2nd Quarter Narrative Report

Grantee: Students for Global Democracy Uganda

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Project Title: Strengthening Youth Participation in 2016 Elections.
Project Summary

The Project “Strengthening Youth Participation in 2016 Elections in Schools” is intended to continue to promote students’ engagement in politics through addressing the gaps identified in the previous project by creating sustainable school-based civic education programs ahead of 2016 elections and beyond. The project endeavors to promote and sustain democracy, while enforcing the possibility of contemplating a civic education project which intends to sustain civility entrenched in a civilized, but essentially static country Uganda especially after the 2016 elections.

Whereas civic and voter Education are fundamental processes that give the citizenry power through knowing the process and information for them to participate, this project targets young people in schools; offering them the opportunity for civic engagement and participation of young people in areas where they must know the responsibilities of their leaders, while understanding how they must participate in matter of civic engagement, especially in areas of policy; seeking to push from the National Youth Manifesto issues that affect them.

The project focuses on building an active citizenry of young people charged with the responsibility of participating, while also able to stand up when policies that affect them are ignored by those charged of running the state of affairs on their behalf. The project is contributing to building on youth engagement on democratic learning of rights, responsibilities and principles of democratic life. The project stands at the helm of young people’s civic –political –patriotic participation, because it is imperative that young people who are politically involved now will push political actors to enforce policies and programs that are responsive to youth needs. In this case therefore, the first step that matters to young people in politics is re-engagement of young people’s democratic behavior and values, while enabling them demand and hold their leaders accountable using the youth manifesto as a social contract document, because it provides an outline of the opportunities that politics holds for young people if they engage with it.

Strategic Project Goal:
To promote citizens’ right of exercising civil duty and responsibility by meaningfully participating in the 2016 electoral process and beyond
### Activity Summary

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### Activity 1: Training of Election Observation at SGD Offices on 8th/02/2016

The training that consisted of 34 participants was organized at Students for Global Democracy Uganda offices. It looked at information like legislation that does not meet Electoral Commission’s commitments and other international standards that does not adequately ensure respect for fundamental human rights; inconsistencies between different pieces of election-related legislation; subsidiary regulations that are contrary to the intent of the law, but also assess the performance of the country’s election administration in the context of national legislation, international commitments and other international standards.

The training in a broader perspective, focused on the legal framework of democratic elections as well as on the “hands-on” training of election observation practice, such as the steps of the observation process, the editing of a report, the role of all stakeholders involved and the do’s and don’ts during a mission. After that one-day training, participants learnt how to assess election processes in
accordance with international legislation, norms and standards and codes of conduct.

The training also focused on making an assessment to which the legislation and its implementation comply with Electoral Commission commitments and other international standards, and whether national laws are applied fairly and impartially and draw recommendations for particular cases.

**Main Outputs:**

- The training inducted 25 student leaders, 2 teachers and 9 SGD staff members who were capacitated on knowing the electoral process that include the pre and post-election cycle and thus able to make an informed analysis.

- Increased understanding of national laws reflective of the elections to be organized.

- Participants acquired a better understanding of guidelines containing rules and regulation of election observers.

- The training manual was designed to conduct future youth focused observer mission training

- The training was organized with a youthful content to cater for first time participants and for their easy digestion.
Activity 2: Briefing of Electoral Observers at Hotel Africana on 15th February 2016

The Electoral Commission organized the briefing for both local and international Observers at Hotel Africana on the 15th of February 2016. The observers were inducted on Basic Voter Information that stipulated the voting procedure, including the date, time, and place of voting, also the type of election, identification necessary to establish eligibility, registration requirements and mechanisms for voting.

The briefing was also intended to update the Election Observers of the entire electoral process and taking them through the guidelines, that included the dos and don’ts of Election observers. All the 34 SGD Observer team attended the briefing and it was an addition to the observer training that had been conducted at the office.


During the just concluded February 2016 General Elections, SGD Uganda deployed a 34 observer team to different parts of the country, that represented the four traditional regions of Uganda i.e. Eastern, Northern, Southern and Western. The team included 2 teachers, 22 students and 9 staff members, who successfully observed these elections in their respective areas of deployment and were able to come up with individual reports, that eventually informed our final observation report.

Main Outputs:

- 34 young people attached to SGD Uganda were able to participate in the recent elections as observers hence fulfilling their civic responsibility and meaningful participation as responsible citizens.

