

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT SCHEME (YES) PROGRAM

EBONY CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

#DEFYHATENOW WORKSHOP REPORT



Figure 1: Official #DefyHateNow Banner for the Youth Outreach Challenge held on 19 Dec, 2015

VENUE: NILE BEACH HOTEL

Date: 19/12/2015

Number of participants: 52

International and Local supporters: r0g; CEPO

SUBJECT: #DEFYHATENOW YOUTH OUTREACH CHALLENGE



© Gatwech, Figure 2: #DefyHateNow official group photo at the end of the Youth Outreach Challenge workshop held on 19 Dec, 2015

Notable participants

Hon. Malual Tap, Minister of Finance, Commerce and Trade (Unity State), NGO representatives, young people and Ebony Center staff.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT SCHEME (YES) PROGRAM

EBONY CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

Introduction:

South Sudan has an estimated population of 12 million, 83% of the population is rural based and 72% is below the age of 32. Due to the large youth cohort young people are both victims and perpetrators in South Sudan's recent conflict.

Young people are often at the heart of the current conflict either through hate speech or directly participate in the fighters forces of both sides. They are both the victims and the perpetrators. They are manipulated by those in power and used as soldiers – or caught up in the cross-fire as casualties. Lack of income and opportunities for work make them vulnerable to being recruited into gangs and militia. As a result of lack of rule of law, there is increased violence. Youth are mobilized through their ethnicity, identity or religion to do good things/ foster positive change or to fight. And they are also essential for change

The Workshop:



Figure 3: Mr. Gatwech (Standing) give opening remark

Ebony Center under its Youth Empowerment Scheme program conducted a one day workshop in collaboration with R0g and CEPO on #DefyHateNow at Nile Beach Hotel which started at 10:30am and ended at 5:45pm. The workshop was attended by 51 youth of which gender equity and diversity was observed. The purpose of workshop was meant to defy use of hate speech by internet users on social media, the youth being the majority. The moderator opened the workshop by giving welcoming remarks and called on main panelist to give his presentation on how to

#defyhatenow.

Youths are ambassadors of peace, with the focus on the perception and awareness of online hate speech. Online hate speeches had negatively and indirectly fueled the escalation of December 15, 2013 crisis, thousands of photos, images, and distorted messages were circulating in every corner of the social media, particularly "Facebook". The December 15, 2013 crisis with its elements including social media had sharply divided communities along ethnic line.

As the country is recuperating toward peace, healing and reconciliation #Defyhatenow in collaboration with Ebony Center for strategic Studies launched the online hate speeches awareness and challenge youth to counteract online hate speech with online peace building campaign messages and photos.

Youth Empowerment scheme under the umbrella of Ebony Center for Strategic Studies had done many peace building mobilization campaigns, youth skill acquisitions and entrepreneurship workshops with the overall objectives of rebuilding fragmented social fabric in South Sudan. Youths at the Youth Empowerment Scheme Resource Center work collaborative as fellow citizens, unity within diversity is paramount.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT SCHEME (YES) PROGRAM

EBONY CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

Key Discussion points:



Figure 4: Hon. Malual making his presentation

The main speaker on the #Defyhatenow was Hon. Malual Tap Diu who is the Minister of Finance, Commerce and Trade in Unity State. Hon. Malual presented a speech on how youth and young people should work together to defy hate speeches among the South Sudanese in the print and social media.

The program was moderated by Mr. Gatwech Koang Ring, YES Program Coordinator at Ebony Center

According to the honorable minister, he defined hate speech as a bias speech that attacks a person or group, on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religious belief, race, disability and sexual orientations.

Hate speech is any speech which is prohibited and that causes incitement among communities. It can be in writing, verbal words, pictures, audio or gestures, he lamented.

Hon. Malual who is the youngest State Minister in the history of South Sudan politics, underlined causes of hate speech as;

- Political incitement,
- Corruption,
- Poor leadership,
- Lack of trust,
- Tribalism, and selfishness etc.

He further mentioned that hate speech can kill. Therefore, honorable quoted some of the leaders in the world who delivered hate speech that include;

- Zulu King of South Africa ~ All foreigners should pack their things and leave South Africa",
- Former Prime Minister of Israel who uses hate speech against Palestinians referring to them as "crocodiles which expect more meat once given some," which resulted to death of citizens of both countries, he concluded.

Top arguments and questions:



Figure 5: Participants during plenary discussion raising up their hands asking questions

At the end of minister's presentation about the dangers of hate speech among our communities through social media, questions and comments were allowed from participants.

Some of the top arguments and questions included:

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT SCHEME (YES) PROGRAM

EBONY CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

1. What are the factors that persuade person or youth to involve in the online hate speech?
2. Is hate speech a crime or is just a freedom of speech?
3. What does the government say about hate speech on line?

After questions and commands, honorable minister answered some of the questions that correspond to the theme of workshop. He said that hate speech is a crime and it is the mother of hatred, tribalism, nepotism, corruptions and in most cases it is the one that will lead South Sudan in to social disintegrations and clannish wars.

