LEARNING AND SHARING SUMMIT 2025

Stand-Out Youth Development

South Africa, Empangeni KZN

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Brief background of the organisation

- Stand-Out is a youth-driven organization dedicated to empowering young people, particularly adolescent boys and girls, by promoting gender equality, leadership, and community development. The organization works closely with traditional leaders, schools, government institutions, and private sector partners to create sustainable change in communities, particularly in **King Cetshwayo District Municipality in KZN South Africa** and surrounding areas.

- **Core Focus Areas**

- **Gender Equality & Advocacy**: Engaging both boys and girls in gender-sensitive leadership and activism.

- **Youth Development**: Empowering adolescents through educational support, career guidance, and public participation.

- **Community Conflict Resolution**: Working with traditional leaders to reduce factional violence and promote peacebuilding.

- **Partnerships & Policy Engagement**: Involvement in legislative processes, such as contributing to the **Tobacco and Marriage Bill** discussions in South African Parliament.

Brief background of the organisation

Registration & Legal Status

- Registered Entity: Stand-Out is a legally recognized non-profit organization.

- Area of Operation: Primarily operating in rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, with expanding reach through partnerships.

Key Achievements & Impact

- **Reduction in Factional Fights**: Through engagement with the Adolescent boys of Majiya High School, Nzuza Tribal Authority and young men's leadership programs.
- **Youth Participation in Policy Development**: Collaboration with South African Parliament (Public Participation).
- **Scholarship Access:** Beneficiaries successfully enrolled in Investec Scholarship Programs.
- **Public Speaking & Debate Empowerment:** Partnering with King Cetshwayo Debating Team for leadership development.
- **Germany Cultural Exchange Program**: Beneficiaries taking part in Cultural Exchange Program for a period of 12 months in Germany

Brief background of the organisation

Institution before VCSA

- Did you have any policies?

Yes but they were few and had gaps

- Were you VAT registered?

YES

- Were your registered for SARS?

YES

- Did you have a governance/board in place?

YES

- Did you have a finance system in place?

Yes but not in line with GL requirements

- Did you make any institutional changes

NO

Registrations

- <u>Before VCSA grant</u>
- Please mention if you were registered with SARS when the grant started?
- **YES**
- Is your NPO registered?
- **YES**
- Did you have a bank account?
- **YES**

- <u>During the VCSA grant</u>
- Stand-Out was already registered with DSD and SARS when we started implementing GL program, and had a bank account however we had to open a separate account for GL funds

STRATEGIC POSITIONING

Before VCSA grant

- **Vision**

To form partnerships and be part of the collective that create and bring about sustainable development interventions in underprivileged, underdeveloped, poverty-stricken and marginalized communities.

- **Mission**

Define the struggles of women and girls who are living in rural and urban communities by working with men and boys to create happy, safe and conducive environment. Provide them within holistic support in order to enhance and nurture their qualities. Assist them to tap into opportunities that will bring about sustainability, shape and build legacies of a better world.

- Core Value

Not Available as we were just finding our feet

Day of an African Child

STRATEGIC POSITIONING

- **Before VCSA Grant**

- **Formulation of relevant strategies**

There were no relevant formulates strategies, due to the fact that GL fund was our first funding.

- **Legitimacy of our work**

There was legitimacy in our work because the organization was registered, however we were not complying with most of the requirement because GL was among the few funders that we received

STRATEGIC POSITIONING

During VCSA grant

Vision:

Empower young women, girls, and adolescent boys through education, leadership, and gender equality advocacy.

Mission:

To create safe spaces, provide access to opportunities, and foster youth-led community transformation.

Core Values:

Integrity, inclusivity, accountability, innovation, and impact-driven programming.

STRATEGIC POSITIONING

During VCSA grant

- **Formulation of relevant strategies**

Have developed strategic approaches that guide program implementation, stakeholder engagement, and long-term sustainability. These strategies align with the organization's goals of empowering youth, promoting gender equality, and strengthening communities and are structured around **three key pillars** that guide its work and ensure alignment with stakeholder collaboration:.

