



Quarterly Report

April – June 2010

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The overall goal of USAID/Uganda’s OTI program is to support the voluntary return of displaced northern Ugandans by increasing their confidence in the government and in the ongoing transition process. To support this goal, OTI focuses on the following objectives:

- Increase access to information on peace, recovery and development issues in Northern Uganda through support to the media and strategic communication activities
- Increase the visibility of, and confidence in, all levels of government through the delivery of targeted strategic interventions.
- Support Truth and Reconciliation processes

As of 30 June 2010, USAID’s total funding obligation to NUTI stands at \$21,797,327.

COUNTRY SITUATION

Security and Transition

Although the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) threat has significantly diminished in northern Uganda, the LRA continues to commit atrocities in neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Sudan and the Central African Republic (CAR). Throughout this quarter, the LRA under the leadership of Joseph Kony, killed 45 people, abducted 105 people and have been implicated in the displacement of over 20,000 people in the LRA affected areas of DRC, CAR and southern Sudan

Political and transitional situation

Between 3 May 2010 to 14 June 2010, the Uganda Electoral Commission carried out the official voter registration drive to update of the National Voters Register. The exercise, which aimed to register 3,500,000 new voters throughout the country, is in preparation for the 2011 presidential and general elections which are scheduled to be held between 12 February and March 2011

The chairman of the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) peace negotiating team, Mr. Matsanga, surrendered to the government and received amnesty. After surrendering Mr. Matsanga reportedly accused the Uganda People’s Congress president, Dr. Olara Otunnu, of trying to supply the LRA rebels with military uniforms and equipment. Dr. Otunnu has since denied these allegations

Uganda hosted the first International Criminal Court (ICC) review conference of the Rome Statute. During the two-week deliberations, delegates agreed on the definition of the crime of aggression but failed to reach an agreement on the International Criminal Court’s jurisdiction over the crime of aggression. This issue was deferred to the next review conference.

During his visit to Uganda, the president of the International Criminal Court, Justice Sang Hyun Song, launched the War Victims Office (WVO). During the launch Justice Sang Hyun Song noted that this office will represent the public face of ICC in Uganda, facilitate investigations and will be responsible for security, defense, logistics, witness protection, victim protection and outreach activities.

Peace Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP)

During the 2009/2010 financial year, which ended on 30 June 2010, the Government of Uganda directly disbursed funds totaling 79 billion Uganda Shillings to the 40 PRDP districts. These resources have so far facilitated the opening of 1,000 kilometers of roads, construction of 722 classrooms, 275 teachers’ houses, 203 health worker houses, and other interventions in the water sector.

OTI HIGHLIGHTS

A. Narrative Summary

	April – June 2010	Total
# of Grants Cleared	14	207
Total \$ of Grants Cleared	\$1,595,434	\$13,325,846

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B. Indicators of Success

During this quarter, the program achieved tremendous success in implementation. Below are several examples of key areas of success:

- 14 grants were cleared, for a cumulative program total of 207, 24 grants were closed this quarter for a cumulative program total of 121.
- The Uganda Electoral Commission was unable to provide extraordinary resources to District Registrars in northern Uganda where the needs and context are unique due to the war, protracted displacement and return process underway. NUTI provided surge support through the district NGO Forums, to educate voters in the Acholi Districts about the upcoming elections and encourage people to register to vote. By providing vehicles and fuel, NUTI enabled the District Registrars to carry out activities throughout the four districts. In Pader alone, the District Registrar reported that registration of eligible voters increased from less than 40% to over 70%.
- Five infrastructure related grant activities concluded in Amuru and Pader Districts and Agoro and Kitgum Matidi sub-counties. The facilities which were handed over to the respective local governments included; an integrated community hall in Agoro, the Amuru District engineer's Office, the Pader Education Department offices, two bore holes and a Health Centre III in Kitgum Matidi
- NUTI facilitated 30 public screenings of the Cultural Music & Dance Documentary in Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum and Pader districts. The documentary, which captures Acholi traditional music and dances, aims to support revival of Acholi culture and give the youth raised in displaced camps an opportunity to learn more about their culture and traditions.
- NUTI facilitated a home improvement campaign in Mucwini sub-county, Kitgum District. This support was to the local government and the village health teams to carry out a home improvement campaign through community meetings and door-to-door visits to sensitize the people on good sanitation and hygiene practices. The campaign increased the latrine coverage in Mucwini sub-county from 42% to 55%
- NUTI, in close collaboration with the Uganda Local Government Association (ULGA), concluded the branding exercise for the Northern Uganda Promotion Campaign. This campaign is intended to contribute toward changing the negative stereotypes and prejudices about northern Uganda. Through a series of interventions, NUTI hopes to contribute toward creating an accurate image of the current context in northern Uganda, where peace prevails and abundant opportunities exist.

