



Photos: Caroline Turyatamba



Hannington Syahuka, Acting Director of UNASO, explains UNASO's role in supporting district AIDS organizations.

UNASO

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— HANNINGTON SYAHUKA

As the severity of the HIV/AIDS crisis has become evident in Uganda during the past decade or so, a multitude of small non-governmental organizations have dedicated themselves to meeting the crisis. The response brightened Uganda’s prospects of coping with the epidemic. Often, however, these groups lacked the organizational capacity they needed to contribute effectively to an integrated, nationwide anti-HIV/AIDS campaign.

The Uganda Network for AIDS Service Organizations (UNASO) emerged to help the organizations gird themselves for the task. UNASO represents about 960 other Ugandan nongovernmental organizations. It has played a vital role in assisting those groups to raise their organizational and management capacity.

To do the job well, UNASO required some structural enhancements. As a first step, it cooperated with AIM in a process known as the Joint Institutional Assessment (JIA)

to identify its strengths and weaknesses in strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation, and other management systems. That process has allowed UNASO to “peel off the layers” of its operations and to “unlock its potential,” says Hannington Syahuka, the organization’s acting director.

AIM worked with UNASO for several years to address these key organizational needs. The support from AIM included training of trainers, targeted technical assistance, the development of training materials and tools, and funding support for UNASO’s work at the district level. This assistance has enabled UNASO to expand its support of district-based HIV/AIDS organizations.

The materials developed through the AIM-UNASO partnership have been compiled, printed, and disseminated. Over 2000 copies are now being used to respond to the organizational development needs of member organizations. As a means of ensuring that its organizational



Organizational development materials developed by AIM and other groups on display during a UNASO district launch.

development programs are sustainable, UNASO trained district network resource persons who will continuously provide organizational development training and mentoring to small, community-based organizations.

“What remains is for UNASO to make sure that the process of strengthening the capacity of district-level organizations is complete,” Syahuka says. With that end in mind, UNASO is seeking other financial backers. That is more hopeful, Syahuka says, because its own strengthened capacity is likely to inspire the confidence of potential donors. ■

AIM'S ROLE	Provided funding, technical assistance, and capacity building
TOTAL GRANT	Ush 49,194,500
CONTRACT PERIOD	April 2004 to December 2005
ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED BY AIM	Joint Institutional Assessment Capacity building for institutional strengthening
OTHER DONORS	U.K. Department for International Development (DFID) American Jewish World Service (AJWS) Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria