

UGANDA UNITES
CONCEPT NOTE FOR SETUP OF RECONCILIATION CENTRES
1st January 2023

1. Problem Statement

Uganda has experienced more than 10 major conflicts and has lost over half a million people to these conflicts in its 59 years of independence. At the centre of all these conflicts are youth age between (18 - 35 years). The young people are easily radicalised into acts of violence, because they are disenfranchised. The largest contributor to this disenfranchisement is the high rate of poverty and youth unemployment and under employment. According to the World Bank, African Development Indicators, the unemployment rate for young people in Uganda ages 15–24 is 83%. This rate is even higher for those who have formal degrees and live in the urban area. Those without a degree are also not able to obtain jobs because they lack the skills needed for the position or they don't have the resources such as land or capital. Youth unemployment poses a serious political, economic, and social challenge to the country and its leadership. Political actors and radical groups like the AI - Shabab capitalise on this disenfranchisement by offering money or a promise of things better to get the young people involved in acts of violence and extremism. With 77% of Uganda's population below the age of 25, more than half of them unemployed and with the current administration in power for the last 35 years, Uganda is at risk of violent conflict and therefore youth unemployment has to be addressed to reduce the risk of violence.

2. Our Vision

Our vision is to reduce the rate of poverty, youth unemployment and underemployment in regions most prone to violence and in turn reduce the risk of them getting radicalised to engage in violence. The goal is to ensure that young people are able to follow a journey from education and skilling to gainful employment while being champions of peace and countering hate speech.

To get there, the priority for change is action in three areas;

- a. Young people need better preparation and motivation for work; Too many young people do not have the hard and soft skills they need to progress in education or work. Attainment of literacy in English and Maths a key requirement for obtaining gainful employment. Many young people have limited access to high-quality work experience, information and lack guidance. To ensure that there will be benefits, the education and training should be of the right quality, in the right places, with the right incentives for young people to start and complete the training program, and for employers to give young people opportunities.
- b. Young people not heading for secondary and university/tertiary education need clear options for progression; For those young people who don't go to university, there are too few progression routes to follow as they make the transition from being in full - time education to being in full - time work. The transition rate to secondary education is only 64.5% and even lower at 50.7% from lower secondary to advanced secondary. According to the Uganda Institute of Higher Education only about 35,000 young people are able to join university education, implying that the transition rate from secondary to university is 35%. We need alternative skilling opportunities that prepare the young people for employment. We also propose an

innovative mentoring project where young people employed for a year are automatically registered to mentor the school dropouts to help them toward work.

- c. Young people need more job opportunities to be available. The roots of the current youth unemployment and underemployment crisis lie in the lack of jobs. The crisis will therefore only be resolved through stronger labour demands. This requires a partnership with government and advocacy for incentives for employers and foreign direct investment in the communities most prone to violence.

The engine for this vision is the set-up of a youth reconciliation centres in all communities most prone to violent conflict in the country. The reconciliation centres are community hubs that train young people, who are most marginalised and isolated, with effective and relevant education that they need to be employable or start an enterprise that can employ other young people in the community while being champions of peace and non-violence. By setting up these community centres and skilling the young people we are giving them an opportunity to earn an income by so doing we are reducing the chance of the getting radicalised and involved in acts of violence in exchange for money. In addition, the centres will serve as a safe space for the young people to discuss the challenges that they face in the community and will be presented with life skills on how to work together to address these challenges, including peace building and conflict transformation.

Target: Youth 18 – 35 years.

Location: Wakiso

3. Navigating the Threats

To ensure that we understand the problem and are providing the right solution, we shall hold town hall meetings and focus group discussions with the youth from communities most prone to conflict who are the primary beneficiaries. We would also like hold meetings with organisation already involved in addressing this challenge to understand the problem better and how we can work together to address it. It is also important to engage the government and existing education institutions to understand available opportunities to young people and how we can partner to increase the transition rate at different levels of education and skilling. The government is key in ensuring that there is direct foreign investment in these areas and bringing them to the table is important. This in addition to the accreditation and licencing of the centre to provide certificates/diplomas to graduates of the program. We would also like to engage employers to understand how we can make young people job ready, it is also important to bring them on board to offer internship placements and mentorship to young people. It is also important to engage and bring on board the National Curriculum Development Centre for the development of curriculum for the reconciliation centre and to include the projects finds in the development of future national curriculum.