Speed

NUTI continues to develop grant activities to respond to the rapidly evolving context, new developments, and opportunities on the ground. For instance in preparation of the 2011 general elections and to prevent violence NUTI is in the process of developing conflict mitigation grant activities targeting youth. This will ensure that youth are not used as agents of violence during the campaign and electoral process.

Retargeting/Flexibility

With less than 12 months left in the program, NUTI is currently in the process of phasing out its support to towards infrastructure rehabilitation, which during earlier phases of the program comprised over 50% of small grant investments. Moving forward, the program is focusing on elections, youth and conflict prevention.

These new areas of focus will complement NUTI's previous interventions and the evolving context in northern Uganda. By carrying out shorter, targeted interventions NUTI will pave the way for a smooth phase out of the program in May 2011

Due to the success of the Home Improvement Campaign in Kitgum Matidi and demand for a replication of the same activity in Kitgum district, NUTI facilitated Mucwini sub-county to carry out a home improvement campaign in 75 villages aimed at raising awareness on the need for good hygiene and sanitation practices to combat hygiene-related diseases.

Resource Leveraging

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NUTI is working and coordinating closely with local government and a number of international organizations, donors, NGOs and US government-funded programs. NUTI continues to develop a number of grants to complement USAID's flagship development and capacity building programs including SPRING, NUDIEL, LINKAGES, NUMAT and the Public International Law Policy Group (PILPG).

For example NUTI recently completed a value-for-money assessment of all its infrastructure-related grant activities in the four districts of Gulu, Kitgum, Pader and Amuru. The findings of this assessment which have been captured in a technical report will form the basis for information sharing by NUTI during a stakeholders meeting organized by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) scheduled to take place in August 2010

NUTI and USAID's Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation are co-funding PILPG to provide technical assistance to the Government of Uganda on the establishment of the Special War Crimes Division of the High Court. PILPG is working closely with the government's Justice, Law, and Order Sector (JLOS) secretariat, which is charged with coordinating multi-donor support to 11 government governance institutions.

NUTI, in collaboration with the Pader District Local Government, hosted a 16-delegate team from the US Mission in Kampala on a one-day monitoring and learning trip to the Department of Defense 1207 funded infrastructure projects in Patongo town, Otuke District, and Lira Municipality. The Department of Defense 1207 funding is supporting the establishment of community justice centers that will restore law and order in the war-affected areas of northern Uganda.

Additionally NUTI regularly consults with other USAID partners with a view of leveraging the US government's interventions and strengthening collaboration across programs. For example NUTI is in the process of sharing lessons learned in the implementation of infrastructure related grant activities with NUDIEL. This will assist NUDIEL avoid the some of the challenges met by NUTI and build its capacity to work with local government by sharing best practices.

Policy Leveraging

NUTI continues to closely follow PRDP developments and contribute toward its implementation. To this effect, NUTI is in the process of building the capacity of local governments to disseminate information on the progress and implementation of PRDP projects.

Currently NUTI is closely following developments in the build up to the 2011 presidential elections, and is in the process of developing strategic activities to encourage a peaceful, free, and fair electoral process.

