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**Electoral Violence Response Initiative (EVRI)
Grant Report**

Funded By
Oxfam GB/Peace-Net

Implemented By
Africa Sports and Talents Empowerment Program
(A-STEP)

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Introduction

Africa Sports and Talent Empowerment Program (A-STEP) received a grant from Oxfam GB/Peace-Net under the Electoral Violence Response Initiative (EVRI) for the stabilization of peace in the Eldoret area following the post election violence that broke out in many parts of the country in late December 2007. The grant which was an amount of Ksh 320,000 was disbursed to A-STEP on 19th March 2008.

The EVRI activities under this funding started on 15th March 2008 (mobilization had started much earlier) when the official launch was held at Ainabich Primary School with the Eldoret Town Mayor Mr. Sammy Ruto officially opening the *A-STEP/EVRI Peace Challenge Soccer Tournament* in the community. The tournament involved 8 senior teams for men and 4 teams for the under 14 category and all these teams were from Eldoret East Constituency which was most affected by the post election skirmishes in the region.

The peace situation during the period under review can best be described as calm since there is no longer any form of violence or agitation for the same although this should not be interpreted to mean return of peace amongst and between communities. The first reason for the **calm** could be because all the pro-government communities were flushed out of the area while the other reason is the Peace Accord signed between the President and the Prime Minister designate a month ago. The best summary of the situation is that there is still tension and apprehensiveness for both the host and the displaced communities for any meaningful return/resettlement to be undertaken.

A-STEP used the interactions availed by sports in the series of tournaments that were organized to assess the extent of the animosity, the anger, chances and opportunities to reconcile. One of the emerging issues was the generational challenge to the peace initiatives at the grass roots level. The younger people that we worked with were liberal and seemed ready for peace and return to normalcy, while the older generation both in the IDP and host community appeared to prefer the hard line position of non-coexistence.

Progress of Activities

In our proposal we had indicated six (6) specific activities that A-STEP would organize during the implementation of the EVRI project and they are;

- Under 14 Soccer Tournament
- Under 17 Soccer Tournament
- Senior Challenge Soccer Tournament
- Under 17 and Senior Women Tournament
- Peace Soccer Tournament
- Peer Coaches Training Seminar

However during the implementation we had to make some revisions to our plans in consultation with the EVRI team (Kiptugen and Pamela) as deemed appropriate and as opportunity availed. We ended up carrying out the below activities;

1. A-STEP/EVRI Peace Challenge Soccer Tournament - Senior Men

This event brought together eight teams from the wider Eldoret East constituency predominantly from the Kalenjin community and the tournament's main objective was to mobilize many young people from the region and to assess their perspective on peace. This event brought together 128 players and over 500 other young people who attended the games and were reached with peace messages. This event was launched by His worship the Mayor of Eldoret Town Mr. Sammy Ruto and attended by Bishop Cornelius Korir of the Eldoret Catholic Diocese, who is a regional peace ambassador.

2. A-STEP/EVRI Peace Challenge Soccer Tournament - Under 14

The tournament for the under 14 was used as a curtain raiser for the senior soccer games but its main objective was to bring together children and listen to their experiences during the skirmishes while highlighting the effects of the conflict on children.

3. Peace Building & Conflict Resolution Seminar – IDP/Host Community

The purpose of this seminar was two fold – first it offered us an opportunity to bring together peer coaches and team leaders from the IDP and the host community offering them an opportunity to interact. The other reason for the seminar was to train these leaders in basic peace building and conflict resolution techniques which they will in turn use in reaching out their respective teams and communities. The seminar was facilitated by Youth Agenda Consortium and brought together 30 leaders from the IDP and host community with 25% of the participants being women.

4. A-STEP/EVRI IDP Community Peace Tournament – Men

This tournament was intended to mobilize the youth in the Eldoret IDP camp and use the forum provided by the same to exchange minds on the way forward on the peace issue. It was also useful in gauging their willingness to play with the teams from the host community. The tournament in addition to the above offered opportunity for trauma therapies and psychosocial support at individual and group level.

5. A-STEP/EVRI IDP Community Peace Tournament – Ladies

The purpose of this event was similar to No. 4 above the difference being its usefulness in mobilizing women who are more vulnerable than men during conflict hence more affected by the post election violence. Women also tend to view issues differently from men and its easy to assume they hold the

same perspective as their male counterparts if not given chance to express and articulate their views. Women are also generally more receptive to peace than men which makes them important component in peace building efforts.