- ❖ Capacity Building & Education
- ❖ Community Engagement a& Advocacy
- ❖ Economic Empowerment & Sustainability

- **Legitimacy of our work**

Anchored in legal recognition, strong community engagement, strategic partnerships, evidence-based programming, and demonstrated impact. This foundation ensures the sustainability and credibility of our interventions in advancing gender equality and youth empowerment.

GOVERNANCE

Before VCSA grant

- Governance structures

-Governance Structure in place without clear roles

- Application of democratic rule

-No clear understanding of the democratic rule and it was applied to a minimal.

16 Days of Activism

GOVERNANCE

- **During the VCSA grant**

Governance structures

- Clearly defined roles of the structure and roles as well as participation in carryingout their duties

Application of democratic rule

- With the capacity building from GL, StandOut upholds democratic rule by ensuring that every voice matters, every individual has rights, and every action leads to collective progress. By fostering participation, transparency, and equality, we create a sustainable, empowered, and democratic society where young people and marginalized groups thrive.

PROGRAMME OF ACTION

Before VCSA grant

- **Planning for implementation**

There project that we had planned to implement when we were applying for GL had to be change on the inception workshops after discussion with our mentor. Thus, when we started the project, we had no proper implementation plan.

- **Reporting and documentation**

There were no proper reporting and documentation tools in place. GL had specific tools that were needed for reporting and documenting the project.

PROGRAMME OF ACTION

During the VCSA grant

- **Planning for implementation:**

The clear implementation plan was established to ensure successful execution that comprises of the following:

- ❖ Key activities
- ❖ Timelines
- ❖ Responsible stakeholders
- ❖ Monitoring strategies

- **Reporting and documentation**

A strong reporting and documentation was established to enhance the efficiency and transparency, maintaining clear, well-structured records, the organization used the following tools :

- ❖ Attendance Register
- ❖ Photos& Videos
- ❖ Minutes
- ❖ Financial Record

Nongweleza H. School Beneficiaries

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Before VCSA grant

- **Human resources**

The organization had volunteers that were part of the staff.

- **Physical resources**

We were renting the office at 60% with the donor funding we had before GL.

- **Electronic resources**

No Projector

- **Administrative and financial routines**

- All the administration was done and reported. Receipts kept and corresponding with the Bank statements not according to the GL requirement

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

- **Human resources**

4 People were employed to work on the project

- **Physical resources**

We manage to add on the rental of the office

- **Electronic resources**

Projector was purchased

- **Administrative and financial routines**

- All the administration was done and reported. Receipts kept and corresponding with the Bank statements in accordance to GL Requirements

Before VCSA grant-

How will the institutional progress be sustained within your organisation?

-There was no clear plan on the sustainable plan at the beginning.

Financial policies and procedures

-The Financial policy was there, but there were gaps in the policy.

• **Value for money**

There was little understanding of this term and its implication to the organization as a whole

SUSTAINABILITY AND DIVERSIFICATION

Before VCSA grant

How will the institutional progress be sustained within your organisation?

- Stand-Out is committed to ensuring long-term sustainability beyond grant funding by adopting a diversified approach to financial stability, program continuity, and impact scaling.

Financial policies and procedures

- Financial Policies and Procedure are in place.

Value for money

- Ensures value for money by maximizing impact while maintaining efficiency, transparency, and accountability in resource utilization

Anti-corruption/Fraud Policy

Before VCSA grant

- We had few policies, that were not clear enough for us to implement our program accurately. However the condition of the GL contract was to have the policies in place, which we did.

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Session at Old Mill High School

Sexual Harassment Policy

- **Before VCSA grant**

  There was no Sexual Harassment Policy in place, however there was a clause on the contract that spoke to sexual harassment.

- **During the VCSA grant**

  There is a stand alone Sexual Harassment Policy

Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

Before VCSA grant

• There was minimal Monitoring and evaluation of the overall project, since the GL fund was one of the first funding we received.

Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

Monitoring & Evaluation Systems with GL assistance

Stand-Out employs a robust Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) system to track progress, measure impact, and ensure accountability in all its programs. The system is designed to provide data-driven insights for continuous improvement and sustainability

- **Data Collection using**

- Attendance registers

- **Reference Indicators**

-Key Areas, Indicators of Success and Means of verification

- Evaluation Mechanism

-Stakeholders meetings, Field visits

- **Reporting & Learning**

- Internal report & Donor report

- **Public Sharing**

-Social Media updates

Other policies/systems

- **Before VCSA grant**

  ❖ Financial Policy
  ❖ Human Resource Policy

- **During the VCSA grant**

  ❖ Finance Policy
  ❖ Safe Guarding Policy
  ❖ Anti-Corruption Policy
  ❖ Internship and Volunteer Policy
  ❖ Recruitment & Selection Policy
  ❖ Human Resource Policy
  ❖ Sexual Harassment Policy

Capacity during VCSA-SA grant

Please explain what capacity building you have received from VCSA-SA that has made your institution better?

- Organizational Development & Governance

- Advocacy & Gender Mainstreaming

- Financial Management & sustainability

- Social media & Digital Advocacy

Capacity during VCSA-SA grant

Challenges

- What have been the main challenges?

1. Social and Cultural Barriers

Deeply entrenched patriarchal norms and cultural resistance may hinder acceptance of gender equality programs.

2. Resistance from Men & Boys

Some boys and men may feel alienated by a focus on empowering girls.

3. Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Retaliation Risks

Some beneficiaries may face **backlash, intimidation, or violence** for speaking up about gender-based violence.

4. Political and Policy Challenges

Government policies, bureaucracy, or lack of political will could hinder implementation of gender-focused interventions.

Challenges

How have these been overcome?

1. Social and Cultural Barriers

- Engage community leaders, parents, and religious figures to advocate for gender equality.

- Conduct awareness campaigns to address gender stereotypes and misconceptions.

- Use male role models and allies to help shift community perceptions

2. Resistance from Men & Boys

- Implement inclusive engagement strategies by involving men and boys in discussions on positive masculinity and gender equality.

- Establish boys' mentorship programs to promote healthy attitudes and behaviors.

- Create peer-led initiatives where boys learn from male champions advocating for gender justice

Challenges

How have these been overcome?

3. Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Retaliation Risks

- Strengthen GBV support systems by forming partnerships with law enforcement, shelters, and legal aid organizations.

- Provide safe reporting mechanisms and ensure strict confidentiality.

- Train community watchdog groups and rapid response teams to intervene in cases of GBV

4,Political and Policy Challenges

- Strengthen advocacy efforts by working with policy-makers, other NPOs, Government Departments and community leaders.

- Align project activities with existing national policies on gender equality and education.

- Use media and storytelling to increase public awareness and influence policy changes.
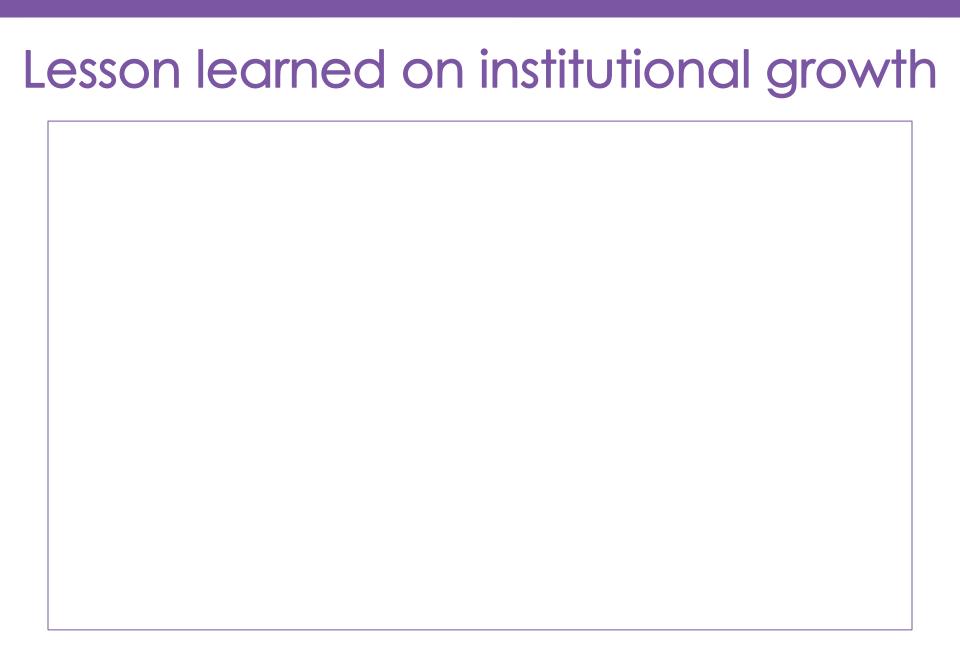
Media Bash