- The deployed team was able to track gaps and best practices during their observation mission. These findings, if taken into consideration by the
relevant stakeholders, are so important for informing and improving on the future elections.

• The team that observed the February 2016 Elections acquired skills and experience that will enable them observe future elections.

• The organization and donor’s exposure increased through the visibility of our observer team.

• The accreditation of a 34 team attached to SGD Uganda increased the credibility of the organization.

• Partners, stakeholders and donors (NED) will have a chance to know what transpired in the recent elections after sharing the observation report.

Activity 4: Youth Parliamentary Election Observation Mission 28-29/02/2016 and 23-24/03/2016 and 7th/03/2016

Students for Global Democracy Uganda recruited 15 observers to constitute the Youth Coalition for Electoral Democracy (YCED) observer team that observed the Youth Parliamentary Elections that were held on the 28th of February 2016; as the Youth Electoral College converged in the districts of Masaka, Kabarole, and Gulu to vote for their Youth Members of Parliament and 7th of March, 2016 in Hoima for the Youth Female Representatives and later 24th of March, 2016 in Jinja to vote for the Eastern Youth Member of Parliament, which was delayed by a court injunction.

The SGD Uganda observer team was able to record their findings from their various locations of deployment that eventually informed the joint observation report developed under the Youth Coalition for Electoral Democracy (YCED).
Date and location: 28-29/02/2016 Gulu for Northern, Kabarole for western, Masaka for Central respectively an 7th/03/2016 Hoima for the Youth female Representatives and Eastern Youth Member of parliament 23-24/03/2016

Main Outputs:


- Emerging issues during the Pre-election, Election Day and Post-Election were tracked under YCED observer mission that included gaps and best practices. These recommendations, if taken into account by relevant stakeholders, will help to improve on future Youth Parliamentary Elections.
Better understanding of the underlying problems of the Electoral College were recorded. The Electoral College with its wrongs and rights in the Ugandan voting system is difficult to understand or appreciate unless one completely understands its past circumstances and the problems it was attempting to solve.

Activity 1: Students Mock Parliament on Education at Kawanda Secondary School

The Students Mock Parliament was organized by SGD-Uganda in partnership with Uganda Parliamentary Forum on Youth Affairs. The debate focused on “Education” which is thematic Area 3 in the National Youth Manifesto 2016-2021 and Goal 4 under Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with the theme “Should Government increase funding to Education Sector over the next 5 years to promote the education sector. The Mock Parliament Debate on Education was between Kawanda Secondary School (Opposition) and Broadway High School (Government). The government side 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, 26% in secondary, 5.4% in tertiary and university students.

Hon. Kakande Abdul Karim (Prime Minister) from Broadway High School 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 2 trillions of government spending in the Financial Year 2015 - 2016 dedicated to the Education sector, but government is still falling to improve the education sector in order to achieve quality education, and he proposed that “more funding will be needed to cater for refresher courses for teachers, curriculum revision, and improved infrastructure”

Hon. Amanda Namuganga (Leader of Opposition) from Kawanda Secondary School said “government should first identify the policy gaps in the education sector”. She therefore suggested that “Government should first create training centers for teachers in each district and the vocational training programs for the out of school, and government should also open up other law development centres to cater for upcountry students offering law courses, and finally government needs to address gaps identified in the education sector”.

In conclusion, the deputy leader of opposition stated that, “We are not fighting duty bearers in the education sector but rather redirecting them. We should therefore meaningfully utilize the 2 trillion that we already have for the sector for the Financial Year 2016/2017.

Hon. Habibah Nakanwagi guided the house in her own view that during the post-National Resistance Movement (NRM), Prof Senteza William Kajubi in 1992 pioneered the research about Education Systems and Policies to provide solutions to the education sector i.e. the following were policy reviews in the education sector:

1. Education as Human Right Policy
2. Universal Primary Education and Universal Secondary Education should be prioritized
3. Equitable Access Policy; to cater for the girls, under privileged and disabled.

With the above submission, she proposed that government should increase funding to the education sector as demanded in the National Youth Manifesto Thematic Area 3 to run school programs to make education accessible by establishing a secondary school in each sub county to cater for those completing primary education, and also emphasized mandatory vocational education in secondary schools.

