

SOLIDARITY UGANDA SERVICES

Action Alliance Philosophy

Solidarity Uganda focuses on inspiration, education, and action. Without inspiration, oppressed peoples may remain idle. Without education, they may use ineffective means of change (like violence) or fail to capitalize on their people power potential. Without action, nothing will change.

INSPIRATION

Cultivating motivation is the first step in social change. Where one feels disempowered, he is less likely to act. We have found the biggest barrier to inspiration is the common misconception that nonviolence is ineffective. In our inspiration efforts, we aim to reveal its great potential.

- COMMUNITY FILM SCREENINGS (*UGX 500,000 - 1,000,000*)

Solidarity Uganda's research – carried out through post-workshop evaluations – has revealed that films are consistently the most powerful tool for convincing Ugandans that nonviolent struggle is indeed more effective than violent struggle. (Quantitative studies such as that done by our colleague Maria Stephan affirm that nonviolence is ten times more effective than violence in dictatorial countries.) Watching communities succeed through peaceful means heightens viewers' curiosity and always sparks dialogue. Film screenings can help us reach villages. (Social movements are best built from the fringes of society, not at the centers of power.) They can also help educate those with a preliminary curiosity for nonviolence. Following the film, Solidarity Uganda guides viewers through a series of dialogue questions causing them to reflect on how the themes explored in a particular film relate to the context of the viewers and the issues they are facing. Partnerships with filmmakers of movies like *Taking Root: The Vision of Wangari Maathai* have allowed us to undertake this project without violating copyright laws.

- SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS (*UGX 150,000 – 500,000*)

There are several outlets they may be suitable for introducing new allies to the concept of nonviolence, even though they may not allow for deeper engagement on the intricacies of actually *doing* peace. Such outlets include meetings among CSOs and religious and cultural leaders. Clergy at various houses of worship may also invite us to deliver sermons or speak to their congregations. University and secondary students can be targeted through clubs and formal classes, since their environments are conducive for empowering them to make change. (This also builds up a culture of nonviolence in the long-term.) Lectures and panels in both formal and informal environments present excellent opportunities to trigger more curiosity in nonviolent social change.

EDUCATION

Educating people on strategic nonviolence, community organizing, movement building, and social change is the heart of Solidarity Uganda's work. A number of activities may fall here, each of them thoroughly prepared and tailor-made for the intended participants and the community problems they aim to solve through creative and strategic nonviolence.

- INTENSIVE TRAININGS (*UGX 500,000 – 1,000,000 per day*)

This is Solidarity Uganda's primary activity. Because there are very few experienced trainers in the types of content we deliver, we provide two main types of workshops: training of trainers (ToT) and training of change agents. While three to four days of training is ideal when the right participants have been chosen, Solidarity Uganda also rolls out on-the-ground trainings from its office, in private homes, and in other informal and public areas. The educational philosophy is based on Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed, which has become globally recognized as the innovative and effective teaching style for educating poor, ostracized, and victimized people around the world. Getting the right people in the room is half of the battle in ensuring a useful training, so for this reason, Solidarity Uganda has a thorough approach to participant selection which is done in conjunction with other organizing individuals and institutions. The modules often covered in our trainings are described later in this document.

- RADIO PROGRAMS (*UGX 150,000 – 500,000 per session*)

Uganda's primary means of information dissemination is the radio. It is at the heart of all media, from the capital city Kampala to the most rural villages. Solidarity Uganda facilitates informative shows on the air to educate citizens on the principles of effective nonviolent struggle, advocacy, and movement building. These shows may include special guests and may be organized as talk shows debates, or call-in sessions.

- MENTORING (*varies, often included with other services*)

Ongoing consultation is needed in addition to preliminary workshops. When Solidarity Uganda notices a client who is really striving hard to apply his new knowledge and skills, the organization takes that client under its wings as an ongoing trainee. Educational resources are provided, as well as networking services and funding opportunities.

- TRANSLATION AND DISSEMINATION OF KEY TEXTS (*UGX 5,500,000 for translation and 100 printed copies of a key text*)

Some central texts in the study of nonviolence are made available to the public for free, and translation is permitted. Gene Sharp is one author who has released his works to the world, including formative texts such as *From Dictatorship to Democracy* and *Dynamics of Nonviolent Action*. Printed copies can be photocopied without breaking any copyright laws.

***ACTION** (ongoing consultative services inclusive of any above service)*

Without action being taken, efforts to inspire and educate Ugandans will have been performed in vain. While it may not be possible to determine exactly what kinds of nonviolent actions will result from the above activities, clients are equipped with Solidarity Uganda's legal and media networks to assist with any risks associated with actions. Solidarity Uganda can also help with the planning, coordination, implementation, and evaluation of nonviolent strategies.