6. Youth Peace Talk Forum – IDP/Host Community

A-STEP organized for a Peace Talk meeting that brought together over 50 young people from the IDP and the host community. They interacted freely and exchanged ideas on the best way forward. There was such a mood of reconciliation with both sides asking for forgiveness and forgiving each other. The meeting came up with what they called “The Bridges Declaration” named after the venue of the meeting, where they resolved to be friends and take the leading role in spearheading peace and reconciliation within and across communities. Three elders (a church leader, a lecturer and a security officer), A-STEP members and one Oxfam staff addressed the youth.

7. A-STEP/EVRI Invitational Peace Tournament – Men/Women

This event included teams from the host community (predominantly Kalenjin plus other communities) and teams from Munyaka slums and the IDP camp (predominantly Kikuyu). After the Peace Building Seminar and the Peace Talk there was need for games amongst the two communities not for purposes of competing but to demonstrate to the wider community, leaders, organizations, media and other stakeholders of the need for all of us as Kenyans to reconcile, coexist and build our country together. Eight men teams and two ladies teams participated in this tournament and the prizes were the same for all participants so as not to generate competition. The tournament was graced by the presence of the Mayor of Eldoret Town, Church Bishops, Councilors, Oxfam & Red Cross staff and other local leaders. Several hundreds of people attended the event at Ainabtich School.

8. Dancing Sessions

Dancing sessions were slotted between matches during the Invitational tournament and the objective was to step up the interaction while breaking any tension that might have existed between the young people. Also the dances provided the youth with opportunity to have fun.

Some of the revisions that A-STEP made on the planned activities include the merging of the Under-14, the Under-17 and the Senior tournaments and this was necessitated by the fact that these were games for peace not soccer talent search and we needed to mobilize as many people as possible of all ages, background and gender for peace. The women’s tournament was also merged with other events for the same reasons.

Initially we had planned to have these events in all the three constituencies of Eldoret region but decided to concentrate the events to Eldoret East since it was the most affected constituency with considerable population from the Kalenjin and the Kikuyu communities, except for the games at the IDP camp which is in

Eldoret South. Eldoret East is also composed of most cosmopolitan part of Eldoret Town.

Emerging Issues

Some issues did emerge that we had not foreseen nor planned for that are critical to a true return to normalcy especially in the long term. A-STEP believes that if these issues are catered for in the next implementing period, then a greater impact will be realized in terms of peace at the grass root.

- i. **Long Term Approach** – the first phase of EVRI was necessary in terms of stabilizing the fragile peace that was secured in February. However one of the emerging issues was the need for a long term peace strategy. There is a need to work with the communities on a long term basis on issues like peace dialogues, including a wider spectrum of people as possible, while monitoring the progress of the National Reconciliation Team on the long term grievances like land and inequitable distribution of resources.
- ii. **Generational Challenge** – while working with both the IDP and host communities, we noted that the older generation was holding a hard line and more conservative approach to the conflict, while the younger people were more liberal and dynamic and more ready for reconciliation and peace. Our strategy of Sports for Peace addressed mainly the younger generation. Therefore there is need for a strategy that will bring the older generation on board of our peace efforts. Peace *barazas* need to be organized within and across the communities to offer the older generation and opportunity for them to talk and air their grievances and possibly forge the way forward themselves.
- iii. **Increase Area of Coverage** – due to the short implementation period during the first phase of EVRI project, A-STEP decided to concentrate its activities in only one constituency apart from the ones carried out in the IDP camp. The peace games generated a lot of interest from youth in other parts of the region as far as Marakwet. There is need to increase the area of coverage beyond Eldoret and possibly target Uasin Gishu and Trans-Nzoia districts which form the bulk of the North Rift region.
- iv. **Reconstruction & Resettlement** – the main concern for the IDP community is their future especially how they will be able to rebuild their lives and move on, and indeed this is a major dividend of peace. At the moment even with the signed Peace Accord at the top, it appears resettlement and therefore reconstruction is hinged on reconciliation at the grass root. Many IDP are still not welcome to their former homes. Many Internally Displaced Persons are not so keen to return to their home and with some help they are ready to pick up their lives elsewhere. Many young people expressed readiness to venture into business if supported in that direction.