**Date and location:** The Student’s Mock Parliament was hosted at Kawanda Secondary School with an attendance of 189 students both from Kawanda Secondary School and Broadway High School, 3 teachers, and 7 staff members’ dated 12th /04/2016.
Main Outputs:

- Increased awareness about the National Youth Manifesto 2016-2021 among the student community and teachers.

- The Students’ Mock Parliament being a platform for inclusive participation of students and teachers gave them an opportunity to express their views on the demands of young people in the National Youth Manifesto.

- 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 in relation to the current job market.

- Leaders are readers; students had an opportunity to internalize deeply the National Development Plan II 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 relating to national issues and holding their leaders accountable in order to fulfill the demands in the National Youth Manifesto.

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

- During the Mock Parliament, students were able to identify that lack of vocational training in secondary schools has curtailed to build students’ skills that suit the current job market, which would have been an alternative way of fighting unemployment amongst the youth.
Activity 2: Students Mock Parliament on “Youth Participation in Decision Making” at Midland High School

Fig Above. Hon. Kenneth (Prime minister) from Midland High School called for Youth Students’ participation in all government programs because it’s our Civic Responsibility.

The Students’ Mock Parliament between Midland High School (Government) and Kinaawa High School Kawempe (Opposition side) was organized at Midland High School and it focused on “Youth Participation in Decision Making” from the National Youth Manifesto Thematic Area 5 and Goal 16 under the Sustainable Development Goals. (SDGs) The theme was “Youth Active and Meaningful Participation in the Development, Implementation and Monitoring of Government Policies and Programs.” This theme was selected by both SGD Uganda and the participating schools, because they came to a conclusion that the student
community has been disengaged in decision making process in many national platforms, yet they are stake holders in their country and this has been affecting their activism and moreso, they have been denied access to information and this has limited their levels of participation in democracy and also making them loose out from participating in important decisions directly concerning them.

During the Mock Parliament on Youth Participation, Hon. Kenneth Nuwagaba (Prime minister) from Midland High School called for active and meaningful youth engagement in government programs to hold government accountable, because they are the majority and the decisions taken by government majorly affect them. Uganda being a youthful country. He said that “Our role as young people in a democracy does not end with our vote, we voted, now what next, he posed a question? “We young people of this country should now engage in policy and decision making processes at all levels without discrimination, holding government and political leaders accountable towards fulfilling the issues in the Youth Manifesto 2016 -2021 should be one of our agenda”.

Hon. Abdul Hakim (Leader of Opposition) from Kinaawa High School urged that before engaging in all government programs, Youth should first advocate for political position where big decision are made i.e. Local Council level, then it will be easy for youth to monitor what they have been part of”. He went ahead to propose “that “Government should be able to identify challenges that limit youth participation in government programs.”

The students in the audience also discussed a few policies like the Universal Primary Education and Universal Secondary Education and were able to identify the gaps within the two policies i.e. some said “the policies were implemented without consultation by government and this has affected the expected results. The two policies were implemented to fulfill campaign promises without readiness and thorough consultations”.

**Date and location:** The activity took place at Midland High School with 100 students, 3 teachers, and 5 staff members on 14th/04/2016
Main Outputs:

- Students understood the difference between policies and laws
- Increased knowledge about the existing government programs and policies for youth i.e. the Student Loan Scheme, Youth Livelihood Programme and the Community Driven Development Fund (CDD) among others.
- The Mock Parliament platform increased the students’ knowledge on how parliament legislates and its procedures.
- During the debate on “Youth Participation in Decision-making”, cited in the Thematic Area 5 in the National Youth Manifesto, there was increased awareness among students that participation is the only way of meeting our demands as young people in our country.
- Students committed themselves to work with all elected leaders regardless of their affiliations and government agencies like National Development Planning Authority, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labor, Gender and Social Development among others to make sure youth needs are met.
- Students of Kinaawa High School Kawempe and Midland High School formed the “Student Advisory Council on Youth Policies and this was created to sustain student’s engagement in policy development and analysis in their respective schools.
- Students were able to identify policy gaps within institutions of learning which affect youth participation for example Hon. Okum from Midland High School said that “Most government and private institutions do not have infrastructures that favor youth with disabilities and this affects their active participation.”
Activity 3: Youth Advocacy Forum and Guild Debate Campaign at Mbarara University of Science and Technology

These Youth Advocacy Forum and Guild Debate Campaign created a platform from which to contribute the reactivation of citizenship among young people and enhance young people’s engagement and participation in their local communities. In any representative democracy, elections are practically the only means where by citizens/voters can participate and hold their political parties and leaders accountable for their promises and performance, In the reality check, there seems not to exist adequate legal/constitutional grounds that require politicians meet electoral promises and its therefore at this stage that citizen’s engagement and participation is relatively important.