Just as trainers and employers have a stake in a young person's future, so do family and community, and unfortunately without family and/or community approval, youth may lack the means and social support necessary to succeed and as such can drop out of the program. Therefore, despite the fact that Uganda Unites is leading the process of the set-up of the reconciliation centre, as a grassroots movement we shall work in partnership with the families and communities to build the program. In-addition the project may not be welcomed by employers looking for unskilled cheap labour and violent extremists looking to exploit youth living in poverty. Many of the young people want quick money and a program that requires training with the promise of success at the end may not be attractive to them.

In addition, the project requires both financial and human resources, and this may require sometime to accumulate. As a training centre, the project will require approval from the Education Board and this as well may not be easy to obtain, because the centre is introducing a new approach that combines skills training and peace building.

The target age bracket (18 - 35 years) is broad, and the project needs to understand the nuances of the particular populations. This might require us to continuously tailor tools for the project.

Gaining community support is directly, correlated to the longevity of the project, and therefore we will need to have volunteers from the grassroots communities involved in the implementation process. It is also important to hold town hall meetings to eloquently and enthusiastically describe the project to the audience and show them how they can be part of the process of ensuring it is effective. In addition, we need to periodically share our journey with the community and stakeholders so that they have an understanding of how the project is impacting the community and invite them to share challenges they have experienced with the project.

It is also important to engage the employers seeking cheap unqualified labour and help them understand how the skilled and qualified labour will improve their businesses and the growth will meet the increased human resource costing. The youth benefiting from the program will be a key component in countering hate speech and prejudice from the extremist groups, this will help to counter violence but also reduce the rate of recruitment by the groups.

A fundraising strategy and sustainability plan have been put in place to ensure that funds are secured and there is longevity of the project. This includes building of strong long-term partnerships, including one with government. The partnership with government involves sharing findings and impact the project is having on the community. The transparency of the project allows the government to have trust in the team and project and will ease the process of obtaining authorisations and licences.

To ensure the continued involvement of the youth and for the completion of the training program, we shall put in place incentives, like workplaces at end of training, scholarships for additional training, seed funding for entrepreneur innovations, refund of up to 60% of the registration fee of the program as seed fund. These incentives will be designed off of focus group discussions held with target beneficiaries at the beginning of the project and from data collected during the implementation of the project.

4. Project Layout

Goal	Objective	Activity	Key Person Responsible	Time Frame	Indicators of success
To end the cycle of violence by reducing the rate of under employment and unemployment in a	Objective 1: Set up a reconciliation centre for practical work readiness training and leadership development for youth	Activity 1: Conduct a survey to identify a location for the prototype reconciliation centre	Project Manager & Administrative Manager	October - December 2023	1. A budget set for reconciliation centre 2. A criteria set for selecting location

community prone to violence through the set-up of a prototype reconciliation centre.	(13 - 25 years) in one of the communities most prone to violence in Uganda by August of 2023	in communities most prone to violence.			3. 3 locations that meet the criteria for prototype reconciliation centre identified
		Activity 2: Conduct town hall meetings and focus group with community, youth(beneficiaries), local government and business to ensure they understand stand the project, how the youth will benefit from it and how the community can be part of it.	Project Manager & Partnerships Associate	October - December 2023	1. Number of Town Hall Meetings held 2. Number of community organizations & business identified to support the reconciliation centre 3. Signed agreements with community partner organizations
		Activity 3: Obtain a licence for operation	Administrative Manager	January - March 2024	1. Licence for reconciliation centre 2. Reconciliation centre set up and ready to start 3. Reconciliation Centre Staff Team hired and onboarded 4. MOUs signed with Businesses for training internship 5. MOUs signed with Mentors 6. MOU with Local Gov't signed
	Objective 2: To develop the knowledge and capacity of 200 youth (13 - 25 years) to ensure	Activity 1: Development of a 6 month - 12 month	Project Manager, Curriculum Development Team, Content Manager	January 2023 - March 2024	1. 6-month curriculum developed

