition, these activities promote social inclusion, cultural diversity and human development. At the heart of the Creative Economy are creative industries that include; folk art, festivals, music, books, paintings, performing arts, fashion, crafts, traditional medicine, film, broadcasting, digital animation, video games, architectural and advertising services. In addition Today’s creative industries involve the interplay of traditional, arts, technology-intensive and service oriented sub sectors ranging from folk art, festivals, music, books, paintings and performing arts to more technology-intensive sub sectors such as the film industry, fashion design, broadcasting, digital animation and video games, and more service-oriented fields such as architectural and advertising services. All these activities are intensive in creative skills and can generate income through labour, trade and Intellectual Property Rights.

Hon. Albert Cook also gave an example On the Global scene; world trade is impressive for cultural goods and services. Over the period 2000/2005, trade in creative goods and services increased at an unprecedented average annual rate of 8.7 per cent. World exports of creative products were valued at US$424.4 billion in 2005 as compared to US $227.5 billion in 1996. Creative services in particular enjoyed rapid export growth – 8.8 per cent annually between 1996 and 2005. This positive trend occurred in all regions and groups of countries and is expected to continue into the next decades. It is clear that developed countries still dominate the global market
for creative products. Nonetheless, many developing world products are already benefiting from the creative industry boom, particularly in Asia and in Uganda. Creative industry In the year 2004-2008, Uganda’s exports of Cultural goods and services were valued at US$239 million (approximately Ug.shs.427 billion). The sector of Creative industries contributed US $ 6.7 Million (approximately Ug.shs12.6 billion). So he called upon the opposition side from Kawanda SS Join the government side to invest in creative to raise revenue for country which will lead to economic development.

The Leader of Opposition Hon. Hakim from Kawanda Secondary School, advised the government side (Seroma Christian High School) that it is more important for country like Uganda to invest more the education sector as the youth demanded in the National Youth Manifesto 2016-2021, since they are the majority. According to the Census Report 2014 conducted by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), the majority of the youth have left school with poor skills and training as shown in the table below:

| Table1. Youth population by educational status and sex, 2013 and 2015 (%) |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Education status                          | 2013 Total | 2013 Male | 2013 Female | 2015 Total | 2015 Male | 2015 Female |
| Never attended school                     | 5.2 | 4.2 | 3.2 | 6.1 | 4.2 | 7.7 |
| Attending school                          | 51.8 | 47.1 | 41.9 | 51.2 | 46.8 | 54.9 |
| Dropped-out before graduation or completion of school | 33.7 | 39.5 | 45.9 | 33.3 | 40.1 | 27.6 |
| Education completed                       | 9.3 | 9.2 | 9.0 | 9.4 | 8.9 | 9.8 |

*Source: School-to-work transition survey (SWTS) in 2013 and 2015.*

Therefore, having the highest number of youth who have left school from the age 15-24 being 53.7 and 18-30 being 75.8, but with skills which are not relevant in the current job market. Government should first address the issue education curriculum as demand by the youth.
Date and location: The activity was held at Seroma Christian High School on 13th/07/2016 with total number of 50 student participants, 5 teachers, and 7 SGD Uganda staff members.

Main Outputs:

- Students increased their knowledge and skills of analyzing government policies on creative economy hence having an informed youth perspective during participation and monitoring of government programs.

- During the debate, students clearly addressed the problem of poor education and training which provides skills that not relevant in the current job market.

- The students’ mock debate created platform where students can discuss national issues by themselves hence an increased level of youth participation.

- It created awareness to both teachers and students on how to actively get involved in discussions and policymaking processes with political leaders.

- Students committed to advocate for investment in creative economy and guide government on issues of raising revenue using the creative economy, since the majority of the youth follow under this sector.
Fig below: Student’s mock parliament at Seroma Christian High School - Mukono district Albert Cook, the prime minister from Seroma Christian High School addressing the participants on “Importance of Government Investing in Creative Economy to Reduce on Youth Unemployment in Uganda.
Activity 1.3: Mock Parliament Debate at King’s College Budo on 15\textsuperscript{th}/07/2016

The students’ mock parliament debate was organized on 15\textsuperscript{th}/07/216 by SGD-Uganda in partnership with Uganda Parliamentary Forum on Youth Affairs and Operation Kindness Uganda. Participating schools were King’s College Budo and Midland High School, and the day’s theme was “High unemployment in Uganda Emanates from Poor Education and Training” derived from (Thematic Area 1 in the National Youth Manifesto). Students were provided with information source from Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) and International Labor Organization (ILO School-to-Work Transition Surveys (SWTS), National Planning Authority, Ministry of Health, UNFPA, Ministry of Education, National Budget, Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development to make case and provide policy alternative as way forward towards achieving the National Youth Manifesto 2016-2021. Midland High School being on Government Side, while King’s College Budo on Opposition Side managed to debate key issues that are emanating to unemployment in Uganda. For instance, During Hon. Baguma Medi, Leader of Opposition from King’s College Budo, explained the youth population in education sector for year 2013/15 and those in employment using the Census Report 2014 as illustrated below:

Table 1. Youth population by educational status and sex, 2013 and 2015 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education status</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never attended school</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending school</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>47.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dropped-out before graduation or completion of school</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education completed</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: School-to-work transition survey (SWTS) in 2013 and 2015.
Table 2. Youth neither in employment, neither training or education (NEETs) by composition and sex, 2013 and 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>2015</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NEE T rate</td>
<td>Unemployed non-students</td>
<td>Inactive non-students</td>
<td>NEE T rate</td>
<td>Unemployed non-students</td>
<td>Inactive non-students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: School-to-work transition survey (SWTS) in 2013 and 2015.