The forum created a ground of what young people must do after electing leaders into office, with critical discussion that empower them to effectively participate, monitor basic services and programs, create a form of public participation through public awareness raising on local issues and citizens education and mobilizing.

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. The platform contributed to building young people’s capacity to be willing and able to participate in local, national and global politics, and understanding that their participation is important for a sustained and viable democratic political system.

Date and Location: The activity took place at Mbarara University of Science and Technology with 300 students, 4 partners like Uganda Forum on Governance in attendance, it was held on 14th-16/04/2016.
Main Outputs:

- Messaging on the aspect of citizens seizing to be voter whose participation is effective during electoral process and be citizens who understand their clear roles and responsibilities.

- The platforms reminded young people that their role as citizens does not end with their vote, but rather their responsibility and not only rhetoric about government actions, but also support and participate in formulating and influencing alternatives for the good of their respective communities.

- Increased equipping youth with necessary political knowledge and skills to effectively enable them participate meaningfully.

Activity 4: Students Mock Parliament at Kinaawa High School

The Students’ Mock Parliament between Kings College Budo and Mbogo High School was hosted at Kinaawa High School with a theme “Expediting the Passing of the National Health Insurance Bill to provide Universal Health Care for all.” The government allocation to health as a percentage to the total government budget reduced from 9.6% in 2013 to 8.6 in 2014-2015 and there is an outcry among young people, especially those living with HIV. Adolescent and youth-friendly Sexual Reproductive Health Services provision is still at 15% for all public and private service providers and only 10% of Public Health facilities provide youth friendly sexual services and young people face considerable social and cultural barriers to accessing comprehensive sexual and reproductive health information and services.

During the Students Mock Parliament, Hon. Aguyo Judith (Prime Minister) from Mbogo High School called for youth support and effectively demanded government and the elected leaders in the 10th Parliament to expedite the passing of the National Health Insurance Bill as our first demand in the National Youth Manifesto in order to provide universal health care for all as it is in Kenya, Tanzania and Ethiopia among other countries, “Because very many young people in Uganda, especially in the deep in villages cannot afford health care services,
especially those with HIV i.e. recently maternal mortality ratio and the number of HIV/AIDS infections have started going up again and young people between 16-24 years account for 45% of new HIV infections annually in Uganda and the majority are young women in rural areas.” In addition to the report published by Uganda Aids Commission in June 2014 indicated that 570 Ugandan girls aged between 15-24 years get infected every week. “So if citizens are insured, it will be easy for them to access better health services” Hon. Judith Aguyo suggested.

Date and location: the activity took place at Hilton High School in Mukono district with a total number of 137 students, 3 teachers, and 6 staff members in attendance.

Main Outputs:
• Students were able to understand the history of the National Health Bill as demanded in the National Youth Manifesto. The bill was presented to parliament, but was sent back for review by government for consultations from different agencies and citizens on how to implement the bill, since it will be partly funded by the citizens under the Public-Private Partnership Policy.

• Students also understood that if the bill is passed by government, the health care infrastructures will be developed to cater for the entire population in our country.

• A team of 6 students from Mbogo High School and Kings College Budo were sensitized about the National Health Insurance Bill to lead the campaign of popularizing the Bill among student community as demand in the National Youth Manifesto.

• 50 copies of National Youth manifesto, 15 copies of National Development Plan11 and 10 copies of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGSs) under health which is Goal 3 “Ensure Health Lives and Promote Well-being for all at all Levels” were distributed.
Fig left: Hon. Edgar (Deputy Leader Opposition) from King’s College Budo analyzing the National Health Insurance Bill to students.