	they are able to get gainful employment and/or start a profitable business by August 2023	curriculum for the reconciliation centre.	and Implementation Team		
		Activity 2: Recruit youth to participate in the first intake of the reconciliation centre program	Centre Manager and Educators	April - June 2025	1. Number of young people enrolled and graduate from the program 2. Number of unemployed or under employed young people in the community sign up for the program
		Activity 3: Conduct skills training and mentorship for youth signed up for the program	Educators, Mentors, Business Partners, Peace club facilitators	July - December 2024 January - June 2025 July - December 2025 January - June 2026	1. Number of young people attending the classes everyday 2. Number of the graduates in gainful employment or running a profitable business at end of program
	Objective 3: To educate 2,000 youth (13 - 25 years) to uphold a culture of non-violence and promote democratic conflict resolution	Activity 1: Conduct weekly training sessions over a 4-month period to build the commitment and capacity of the 200 youth in the program to run peace clubs in their communities to 2000 young people.	1. Peace Club facilitators 2. Peace Building and Conflict Transformation Educators 3. Programs Associate - Peace Club and Volunteers	July - December 2024 January - June 2025 July - December 2025 January - June 2026	1. Number of youths in the cohort that attend and complete the 30 credit of the peace club guidebook.
		Activity 2: Support the 200 youth in the program to form 100 peace clubs through duo leadership and	1. Programs Associate - Peace Club and Volunteers 2. Centre Manager	July - December 2024 January - June 2025	1. Number of peace clubs started in the community by each cohort.

		with the help of a guidebook deliver weekly sessions to 2000 young people in the community to enable them to uphold a culture of non-violence and peace building.		July - December 2025 January - June 2026	2. Number of youths from the community that sign up to join a peace club 3. Number of peace club members that have completed the 30-credit leadership and peacebuilding training.
		Activity 3: Support the 200 youth to develop 10 projects to address a challenge in their community.	1. Centre Manager 2. Programs Associate - Fundraising and Content Development 3. Project Manager	July - December 2024 January - June 2025 July - December 2025 January - June 2026	1. Number of services projects completed to address a community issue 2. Number youth in community that sign up to volunteer to support the project

The Team:

- 1. Implementation Team: Responsible for making sure that the prototype centre is setup and running
- 2. Advisory Board: This is team member up of representation of key stakeholders to guide direction of the project
- 3. Project Manager: The person in charge of making sure that the project is on track
- 4. Centre Manager: The person responsible for the administrative running of the centre
- 5. Trainers: Responsible for educating and skilling the 200 beneficiaries
- 6. Mentors: Group of qualified people in different fields sharing their experiences with the youth

The Timeframe

- 1. The skilling and training for each cohort will last 6 months, with each cohort hosting 50 youth
- 2. The Prototype Centre will host 4 cohorts before scaling to other locations and regions across the country, with each cohort taking 6 months the 4 cohorts will last 2 years.
- 3. Before the being of the 1st cohort, 6 months will go into conducting research, establishing partnerships with stakeholders, developing curriculum and training material and raising funding for the set-up of the prototype, 3 months into reviewing applications for youth to attend the program and 6months for each cohort for 4 cohorts. With that in mind the entire project is expected to take 2.5 to 3 years in the short term.

Summary Budget:

Item	Total Cost (UGX) Local Currency	Total Cost (USD)
Set Up Cost – Furniture, Fitting, Computers, Educational Material Etc.	52,907,400.00	15,561.00
Rent for 1 year	12,000,000.00	3,529.41
Utilities for 1 year	3,600,000.00	1,058.82
Communication for 1 year	2,400,000.00	705.88
Office Supplies and Printing – 1 year	6,000,000.00	1,764.71
Travel Expenses	3,600,000.00	1,058.82
Centre Maintenance	1,200,000.00	352.94
Staff Cost – 1 year	91,800,000.00	27,000.00
Total	173,507,400.00	51,031.58