In recognition of the importance local government attaches to traditional institutions, NUTI continues to provide substantial support to the Acholi cultural institution Ker Kwaro. For instance, NUTI support Ker Kwaro to produce and publicly screen a Cultural Music and Dance Documentary as a means of reviving Acholi culture.

Additionally, NUTI has continued to implement its grants within the decentralized framework largely focusing interventions at the sub-county level. Grants are identified through a collaborative process with the district and sub-county leaders and based on priorities identified in the local government development plans.

PROGRAM APPRAISAL

NUTI continues to record remarkable achievements in the implementation of planned activities as well as generation of new grant ideas. Since the inception of the program, NUTI has cleared 207 grants valued at \$ 13,325,846 of which 14 were cleared during this quarter. This has largely been achieved through the excellent working relationship with USAID/OTI representatives in Uganda in terms of planning and decision making related to the conceptualization, clearance, targeting and implementation of grants.

Additionally the Program Performance Review (PPR) of the NUTI program is currently underway. This process will provide an outside perspective on the program. The PPR contributes substantively to reflection on how to maintain and strengthen the relevance of the work being done in relation to the country objectives and evolving context in northern Uganda.

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USAID/ OTI has congratulated NUTI on the positive and significant contribution the program has made to the overall USAID portfolio. NUTI is universally appreciated by its partners who are enthusiastic about the support NUTI has provided.

CHALLENGES AND RESPONSES

- NUTI continues to encounter challenges, including lack of local capacity, lack of commitment and alleged corruption among local government officials, and land conflicts. Although some of these issues are beyond NUTI's control, NUTI continues to carryout constant evaluation of its grant activities to minimize the negative impact of these issues on the program.
- NUTI has expanded its monitoring and evaluation activities to ensure that the program maintains its relevance in the evolving context. The lessons learned from these evaluations are used to strengthen the program's strategic interventions and maximize the overall impact of the program.
- NUTI continues to face the problems with construction contractors including non-compliance with time frames, poor workmanship, non-payment of laborers, and disregard for sub-county rules and regulations. NUTI has instituted close monitoring systems including the introduction of a Contractor Performance Review form. This form enables NUTI to track the performance of contractors and ensure that contractors which have not performed well are not awarded additional contracts. NUTI has also completed a contractor pre-qualification process. This process will guarantee that the contractors which are awarded contracts have the financial and technical capacity to deliver high quality work.
- The recent transfer of the Solicitor General to the bench may affect several grant activities being implemented under the Department of Defense 1207 funding in Pader, Otuke and Kiryandongo and the CAS104 Public International Law Group (PILPG) activities. NUTI will work with the JLOS Secretariat to ensure the new Solicitor General is briefed on NUTI's ongoing support toward the sector.

STAFFING & STAFF MOVEMENTS

NUTI completed recruitment of an Information, Communications and Information Technology Officer and a driver for the Kitgum office and did some internal reassignments of the operations staff to reflect changes in the workload of the field and Gulu offices. The Pader Finance Officer transferred to the Gulu Office and the Kitgum Admin Officer took up the Finance and Admin Officer position in Pader.

NUTI also received one operations vehicle and four Honda motorbikes. These will allow a wider and more concentrated field presence for the team and support closer monitoring of all NUTI support grant activities.

NEXT STEPS/IMMEDIATE PRIORITIES

NUTI will continue to develop new grant activities and ensure that all cleared grants are effectively implemented and adequately monitored. NUTI will work to close completed grants in a timely fashion and has dramatically accelerated grant closures over the past quarter. The pace of grant closures will be sustained in the coming quarter.

The following will be the key areas of focus for improvements and implementation:

- Award all remaining rehabilitation contracts for infrastructure.
- Finalize the paper work required to close completed grants.
- Carry-out additional three-months-after evaluations of completed grants to inform future programming, ensuring that lessons and best-practices learned during grant implementation are applied in future program interventions.
- Evaluate all media and USAID Mission-funded grants to inform future grant activities for new focus areas.
- Closely monitor contractors to ensure quality work is delivered per established time frames. This will ensure that all NUTI infrastructure grants close before the 12 months mark and the end of the program.

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