He said that “The sustainability of the bill relies on taxes where the working class will be paying 6% per individual, how many young people are employed in our country and yet we are the majority, how sure are we that this government won’t miss use our taxes, since there are some corrupt officials in government. We need to revise that bill before government passes it.”
Activity 5: Students Mock Parliament at Hilton High School on 22\textsuperscript{nd}/04/2016

The Students’ Mock Parliament Debate on Unemployment under the National Youth Manifesto with the theme, “40% of the Jobs Created in Public Works Projects such as major roads Construction be Reserved form Youth” as demanded by the youth in the National Youth manifesto. The debate was organized by SGD-Uganda in partnership with Restless Development Uganda, Uganda Youth Network, and Uganda Parliamentary Forum on Youth Affairs. During the Mock Parliament, the National Development Plan Phase II.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and policy documents on unemployment were used as guiding documents by both students and teachers from Seroma Christian School (Government) and Hilton High School, Mukono (Opposition). Students were tasked to identify policy gaps within the existing youth policies on unemployment and provide policy alternatives suitable in fighting unemployment amongst the youth.

The National Development Plan II was used to identify government commitments in line with SDGs in fighting unemployment amongst the youth. The Government regarding employment creation estimated a number of jobs created annually under the NDP 11 about 640,000 on average. The bulk of the jobs created in the agriculture sector on average would add 156,000 jobs annually and industries would also create 112,000 jobs annually, while the public services would create 302000 jobs, which will be able to reduce unemployment amongst the youth.
Hon. Ziridamu Albert (Prime Minister) urged that “we have the youngest population in the world and majority are unemployed, we have many young people in Katwe who are good in metal works and graduates who are good in Road Construction, so young people deserve the 40% of public projects as demanded in the National Youth Manifesto to help reduce on the level of unemployment”.

Hon. Mushegere Joyce (Leader Opposition), on point of order requested government that “in order to address the problem of unemployment in short run, it would require promotion of activities that are labor intensive to absorb unskilled workers, especially in the industrial and service sector as well as investing in massive skills development programs for rapid build-up of a skilled labor force that can perform high productive jobs than first focusing on the 40% of public projects to young people”. “We also demand government from the National Youth Manifesto to establish regional incubation centers for invention and innovation to create opportunities for business growth thereby increasing the pace of job creation for all youth”.

The majority of students agreed that government should first create more centers for skills development for youth at regional levels to provide basic skills and also review and redesign the education curriculum in formal education system and vocational training institutions that will make them competent in the available labor market both national and international to reduce on levels of unemployment.

**Date and Location:** The activity was hosted at Hilton High School with 137 students including teachers and 6 staff members in attendance and was held on 22nd April 2016.

**Main Outputs:**

- Students were able to identify their priority demands under the National Youth Manifesto, where government should first put emphasis on Unemployment under Demand 1 section (ii) of establishing regional incubation centers for invention and innovation to create opportunities for business growth.

- The National Youth Manifesto was made a talking document to the students to hold leaders accountable.
• 30 Copies of National Youth Manifesto, 20 NDP 11 copies, and 20 SDGs documents were distributed to both students and school libraries.

• There was increased awareness among students about the dangers of youth unemployment and were able to identify policy alternatives relating to demands of young people in the National Youth Manifesto. One of the possible alternatives was government establishing vocational training facility at least in every secondary school.

Fig5: The students Mock Parliament between Seroma Christian School and Hilton High School on National Youth Manifesto 2016-2021 focusing on Unemployment which is Thematic Area 1 and Goal 8 under the Sustainable Development Goals.
Activity 6: Students Campaign on Tax MPs

The Students Campaign on “Tax MPs” was organized by SGD-Uganda from 22nd-26th of April 2016 in partnership with Mbogo High School, Broadway High School, Kinaawa High School, Hilton High School and Seroma Christian High School and Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG) to create awareness amongst the student community and teachers on the issue of MPs being exempted from paying tax, “If you Students Pay your Taxes Why not Your MPs. This was the motivation slogan for them to participate in the campaign.

During the campaign, students were enlightened about the dangers of evading from paying taxes as individuals to a poor country like Uganda, because this will lead to poor infrastructures and poor health services among others. Students demanded for tax justice as a human right. With such a civic task, 6000 students including teachers committed themselves by signing a petition as the young generation to call for action for members of parliament to recall the tax exemption bill on their allowances and petitioning the President not to sign the bill into law.

