



## Weekly

Feb 12 - 18

On Valentine's Day, ActionAid Busiki Office reached out to young girls and women to speak to them about the importance of self-love in transforming their lives for the better. **#Selflove #Youngwomenmatter!** Photo credit/ Chipo Bangira/ActionAid.

Welcome to this edition of the Weekly!

### Ford Foundation Thrilled by AAU Award!



Left– AAU's Didas Muhumuza presents the award to Ford Foundation Director Maurice. