

## SLUM AID PROJECT'S COMMUNITY ORGANISATION PROGRAM



SAP has for along time discovered the need for Community organization for slum dwellers. Although they live in congested areas where neighbors can even listen to conversation's from the next house, conflict is the order of the day in slum areas.

Slum Aid Project invested a lot of effort and time in what has come to be known as Community Organization, because we believe that many of the slum related problems can be sorted out if the community is well organized with leadership structures doing their work right.

This is a relatively new concept in Community Development. In terms of definition, Community Organization refers to mobilization of people in an area with a common goal to achieve development in areas such as hygiene, education and moral stability. Community Organizing enables people to overcome fear and passivity and regain hope and courage to transform their societies. It also brings people together to work collectively and change their situation for the better. The multiplier effect of this leads to positive change to many lives.

In order to achieve development, community organization should not be based on racism/tribalism, religion or political issues. This is because it will create more challenges that may not be easy to overcome and thus the intended goal of community organization may not be achieved. A baseline survey conducted by Slum Aid Project on **“The Nature and Magnitude of Gender Based Violence”** indicated the unmet need to empower communities to actively participate in strategic development processes. This is one of the reasons behind the Community Organization initiatives by SAP. SAP thereafter established five gender responsive support groups with an average of 45 – 50 members (60% female, 40% male) namely:- KIWAB (Kibuli Wabigalo); Nakulabye – Wandegeya; Naguru; and Katwe, Kisenyi.

For a community organization to be successful, there are ten (10) steps that should be considered. These steps are neither rigid nor sequential and more than one step can be taken. They are also interrelated with each other and therefore failure to actualize one step affects the other or others. The steps are a continuing cycle whose purpose is to enable the community to gradually evolve from a silent, powerless and alienated majority into a dynamic and politically responsive community.

**Integration:** This is the first step and it's a continuous process of building relationships of mutual trust and respect. This is a crucial step of understanding people's issues /problems and how to motivate them. At this step the community organizer then immerses himself in the community to know their lifestyle better.

- **Social Investigation:** At this stage, the community organizer gathers information /data about the community.

- **Issue identifications analysis and prioritization:** This is the third Community Organizing step where issues are identified, listed, analyzed and prioritized with the help of the community organizer.

- **Ground work/leg work.** This is a process where the organizer goes on a one to one basis to motivate the people to act and participate in the community meetings and other activities. Legwork involves reminding the people about the upcoming activity.

- **Meetings:** During these meetings, affected people come to present, discuss, decide and plan to address an issue affecting them. The meeting gives a sense of collective power and confidence.

- **Role-play:** Here the Community organizers prepare the community, emotionally, physically and psychologically to effectively and confidently carry on their planned action in order to attain their objectives.

- **Mobilization:** - Is the actual implementation of the planned action by the people with the general objective of enabling themselves to experience and realize that they have the capacity and power to resolve their own identified problems and issues?

- **Evaluation:-** Is a step taken to determine the effectiveness of and assess the factors affecting the outcome of mobilization, other organizational activities or any planned action with an aim to

improve action in future ? .

• **Reflection:-** This is a process of translating people's experiences, and actions into learning insights, positive attitudes, values and higher level of consciousness in order to develop into a deeper commitment and responsibility.

• **Formation of Peoples Organization/Settlement Based Organization:**

- This is the result of the actions of the members. After series of actions, the groups come together and choose their leaders and form their organization. **“SAP's niche to empower community support groups will go a long way in facilitating development processes while engaging the government and other relevant authorities. In the end, this Will enhance sustainability.”**

#### The Programs

1. SAP has strengthened Leadership structures through formation of community support groups. these groups leaders were decided by the people.
2. SAP continues to sensitize leaders to enhance their knowledge in handling human rights abuse cases in the slum areas.
3. Strengthening women leaders
4. Improving on the knowledge base of leaders
5. Overcoming ignorance of community leaders.
6. Strengthening leaders to help people access services.

#### SAP OVERCOMING IGNORANCE IN THE SLUM AREAS OF KAMPALA