Therefore this campaign highlight and demonstrate the link between taxation and economic development as a fundamental function for growing citizens to basic need offered by states through national budget processes and meeting service delivery though social amenities for accountable governments and equitable resource redistribution.
Fig1: As a commitment made by the student community during the 2016 Pre-election period of “Raising their Voices when the elected leaders make policies that affect young people in our country”, Students of Kinaawa High School, Broadway High School, Seroma Christian School, Hilton High School and Mbogo High School as a fulfillment of their commitment protested against MPs exempting themselves from paying tax with a slogan “If I pay my tax, why not my MP”
Programs Officer Mr. Otim Ivan calling upon students of Mbogo High School to take action against MPs evading tax by signing the petition at Mbogo High School during the students campaign on taxing MPs.
Main Outputs:

• The student community was enlightened about the dangers of not paying taxes and the importance of paying taxes as a civic responsibility.

• 6000 students including teachers committed themselves to fight against tax injustices being created by MPs by signing a petition to the president not to sign the bill into law to exempt MPs from paying taxes.

• The student community thanked SGD-Uganda for involving, supporting, and recognizing them towards issues of national cause and adding their voices to take action.

• Eventually the President heard the citizens' voice and refused to sign the bill into law.
Activity 7: Students Press Conference on Tax MPs on 26\(^{th}\)-4/2016

The Students Press Conference on “Tax MPs”, was organized by Students for Global Democracy Uganda in partnership with high schools, students, and several media houses which included WBS TV, NBS TV, K.FM, Sanyu FM, Observer newspaper, New Vision and Daily Monitor which was held at Kinaawa High School and other participants were from Broadway High School and Mbogo High School.

The main aim of the press conference was to engage the student community to raise their voices against MPs exempting themselves from paying their tax share and also advocating for good policies as a commitment made during the pre-election period. Students from Kinaawa High School, Broadway High School and Mbogo High School convened at Kinaawa High School where they urged MPs to stop their greed and emulate civil servants who are paid little but are taxed so that the government can provide services. The students who were carrying placards, said the MP’s move to evade tax on their emoluments, which would have a great impact on the achievement of the demands of young people from the National Youth Manifesto such as health care and education among others is a shame and does not portray qualities of good leadership.

The students joined the campaign to be identified by the concerned citizens who pay their fair tax share in the country in order to discourage President from assenting to the income tax amendment bill section 21 (aq), which was to exempt MPs from paying their fair tax share.
'Kakande Abdul Karim (from Broadway High School), Leader of the Students’ Campaign on Tax MPs said, “we were alarmed by the MPs’ decision to exempt themselves from paying taxes, well aware that they are our leaders, from whom some us draw inspiration. Their action to evade paying tax is a bad example not only to us, but even to the rest of the citizens.”

Main Outputs:

• Students had an opportunity to show their concern and views against the bill of MPs not paying taxes by holding placards that carried messages showing the dangers of evading taxes.

• There was increased awareness on the importance of paying taxes, which is a civic responsibility of all citizens.

• Students were able to fulfill some of their commitment during the 2016 pre-election period by raising their voices and advocating for good policies.
• The press conference increased awareness on a “Call for Citizens’ Action on Tax Exemption”, especially among the student community thus 6000 students were motivated to append their signatures, that constituted the 5 million signatures which were collected from the citizens.

• Students voiced out their views during the press conference for example Aguyo Judith from Mbogo High School who sent a direct message to the MPs that, “you complain of bad roads when you go to your constituencies, now how do you expect these roads to be upgraded when you do not want to be taxed” “Why should other people pay for your taxes” she posed a question to the MPs, “There should be equality when it comes to taxation”. She urged.

• The press conference was aired out on radios and TV stations and also published in the key print media papers like Newvsion and Daily Monitor.

Activity 8: Civil Society and Development Partners Press Conference on “Tax MPs” at Action Aid International Offices on 29th/04/2016

