

READY FOR DEMOCRACY

More Young People Sign Up On The Bus Project

Young people are increasingly at the forefront of global development and security agendas in every



country. They are often stigmatized as part of the problem, while their potential as a large untapped resource goes with little or no recognition. In the case of Liberia, young people constitute approximately 65% of the total population of Liberia and they are among the worst affected by the civil crisis, their participation and knowledge in formal and informal decision making processes are limited.



Their trust in government and political leaders are poor due to failed campaign promises. They are of the mindset that they do not have adequate space to

actively engage in the democratic process that is currently ongoing in the country.



To address some of these challenges, IBIS Liberia has provided grant to NAYMOTE aiming at increasing the active participation and influence of women and youth in decentralized decision-making and democratic processes for equal rights at local and national levels, thereby empowering a whole new generation in democracy.



NAYMOTE through the Liberia Bus Project ended a four days civic engagement campaign in Bong County from October 7 to 10, 2013. The campaign was designed at boosting and encouraging more young people participation in democratic decision-

making processes especially the voters' roll update and constitution review process.

The campaign targeted five schools, two market places and seven communities using a bus ride for educating young people on the voters' roll update process of the National Elections Commission, the upcoming 2014 senatorial election and citizens' roles, rights and responsibilities to participate and make their voices heard in the democratic space being provided in Liberia.



Over 1,000 students and community residents were reached during the four days campaign and facilitated by 20 trained bus volunteers from Bong and Montserrado counties.

During these engagements more than 300 students from G. W Gibson High School, Dolokenleh Gboveh



High School, St. Mark Lutheran School, St. Peters Episcopal High School and the William V.S. Tubman Gray High School respectively signed up to serve as member of the Liberia Bus Project Bong Chapter. This is a clear manifestation of how young people are willing to from part of initiatives that will ensure their active participation.



Specifically, they are more likely to stay involved when they understand that their interests, growth, and empowerment depend on their positive and constructive participation in the democratic process of their nation.

The excited bus volunteers knocked on 50 doors through household visitations educating and engaging community residents ensuring they understand their rights, roles and responsibilities within an emerging democracy and to advocate for equal rights and



participation in decision-making processes that affect their lives irrespective of their status.

Civic education activities are still ongoing, bus volunteers are reaching out to more schools and communities educating to increase youth participation in decision-making while distributing flyers with messages to get involve.

As part of the project, series of activities are being implemented including training youth and student leaders to increase their skills to facilitate civic engagement and community organizing activities and holding capacity building training for local partners institutions to expand the project at the community level thereby reaching greater number of young people.

The bus ride has been an awesome way of getting young people to participate in democracy, which



transports students to school's campuses free of charge where bus volunteers educate other students on democratic principles to improve their understanding for active participation in community and national decision making processes.

The October 7-10 bus campaign was in furtherance of September 21, 2013 national civic and voters' education drive, which was launched in Gbarnga, Bong County with over 800 young volunteers from Bong and Montserrado counties. This campaign kick

off the voters roll update process thereby getting young people actively involve in this national effort to increase and inform their participation in the 2014 special senatorial election and the constitution review process.

The Bus Project is a non-partisan volunteer driven democracy initiative for young people that seek to make real political change and empower a whole new generation in democracy. On the BUS, volunteers are involve in a bus-ride activities that goes from door-to-door to engage and ensure increase youth participation in the decision making that affect their lives. The bus project will be launch in Grand Gedeh and River Gee as part of the IBIS to extend the



project in the Southeastern region on October 25, 2013. Massive mobilization on the Liberia Bus Project Southeastern Chapter launch is ongoing.

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