- v. **Economic Empowerment** – the youth from both communities expressed the need for some meaningful economic venture for upkeep in addition to the games. For the IDP youth this would facilitate and boost their resettlement while for the youth from the host community they said idleness and economic hardship make them vulnerable to incitement and violence. Therefore there is need for the youth to be engaged in long term programs especially those that empower them economically.
- vi. **A-STEP's Capacity** – while implementing the EVRI project the main challenge that emerged was the teams' capacity at individual level. Even though A-STEP has committed members, most of them lacked the capacity to implement both in the games and in the peace talks. This brought to the fore the need for some form of monthly remuneration to the staff so as to enable the organization to acquire competent staff in addition to the Project Manager, Project Coordinator and the Accounts Assistant. This is also useful in generating commitment and accountability to the organization.
- vii. **More Sporting Activities** – the sports activities carried out during the period under review were limited to soccer. Many people expressed the need to integrate other sports activities in mobilizing communities for peace and Eldoret being the home of many athletics world beaters, there is a high interest in use of athletics in peace efforts. Volleyball also has a high following in the region and there is need to organize competitions in these games in future in addition to soccer.
- viii. **Peace Building Seminars & Peace Talks** – under the reporting period only two training and peace talk opportunities were availed and both of them ended up being the most memorable part of this project. Our beneficiaries have expressed the need for building their capacity in peace building in addition to providing opportunities for peace talks across the board, and more of these forums need to be planned for the next quarter.

A number of factors necessitated the change or revision in implementing approach different from what had been planned for. One of the main changes was focusing most of the activities in Eldoret East a shift from the earlier proposal of implementing in all the 3 constituencies of Eldoret. The main reason for this revision was as a result of limited time and funds to effectively cover the wider Wareng County.

The other change that we undertook was to include a team from Munyaka slums which is predominantly Kikuyu. Munyaka slums are unique because the most of the youth who live here were directly involved in the electoral violence and are not in the IDP camps hence had to be invited.

The other detour that was taken from the earlier plan was the Invitational Peace Tournament. This event was the apex of the EVRI project as implemented by

A-STEP. A need for the IDP and host community to interact in non competitive games was noted and this culminated in the invitation of 10 teams, 3 from the IDP camp and 7 from the community. 4 of the teams were predominantly kikuyu (3 from the IDP camp and 1 from Munyaka). This tournament was the best test of the possibility of peace between the two communities.

Another change that was made was Peace Talk which was organized and intended to bring youth from feuding communities together first to gauge their willingness to play against each other and the other reason was to collect their input on the subject of peace and their feelings to each other.

Achievements/Impact on the Lives of People

A-STEP/EVRI Peace Challenge Soccer Tournament - Seniors

This event was organized by A-STEP but the actual mobilization of the teams was done by the peer coaches and the team leaders who form part of A-STEP's grass root structure. These games were attended by 8 teams from Kimumu, Beta Farm, Kipsinende, Koitoror, Kambi Nairobi and Chepkanga. Other representatives came from Marura, Iten, Eldoret North and South among other areas. This event was attended by the Eldoret Town Mayor Mr. Sammy Ruto, Bishop Cornelius Korir, Peace-Net Secretary for Uasin Gishu Rev. Chumo, a number of civic councilors among other leaders. The games attracted a crowd of over 1000 people daily.

The teams were mainly made up of men with hardly any female representation but there were many women from around Ainabitch who came to watch the games and as a result were reached with peace messages.

The result of this event is that it provided forum for peace messages to be disseminated to the host community and in essence it was the first real grass root effort to initiate community dialogues on peace. The meetings with the teams and leaders provided opportunity to establish the perspective of the host community on the peace efforts. The result of this event was a change of heart and perspective in favor of peace by the community.

Peace Building & Conflict Resolution Seminar – IDP/Host Community

This training seminar was organized by A-STEP but facilitated by our local partners called Youth Agenda Consortium. It was attended by 10 people from the IDP camp and 20 from the host community. Six ladies attended the training five of them from the IDP camp but there was no lady from the host community.

The result of the meeting was increased capacity in terms of peace building for the participants. They left the seminar as peace ambassadors back in their communities. The training also availed the first opportunity for the IDP and host community to meet face under EVRI project and exchange ideas and perspective on peace. This interaction helped to break the tension that initially was obvious

between the participants and by the end of the day most of them had made friends and this friendship was evident in the proceeding events.

The general feedback from most participants was the change of perspective and exposure as a result of the seminar and the need for further training to enhance their capacity as peace gents in their respective communities.

A-STEP/EVRI IDP Community Peace Tournament – Men & Women

This event was a joint initiative between A-STEP and the IDP youth. A-STEP has been working with them since January and already the teams and trust existed, which made it easier for A-STEP to organize these games in consultation with Kenya Red Cross.