Groups presentations:

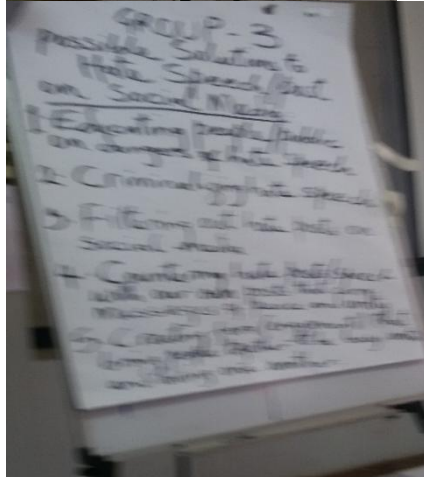
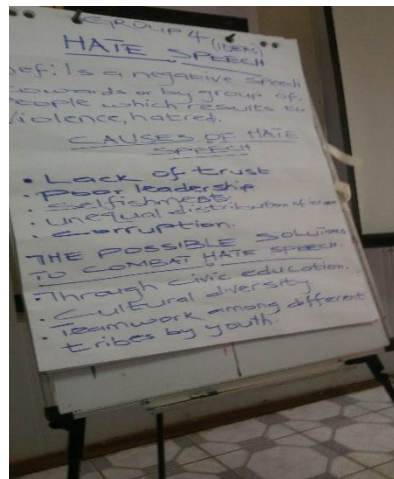
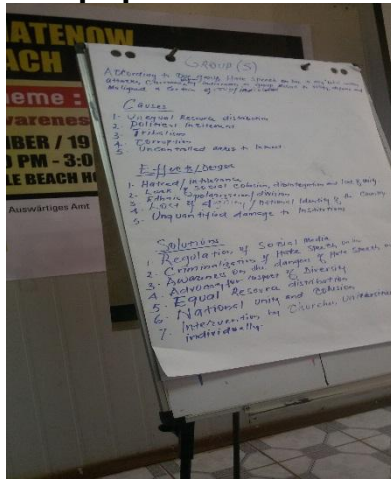


Figure 6: Group 5 Presentation

Figure 7: Group 4 presentation

Figure 8: Group 3 presentation

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT SCHEME (YES) PROGRAM

EBONY CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

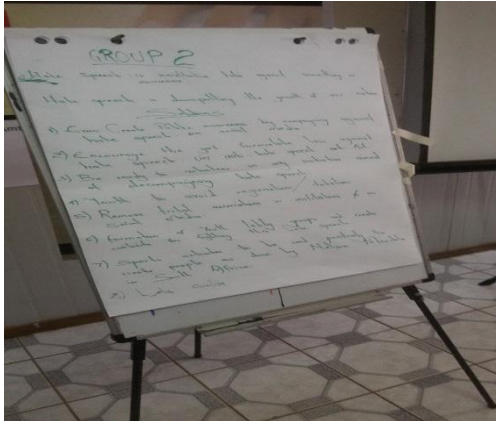


Figure 9: Group 2 presentation (Winner of Debate)

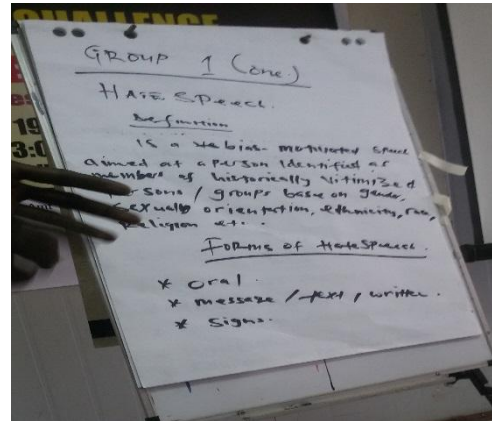


Figure 10: Group 1 Presentation

At 11:30am, 50 youth were divided in five groups from group for discussion and give their view on what and how they can eradicate hate speech. The topic for the discussion was: How can we defy the use of hate speech by people on the social media?

After this grouping, participants were asked to go for lunch as well as to go and discuss the question and come up with possible solutions on how to defy hate speech on social media.

The groups were later given ten minutes each to make their presentation on the question given while one person was selected as a judge to observe their presentations of which he later declared group two a winner of the debate with 95% followed by group three and five with 75%. Group four and group one with 70% and 60% respectively.

Role of media and young people in #DefyingHateSpeech

- Raise awareness by giving correct information and facts to the youth
- Reconciliation cannot be imposed on the people. Those affected by the conflict still have questions on the cause of the conflict
- Dialogue through sports, theatre to bring young people together
- Justice, trauma, counseling and healing are urgently needed factors.
- Design programs that are benefiting to the youth especially at the grassroots.

Conclusion Remark and Recommendations:

At the end of the groups' presentation, the following were observed to be the consensus in which all five groups agreed to be done in order to defy hate speech on social media.

1. One of ways South Sudanese can defy hate speech on social media is that, social media should be regulated or monitored on any message that carries incitement, by filtering out hate posts on the social media.
2. They also agreed that hate speech should be criminalized. If anyone is found using hate speech on social media, s/he should be punished by law.
3. South Sudanese youth should go out and make awareness campaigns about the dangers of hate speech in our communities.
4. They also say hate speech can be defied or eradicated through civic education.
5. Encourage dialogue among communities that are suspicious with one another.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT SCHEME (YES) PROGRAM

EBONY CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

6. Equal distribution of resources among South Sudanese communities can help us to defy hate speech on the social media.
7. Churches, universities, and other institutions which are known to be centers for human resources should intervene to combat hate speech on the social media.
8. Good governance will also reduce hate speech.
9. Be willing and ready to volunteer in any initiative aimed at de-campaigning hate speech.
10. Create media groups to counter hate speech of online posts with messages of peace, unity, and love.
11. Encourage organizing of fora, seminars, workshop, and conferences to advocate against hate speech.
12. Encourage sport activities to unite the youth as so did Nelson Mandela of South Africa.