Modules and Content Areas

The following modules are all dialogical, interactive, and contextualized. All trainings of any kind are tailor-made and extensively planned by Solidarity Uganda. This list of modules covers the majority of Solidarity Uganda's content, though not exhaustively. Various learning activities can be used for each module.

PUBLIC NARRATIVE

Public narrative is the telling of a story of an individual or community to affect social change. Questions of personal and community identity are considered here. This module examines where we came from, where we are, where we are going, and what we must do. Storytelling skills are cultivated. This module also builds rapport between participants and often works well as one of the first modules.

POPULAR EDUCATION

The UPE and USE schooling systems have miseducated us. Popular education, on the other hand, considers everyone a teacher and everyone a student. Reframing “workshops” and “trainings” in a democratic structure is very important at the beginning of Solidarity Uganda trainings.

COMMUNITY VISIONING

Human beings are pretty good at saying what they don't want, but how do they determine what they *do* want? This module enables communities to establish their common goals and shared interests and values.

NONVIOLENT DISCIPLINE

This module covers the essence of our trainings. It explores the nature of nonviolence. What is it? How does it work? It is a type of Nonviolence 101 class. Solidarity Uganda often screens films about nonviolent social movements and change agents during this module.

NONVIOLENT STRATEGY

This module digs deeper into how nonviolent action should be planned and enacted. Often, we play a group game that comprehensively covers the basics of nonviolent strategy: vision, mission, grand strategy, campaigns, tactics, risks, resources, principles, big ideas, and dramatization. Principles are especially emphasized in this module, many of which come from the Beautiful Rising game which Solidarity Uganda helped develop. (A copy of the game can

be purchased by clients for a small fee, if desired. Copies of texts on this topic can also be purchased.)

CAMPAIGN PLANNING

Once a movement has a grand strategy, it can begin to undertake various campaigns that will ultimately contribute to the success of that strategy. What makes a good campaign? How does a campaign succeed? These are considerations of this module.

DESIGNING TACTICS

Once a community has developed a strategy and a number of campaigns, tactics can be selected, tweaked, and implemented. Hundreds of nonviolent tactics have been researched formally. This is an exciting module where participants begin to envision and witness actions at work. Solidarity Uganda facilitates a discussion concerning what makes a given tactic effective. Four categories of tactics are explored usually: protest & persuasion, noncooperation, intervention, and documentation.

POINTS OF INTERVENTION

“Where do we do this?” is an important consideration when designing a tactic. In this sub-module, we unpack points of assumption, points of decision, points of destruction, points of consumption, and points of production.

BASIC LEGAL RIGHTS

Although our organization has limited legal expertise, we have come to realize the positive impact of sensitizing communities on their legal rights and responsibilities. Said one client, “The constitution gives the people the mandate to protect it when it is being raped. Therefore, we are breaking the law by being idle.” Confidence in understanding the law has enabled many of our clients to overcome fear and know what to expect when facing police brutality, arrests, or court proceedings.

POWER ANALYSIS

To change the way power is structured, we must first understand how it is structured currently. Upon obtaining such an understanding, we can dismantle and restructure the systems that oppress us to create systems that benefit us. This is a crucial module in any training, and we often spend considerable time on it.

PRACTICE OF DICTATORSHIP AND DEMOCRACY IN SOCIETY

Dictatorship is not merely a governance system; it is a construct that pervades the whole of society. Men make decisions in the homestead. Executive directors call the shots in the nonprofit sector. Wealthy educated males rule the marketplace. Here, we examine how an overly politicized struggle is ultimately futile in the grand scheme of things. This module encourages a holistic approach for social change.

SPECTRUM OF ALLIES

This module equips participants to understand how society is structured according to values and how social change is dependent on tilting various segments of a population toward the side of a movement. Solidarity Uganda covers active allies, passive allies, neutrals, passive opponents, and active opponents. Various tactics are designed to bring each of these segments of a population one step closer to a movement, enabling the movement to strengthen its own network and isolate its opponents.

SECURITY CULTURE

What about the risks? Social change, despite popular misconceptions, is not only for the fearless. This module explores important matters such as how to stay safe.

TECHNOLOGY

Activists and organizers are not always familiar with the technologically invasive practices of Ugandan security operatives and their European business partners. Even those who are aware don't know what to do about it. This module bridges these gaps.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk can never be totally eliminated, but it can be managed. Here, Solidarity Uganda teaches participants how to plan for arrests, medical emergencies, and other hiccups.

OVERCOMING FEAR

Fear is the most powerful weapon of an oppressor. It subjugates a population and forces obedience. There are many very practical things people can do to manage fear. Eliminating fear may not be a realistic objective, but it can be managed so as not to interfere with decision-making.

INTERSECTIONALITY

Intersectionality refers to the overlapping of systems, such as capitalism, dictatorship, gerontocracy, patriarchy, and religion. This module broadens participants' understanding of the systems of oppression and liberation, encouraging them to understand where they are situated in these systems as individuals and how ignoring one oppressive system – even if unrelated to one's goal – could be fatal for a social movement.

BRANDING, PR, & MEDIA

Activists and organizers in Uganda are not well versed with selling their stories. Without improving marketability, how can a social movement grow and expand? This module teaches participants how to spread their message and elevate interest in their social change efforts.

RECRUITMENT

Convincing more people to join a social movement is not easy, but it's also not necessarily as hard as we think. Activities within this module provide new techniques and opportunities for participants to broaden their base for their most important resource – the human resource.

COMMUNICATION, COORDINATION, TRUST

These three things are essential for the internal workings of a movement. Where one is lacking, the others must be elevated to compensate. A movement's success is far more dependent on internal discipline, communication, coordination, and trust than any external factors such as state repression, poverty, tear gas, threats, and the like.

ACTION PLANNING & INTERNAL ORGANIZING

No training or workshop should be left without a way forward. Solidarity Uganda guides participants in forming working groups for which each member is given an infrastructure to leverage his skills, knowledge, and assets. A collective short-term, medium-term, and long-term plan is also drafted between all of the working groups.

Other One-Off Modules:

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Some Solidarity Uganda staff had before taught organizational development at the university level. They have consulted several small CBOs in various regions of Uganda. Building a charitable organization from the ground up requires much innovation and dedication. For those new or young institutions looking to do so, Solidarity Uganda can help guide them.

FUNDRAISING

One of the biggest obstacles to effective social change is the lack of money. Fortunately, social change doesn't need as much money as typical charitable programs. It relies heavily on human resources instead. Yet, some money is still needed to increase effectiveness. Solidarity Uganda teaches a community-based approach to fundraising, while also teaching strategies and best practices for grant acquisition and strategic partnerships.

DIVERSITY

Women, youth, disabled people, and ethnic minorities often feel like more privileged members of society just use them as tokens for their own ends. In this training, Solidarity Uganda emphasizes empathy, unity, and solidarity, not mere appreciation or tolerance. This module is sure to get participants out of their comfort zones.

TEAM-BUILDING

Companies, businesses, organizations, schools, cooperatives, neighborhoods: every group of human beings must work together to achieve their goals. The system of capitalism, ironically, has actually eroded the teamwork that is needed to create synergy, emphasizing competition

over collaboration. Team-building modules may be crafted for any group from the managers of a workplace to the goals of a parents' group. Exercises are derived from the innovations of Fortune 500 companies, venture capitalists, powerful social movements, and global social change networks.

TOPICAL MODULES

Solidarity Uganda is well-versed and experienced in ecological, social, legal, and political issues in the following areas: land rights, climate change, tax justice, shrinking political space, corruption and transparency, citizenship, advocacy, womens rights, human rights, food security, youth issues, gerontocracy and ageism, peace and security, service delivery, housing and homelessness, international conflict, students rights, and community budgeting. The beauty of nonviolence is that its philosophies can be applied to any issue, but these above issues are those in which Solidarity Uganda staff have more extensive experience.

CONFLICT MEDIATION

In Ugandan cultures, mediator roles are assigned to certain members of society, depending on the type of conflict. Others simply want to have the skills it takes to mediate or arbitrate disputes that can be resolved outside of court. One Solidarity Uganda staff member is internationally certified in conflict mediation and has equipped various clergy, cultural leaders, CSOs, teachers, and other Ugandans in the skills and knowledge of conflict mediation.

“AGRI” CULTURE

Uganda is an agrarian society. Even urban dwellers usually keep gardens somewhere, or through relatives in rural places. This training interweaves agriculture with culture (covering history, science, literature, and technology) and shows participants how to return to best practices in farming, perma-culture, herbalism, and environmental preservation. Radical living means returning to the land, not pursuing the path of industrialization and corporate agrobusiness which only benefits a few while harming the masses and the planet.

ARTISTIC CREATION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

A few Solidarity Uganda staff members also have a background in writing, poetry, visual arts, culinary arts, fashion, and music. The essence of art is to create something out of nothing, a reality that overlaps well with social change endeavors. Those who create are the pioneers who transform society and determine collective identity. This training pulls together creative types with a passion for social justice and peace, helping them fine tune their skills for the common good of the world. Emphasis is placed on both mastery of skills and finding a niche in the broader human struggle for social change.

PTSD PEER COUNSELING

Those who have been tortured, harassed, or intimidated face a number of psychosocial challenges which are rarely shared openly. This training provides a safe space for storytelling, healing, counseling skills development, and recovery exercises facilitated by our staff and organizational partners.