The games were attended by the IDP community, six men's teams, four ladies' teams, Oxfam staff, Kenya Red Cross staff, IOM staff, Catholic Diocese among others. Women's attendance and participation was very high in the IDP tournament both in playing and in cheering. In fact one of the players among the ladies' teams was a 40-year old mother of nine. Another 45-year old lady was actively involved in singing and rapping in between the games. The games provided the best opportunity of hearing from the women on the subject of peace. One of the referees through out the EVRI project was a lady (accredited by FIFA) and she elicited a lot of interest from the communities and was a big challenge to women. Media was also part of these events.

These games among the IDPs proved quite useful and below are some of the benefits in mentioning;

- The games provided opportunities for peace to be discussed and the way forward. Peace messages were disseminated during the games both to the players and the spectators
- The teams provided a good opportunity for group and individual trauma therapy, counseling and general psychosocial support to the IDP community.
- The games were also useful in mobilizing of the youth and the community during the event.
- The games during this event and others that A-STEP has been organizing in the camp(s) have proved useful in engaging the youth who otherwise find themselves with a lot of time with little to do which easily leads to social ills like indiscriminate sex, drug abuse, crime et cetera.

Youth Peace Talk Forum – IDP/Host Community

This meeting had not been planned for by A-STEP and was requested for by the youth from both sides who noted the need for them to come together before the tournament involving both side, to plan and explore the best approach to the event and any precautionary measures that might need to be put in place. The meeting was attended by over 50 youth, 15 of them being ladies mainly from the IDP camp. The meeting was attended by Rev Chumo of the Anglican Churches

of Kenya, Mr. Mibei a Lecturer at Moi University and a Mr. Sang a retired intelligence officer. Rachelle from Oxfam also attended this meeting.

The result of the meeting was such a mood of true reconciliation between the youth and they forgave and asked for forgiveness from each other and resolved to move ahead. They noted that in every conflict the youth are the highest casualty while they least benefit from the outcomes of these conflicts. The forum also acted as a good basis of challenging the young people to embrace and preach peace.

A-STEP/EVRI Invitational Peace Tournament – Men/Women

Again A-STEP had not provided for this event in its initial plan but as we interacted with the teams from the IDP and host community, the need to have teams from both sides playing for peace emerged. There was a general consensus for the games not to be competitive rather participatory and therefore the prizes were made same for all the participating teams.

The games involved a total of 8 men's teams and 2 ladies' teams. Four of the teams were predominantly kikuyu, 3 were predominantly Kalenjin while the rest were a mix of different communities. In addition to the 3 teams from the IDP camp, over 60 people from the IDP camp attended these games, 20 of them being women. The games were attended by the Mayor of Eldoret Town, Civic Councilors, Church Leaders, Oxfam staff, Red Cross staff, Chiefs among other leaders, and they all called for peace. These games were graced by several media houses among them KBC, Royal Media, Fish FM, Kass FM among others.

The games were a great challenge to the communities and the leaders who had initially thought this as not being possible. Many realized the possibility of coexistence and that's basically the message that most of the leaders passed across. This event was such a success that two church a reverend and a bishop played for the 2 teams in the finals and the lone goal of the game was scored by Reverend Chumo.

Lessons Learnt

- *Community Participation* – one of the most important lessons that we learned was that for any peace efforts to be sustainable and lasting, the approach and consultation must be all inclusive. The lesson learned here was that true peace can only be brokered at the grass root regardless of how many accords are entered at the national level. This is because the conflict that broke out across the country after election was community based.
- *Organizational Capacity* – there is need for organization capacity especially in the case of long term grant. This applies not only to A-STEP but also the local partners that we have had to work with. The capacity on peace building and conflict resolution is low hence the need for the next funding to consider

capacity building. Also incentive on the human resource is required for the organization since volunteerism is never sustainable.