Lesson learned on institutional growth

- **What lessons have been learned?**

1. Community Engagement is Essential for Lasting Change

🔷 **Lesson Learned:**

- Deep community involvement is **critical for project success and sustainability**.

- Resistance from some traditional leaders and communities can slow progress if not **strategically managed**.

2.Capacity Building Strengthens Institutional Growth

- 🔷 **Lesson Learned:**

- Investing in training and mentorship improves **organizational effectiveness and sustainability**.

- A well-equipped team delivers better services and **attracts funding opportunities**.

3. Social Media is a Powerful Tool for Advocacy & Engagement

- 🔷 **Lesson Learned:**

- Social media platforms help **amplify voices, share success stories, and mobilize support**.

- Digital advocacy can **expand reach beyond local communities**.

Lesson learned on institutional growth

- **What lessons have been learned?**

4.**Youth Participation is Critical for Sustainable Development**

◆ **Lesson Learned:**

-Young people must own the change process for long-term impact.

-When given leadership roles, they become powerful agents of transformation.

5**. Multi-Sectoral Partnerships Enhance Impact**

◆ **Lesson Learned:**

 -Collaborations with government, civil society, and private institutions create stronger, more sustainable programs.

- Strategic alliances increase access to resources and funding.

6. **Sustainable Funding Requires Diversification**

◆ **Lesson Learned:**

-Dependence on one funding source is risky; diversification ensures long-term sustainability. A mix of grants, corporate sponsorships, and community contributions leads to financial stability.

Lesson learned on institutional growth

Radio Session iCoraFM

Lesson learned on institutional growth

How are these being applied?
 1. Community Engagement is Essential for Lasting Change
- We now engage key community stakeholders (traditional leaders, parents, and youth) early in the process to build trust and support.
- Partnering with Learners, Teachers, religious and traditional leaders in Nzuza Tribal Authority has helped reduce factional fights among young men.
- Expanded community dialogues to address gender-based violence and harmful cultural practices

2. Capacity Building Strengthens Institutional Growth
- Implemented staff training programs (financial management, M&E, advocacy skills).
- Strengthened governance structures, including the development of a sexual harassment policy and financial policy.
- Enhanced organizational sustainability through fundraising strategies (e.g., Father & Daughter Golf Day).

3. Social Media is a Powerful Tool for Advocacy & Engagement
- Strengthened our social media presence to engage more young people.
- Used digital storytelling to highlight the impact of our work and empower beneficiaries.
- Leveraged social media campaigns to advocate for community transformation.

Lesson learned on institutional growth

How are these being applied?

4. **Youth Participation is Critical for Sustainable Development**

- Involved young men and boys in policy discussions (e.g., Tobacco & Marriage Bill with SA Parliament).

- Empowered youth through debating and leadership programs (King Cetshwayo Debating Team).

- Created mentorship programs where young beneficiaries become peer educators to influence others.

5. **Multi-Sectoral Partnerships Enhance Impact**

- Strengthened partnerships with Investec (Scholarship Program) to benefit our youth.

- Collaborated with Gender Links, South African Parliament, Government Departments and community organizations to advocate for change.

- Partnered with schools to introduce gender-sensitive education and mentorship programs.

Lesson learned on institutional growth

How are these being applied?

6. Sustainable Funding Requires Diversification

- **Implemented a diversified fundraising approach:**

- Grants, Corporate sponsorships (Investec, local businesses).

- Community-driven fundraising events (Father & Daughter Golf Day).

- Developed a financial sustainability plan to secure long-term funding.

Siyabonga! Dankie! Asante! Thankyou!