Hon. Baguma Medi, leader of opposition advised the government side according to the table below that in the year 2013 a total of 51.8 male and female were attending school, but only 9.3% completed school education because of high education costs and lack of clear monitoring policies towards the government programs in the education sector in i.e. UPE, USE, Uganda Post O-Level Education Training (UPOLET) aiming at increasing access to education. In 2011 the Government of Uganda drew up a Business, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (BTVET) Strategic Plan 2011–2020. As a strategy to strengthen BTVET System, Skilling Uganda Programme has been put in place to address the major challenges regarding relevance, quality, and access and equity, management, and financial sustainability of the BTVET system in Uganda but it also has the same challenge.
The Hon. Kenneth (Prime Minister), from Midland High School admitted that its true, the high unemployment in Uganda emanates from poor education and training. The Skills development sub-sector budget increased from 38.1 billion to 206 billion, but the sector could not raise the Ushs.10.00bn to support the programme for skilling unemployed under graduates. The program is to start with 10,000 graduates though 50,000 graduates are targeted for a period of 5 years through offering skills development. This program through its strategic plan 2012/13-2020 is to cater for apprenticeship and industrial attachment needs of the young people for gainful employment. The danger this poses in the country is great, the fact that the country has the biggest unemployment level in Sub-Saharan Africa with public and private institutions releasing over 400,000 graduates every year with only 90,000 transiting into gainful employment due to skills mismatch. This priority area has also not been provided for with budgetary support from government and the report notes that there are 3 layer courses taught in each BTVET institutions. These are carpentry and joinery, Plumbing, Welding, brick lying, mechanics, tailoring, and Agricultural production but in this era of technology the skills are not relevant in the current job market.
However government has committed to amend the education curriculum in National Development Plan 11 2016/20 i.e. instead of over 20 subjects I, the curriculum development center has consolidated to 7 subjects in O Level and many subjects have been combined together in the of core 7 strictly.

**Date and location:** The activity was held at King’s College Budo on 15th/07/2016 with 3 teachers, 6 SGD Uganda staff members and 100 students in attendance.

**Main outputs:**

- Increased awareness to both students and teachers about Business, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (BTVET) Strategic Plan 2011–2020. As a strategy to strengthen BTVET System, Skilling Uganda Programme has been put in place to address the major challenges regarding relevance, quality, access, equity, management and financial sustainability of the BTVET system in Uganda. The report notes that there are 3 layer courses taught in each BTVET institutions. These are carpentry and joinery, Plumbing, Welding, brick laying, mechanics, tailoring, and Agricultural production.

- The students mock parliament debate on education sector has raised a team of students that focuses on monitoring and evaluation of policies i.e. Skilling Uganda, Universal Primary Education (UPE), Universal Secondary Education (USE) and Students Loan Scheme among others.

- Students acquired skills of analyzing policies and identifying policies that can address youth issues i.e. the BTVET program under the Ministry of Education and sports has to provide skills to young that leading for gainful employment, but the skills provided are not relevant to the current job market.
Observations

- Students and teachers still have limited access to information on policies and laws within our country. However, the mock parliaments on the National Youth Manifesto have helped to build their capacity to engage in discussions concerning youth policies.

- There was an adoption of a culture of political engagement of students in government programs specifically through providing alternative policies during the implementing of the National Youth Manifesto i.e. the Skilling Uganda Program under Ministry of Education and Sports provides skills like carpentry and joinery, Plumbing, Welding, Brick laying, Mechanics, Tailoring, but the skills are not relevant to the current job market.

- The students mock parliament debates came at right time to build capacity of students on youth policies after general elections and this has been effectively done by the initiative.

- During the debate, we observed that government has committed to implement some of demands of young people in the National Youth Manifesto 2016-2021 i.e. on the issue of unemployment,
government came up with the BTVET program to provide skills to young people in order to reduce on unemployment rates in Uganda.

• Students familiarized themselves with the following national documents including minimum wage Bill of 2015, NDP11, National Budget 2016/17, National Youth Manifesto 2016-2021, SDGs, Census Report 2014, Skilling Uganda under the ministry of education and sports to help understand who government is progressing on implementation of the National Youth manifesto 2016-2021,

Achievements

• The participating schools created Student Advisory Councils to sustain their discussion on public policies, especially those that relate to youth issues.

• The schools have created spaces/platforms for the students to engage directly with politician on matters of public accountability.

• SGD Uganda and Taiwan Foundation for Democracy have been applauded by the student community and within the civil society fraternity as institutions spearheading the advocacy of student needs in Uganda.

• The project has created SGD Uganda’s close interaction with the student community and as a result, we have been able to identify more challenges that limit their participation in politics.
Supported by Taiwan Foundation for Democracy

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