- *Long Term Approach* – the issue of peace is usually complex and the post election scenario is no exception. A-STEP/EVRI project managed to reach many young people with the peace message including training opportunities but this is very little compared to the area (North Rift) that need to be reached. Also there still exists a lot of tension, suspicion, animosity and bitterness between communities and a month's work that we implemented can hardly suffice. For real benefits of peace to be felt, longer projects and more ground need to be covered.
- *Broad/All Inclusive Approach* – A-STEP/EVRI project mainly targeted the young people since they were on the fore front of the conflict. However, peace is a societal issue that should bring on board as many stakeholders as possible. Whereas the younger generation were quick to embrace peace and coexistence, the older people especially men, are still on the war path. Other approaches like peace dialogues/barazas should be considered in the next quarter.
- *General Desire for Peace* – talking to different people on ground one is able to sense a desire for peace by everyone. They only differ on the approach and mechanisms for the same. This is an excellent opportunity for peace building projects to build on with each group (the old, the young, gender, ethnic groups etc) approached uniquely.
- *Top-Grass Root Linkage* – there is need to link the peace efforts at the top by the national leaders to the efforts at the grassroots and possible keep them in tandem. The most important players here would be the local members of parliament who are seen both as national and local leaders. In North Rift region for example the IDP say that none of their MPs has visited them in the camps four months down the line. This makes the MPs to be viewed suspiciously by the IDP community (that they are not honest in their peace talks).

Recommendations

Recommendations that are made here are closely linked to the lessons that A-STEP learnt while implementing the just closed grant for stabilization of peace. We recommend that the next funding (regardless of the organization) that the grant should include;

- Building community structures for peace so that the process can have a community participation approach
- Build the local capacity for peace and conflict resolution to enable as many stakeholders as possible to have a deeper understanding of peace building

- Provide for a longer implementing period for peace efforts to take ground since we have moved from the emergency phase
- Bring on board as many players as possible from the communities considering the different perspectives and views that the young and the old hold
- Take advantage of the general desire for peace by all and link the peace efforts at the national level to the efforts at community level.
- The late disbursement of funds affected the implementation of the project and reduced the project period to two weeks instead of the six weeks. This should be considered in the next phase of EVRI.
- Youth Agenda Consortium did a very good work in training and facilitation during the Peace Building & Conflict Resolution Seminar. However they failed to pay the participants their allowances as we had agreed with them. The allowance of Ksh 200 per participant was meant to cover their transport cost and act as an incentive in the peace process. We recommend that in future A-STEP to organize the seminar and handle all matters pertaining to the participants while YAC focuses on training and facilitating the seminar.

Conclusion

The opportunity for returning the communities to the coexistence that existed before the post election violence is real. What is really lacking is human rights awareness at the grass root so that people may understand that they can get justice without violence. Also they need to be taught that they should not infringe on other people's right while pursuing their own.

Some of the ongoing activities at the moment include team leaders' and peer coaches meetings both on assessing the first phase of the EVRI project and on updating the forum on the peace situation at the community level.

Several friendly matches are planned for to continue building friendship between the youth from different areas in our effort to have as many young people as possible in the peace searching missions. For instance Kimumu FC are scheduled to play the IDP Combined FC this coming Sunday the 13th April 2008.

Also A-STEP has continued to organize for peace talks among the soccer teams especially during and after the friendly matches. Also other forums will be organized and all available opportunities taken advantage of in bringing the youth together

A-STEP is also still working with the IDP community in conjunction with the Kenya Red Cross at the Eldoret IDP camp. We are also working with the host community teams which are useful in gauging the situation on ground. Working with both community teams has proved very useful in developing of early warning systems on threats to peace.

Regarding planned activities after the first phase of EVRI project, A-STEP has planned for the following activities;

- **Eldoret Citywide Tournament** - we plan to have a city wide tournament involving the under 14, under 17, ladies and senior categories, targeting the entire city of Eldoret and its outskirts. This event will also be useful in reaching more areas like Trans-Nzoia and Nandi Hills in the North Rift region with the EVRI project.
- **Peace Talks/Seminars** – during and after the citywide tournament, A-STEP plans to bring together over 200 youth leaders in a peace building seminar for capacity enhancement and about 500 youth in peace talks across the region.
- **Peace Dialogues/Barazas** – considering the generational challenge to the peace initiatives, A-STEP plans to organize peace dialogues between the elders of the IDP community and the elders from the host community. This is because the older generation has been taking a hard line position on the peace efforts and it would be wise to provide a forum for them to talk and also to challenge them on the need for peace and coexistence. This will be done by targeting the elders from the same area in the IDP camp meeting with the elders from that community whom they are familiar with. Sports will be used to break the tension and as a mobilizing force for these community meetings.
- **IDP Camps outside Eldoret town** – A-STEP will continue to visit the IDP camps in Uasin Gishu district and work with the youth and other leaders in these camps to replicate and come up with structures similar to those in the Eldoret IDP camp in terms of soccer teams, youth committees, peer coaches among others.