The Press Conference was organized by Action Aid International Uganda in partnership with individuals and civil society organizations which included; Advocate Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE), Development Network of indigenous Voluntary Association (DENIVA), Food Rights Alliance (FRA), Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE), Human Rights Awareness and Protection Forum (HRAPF), Initiative for Social and Economic Rights (ISER), Kampala City Traders Association (KACITA), Kick Corruption out of Kabale (KICK), Laws and Government Advocacy, Participatory Ecological Lands Use Management Uganda (PELUMUG), Rwenzori, Anti-Corruption Coalition( RAC), Sebei Diocese Community for Development ( SD-CODE), Shelter and Settlement Alternatives- Uganda ( SSA-U), Southern Africa and East Africa Trade and Negotiations Institute(SEATINI), Students for Global Democracy Uganda Teso Anti-Corruption Coalition (TAAC), The Apac Anti-Corruption Coalition, Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG), Transparency International Uganda, Uganda Joint Christian Council, Uganda National NGO Forum National Regional Offices, Uganda Women Network, Uganda Youth Network and Women and Girl Development Association, Media Houses present included; NTV, NBS Television ,WBSTV, Capital Radio CBS Radio, Bukedde TV, KFM, Daily Monitor and New Vision Newspaper.
By the time of the press conference 5 million citizens had assented their signatures to petition the President not to assent to the bill into law. The 5 million signatures were collected from only 75 districts out of 112 districts in Uganda and this was conducted in a period of only one week.

The aim of the press conference was to inform both the public, MPs and the President that citizens have been proud of the increasing local revenue thus being able to finance 68% of our National budget, GDP ratio is stagnating at 12.9% yet the target for all East African countries is 25%, public debt projected to increase to US$8.3billion by June 2016 and in the FY 2016/17 interest payment on the debt have allocation of UGX 2.02Tn. With such performance everyone has to pay his/her fair tax without exemption.

Fig5: The Acting Country Director of Action Aid International with partner organizations including SGD-Uganda and individuals calling up the President not assent to the inserted Clause under Sec.21 (1) in the Income Tax Amendment Bill, 2006. This was during the Civil Society Press Conference.
Main Outputs:

• Students for Global Democracy Uganda involvement was paramount, since it was-tasked to mobilize the students to take action towards the campaign and presented 6000 signatures from the students.

• During the 5 million Citizens Campaign on Tax MPs, 2,821,909 Citizens signatures were collected from over 75 districts in Uganda.

• The citizens were sensitized and encouraged to take action on MPs who acted against citizen demands towards the development of the country.

Activity 9: Students Mock Parliament on Tax MPs

The Student Mock Parliament on Tax MPs was organized by SGD-Uganda in partnership with Mbogo High School, Kawanda Secondary School, Kibuli Secondary School, Kinaawa High School, Broadway High School and Sumaya Girls Secondary Schools and Local Leaders including Mr. Mwanja Ibrahim (Lawyer and Chairperson Kawempe Division Urban Youth Council) from National Resistance Movement (NRM) and Mr. Lukwago Ramadan, the elected Urban LCIII Councilor Kawempe Division from Democratic Party (DP).

With the theme “Students Political involvement in Decision Making and Nation Building”, most of the student discussants opposed the law that would exempt MPs from paying taxes on their allowances.

With the motivation and guidance of SGD Uganda staff, students were able to mobilize themselves through their leaders and signed petition forms calling upon the President not to assent to the Bill that would exempt MPs from paying taxes. After day two, SGD Uganda collected 6000 signatures from the students who had signed the petition. One of the student leaders from Mbogo High School, Hellen Mpagi who handed over the petitions to SGD Uganda Planning, Research & Development Officer, Mr. Abdu Ntale said, “We have also added our voice to the Citizens call, let us wait for the President’s response, and see if he values us”
During the Mock Parliament, students identified means on how to sustain their engagement towards the Income Tax Amendment Bill, 2016 which was sent back to parliament for review.

Mr Lukwago Ramathan, the Urban LC III Councilor elect of Kawempe Division encouraged the youth to use the existing platforms right from Village to National level to promote inclusive youth participation in political processes and also advocate for good policies in favor of the National Youth Manifesto under Thematic Area 5 which is participation. He said “No one will ever come to empower you at Village, Parish, Subcounty, District and National level, unless when you, young people mobilize yourself and advocate for power and recognition from other political actors in our country”. He also engaged and reminded them that they should always pursue their leaders to fulfill their campaign promises, especially the demands of young people in the National Youth Manifest, he said in his concluding remarks, that MPs must pay their fair tax share, since we councilors are taxed too on our allowances.

Mr. Mwanja Ibrahim, a Lawyer and Chairperson Kawempe Division Urban Youth Council requested SGD Uganda to continue engaging the youth on national issues through the Students Mock Parliament, especially on issues that directly affect them. He also highlighted some dangers of evading taxes in a developing country like Uganda.

