

Telegram: "EDUCATION"
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Ministry of Education & Sports
Embassy House
P.O. Box 7063
Kampala, Uganda

In any correspondence on
this subject please quote No: ADM/137/147/01

21 February 2012

To Whom It May Concern,

Re: United Movement to End Child Soldiering (UMECS)

UMECS is an organization in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Sports.

In 2010, in conjunction with the Ministry, UMECS implemented **Peace Education and Guidance & Counseling in Secondary Schools in Northern Uganda** at seven secondary schools in four districts. Its major goal was to systemically build a culture of peace and contribute to building peaceful schools and communities so as to prevent new wars. The program components included peace education classes, guidance classes and counseling services; student-centered peace activities and community outreach. The Guidance and Counseling component institutionalized key instructional, psychosocial and programmatic activities designed to strengthen child development, address adolescent issues, enhance career development and address psychosocial needs of learners including those stemming from the protracted war in Northern Uganda.

The program pilot was supported by USAID/SPRING and has had groundbreaking results: eradication of bullying, building nonviolent school environments, improved academic performance, reduced cases of indiscipline, improved student-teacher and student-peer relationships, enhanced community-school relationships and community dispute resolution services. Implementing teachers were certificate level trained as guidance/counselors and peace educators. Students were trained as peer counselors and peer mediators. The program continues to operate at the seven pilot secondary schools and we expect to scale up the program this year. Our overarching goal is to mainstream the program in the secondary school and teacher training systems.

In 2011, UMECS was selected by World Vision International as a Finalist in its Peacebuilding Prize; recognizing UMECS for its outstanding achievements in peacebuilding.

UMECS is not only of significance in supporting the Ministry to achieve some of its broad goals, but also highly regarded by the schools and institutions they serve and support for their transparent and collaborative mode of operation. UMECS also sponsors vulnerable students from secondary school through higher education graduation which positively impacts on the students, their families and community development.

We recommend United Movement to End Child Soldiering (UMECS) for grant support from your institution, and look forward to UMECS' continued role in implementing school and learning support services in our educational institutions.


W.G. Opiro
For: **PERMANENT SECRETARY**