**Date and Location:** The activity was held at Mbogo High School with total of 40 Student Leaders 3 teachers, 2 Local Leaders and 6 SGD Uganda staff members in attendance.

**Main Outputs:**

- Increased understanding on how parliament legislates and passes laws.

- Young people understood that there is need to read and understand the laws that govern our country in order to identify youth spaces for political involvement.

- Students Mock Parliament platform directly involved students in policy advocacy, and this has increased their knowledge and skills of participation
by advocating for good laws for example on 26\textsuperscript{th} May 2016, the student community joined other citizens call to petition the President not sign the Income tax Amendment Bill, 2016 and the President did not sign.

Observations:

- Students understood they have an opportunity to air out their views on policies that affect the youth and development of country at large.
- Students were not aware about the National Health Insurance Bill as demand in the National Youth Manifesto 2016-2021
- Young people in schools still have no 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 understand and engage in discussions concerning national and youth policies in particular
- School curriculum does provide space for platforms to engage students in discussions pertaining national affairs.
- Young people adapted the culture of political engagements especially by providing alternatives on policy formulation and laws, which are in favor of implementing the issues in the National Youth Manifesto.
- Students directly engaged in holding the elected leaders accountable to their promises during the post-election i.e. students took part in the signing of the petition to the president of MPs evading taxes and 6000 signatures were collected from the students.
- Majority of young people support a basic principle of democratic governance within youth structures, where they have to choose their member of parliament through an adult college system through a representative democracy. Whereas young people’s democratic aspiration is to choose their members of parliament without any structural challenges and interference, there is a continuation of not taking the youth parliamentary election as serious as there is continued breaking of electoral laws.
• As an organization, we observed that young people understood that their role as citizens, that democracy does not only mean and end with voting. This was evidenced during the Students’ Mock Parliaments, which were focusing on National Development Plan II, Sustainable Development Goals, National Youth Manifesto, Youth policies, and laws. During these mock parliaments, students were able to identify policy gaps and provide policy alternatives for instance young people requested government to provide vocational training centers in each secondary school.

Achievements/Lessons Learnt

• The Mock Parliaments built capacity and confidence of students in presenting and analyzing youth issues.

• The campaign when sustained will strengthen the capacity of youth to develop advocacy strategies for tax justice and thus stand up and demand for accountability.

• The project has promoted space and learning platforms for sharing and networking on democratic learning and engagement.

• Students learnt that for one to become a great leader he or she needs to be a great reader. During the mock parliaments, students engaged themselves in intensive research on youth policies related to the National Youth Manifesto and this helped to improve on their reading and research skills.

• Students familiarized themselves with the National Youth Manifesto 2016-2021 as a talking document. This was viable strategy to popularize the Youth Manifesto.

• Young people learnt how parliament legislates policies and laws during the Mock Parliaments.

• The Mock Parliaments built a group of demand-oriented youths on issues of accountability from the elected leaders.
• Students learnt that mock parliaments were a platform for direct political involvement in decision making, since they have always been disengaged.

• The Mock Parliaments resulted into creation of Students’ Advisory Panels to provide policy alternatives and formulation of youth policies.

Recommendations:

• Government through the Ministry of Education should put more emphasis on sensitizing and encouraging students to actively engage in debating about issues of national concern.

• Government should ease information access through provision of youth friendly policy documents to school libraries to aid students in accessing the relevant information they need.

• Schools should utilize the opportunity of attending parliamentary sessions by sending student representatives to attend some critical parliamentary sessions.

• Schools libraries should be well equipped with the key national documents like the Constitution, the different Acts and other policy document.

• School administrations should ensure that the available platforms are well utilized by students for example the debate clubs, patriotism clubs, straight talk, and SGD-Uganda Chapters in schools.

• Civil Society Organizations should provide relevant and current information to students to enable them stay updated on ongoing national events as far as youth issues are concerned.

• Student community should be able to hold elected leaders accountable to fulfill their demands in the National Youth Manifesto through actively utilizing available spaces hence participating in decision-making processes.
Media and online communication

Media clips
news.ugo.co.ug/ugandan-react-mps-mps-move-block-budget-approval/

Training Programme for Youth Domestic Election Observers
Date: 8th/February 2015

Articles for media campaign on Tax MPs

Facebook
https://www.facebook.com/groups/198536636852795/permalink/110842585861191/hashtag+youth

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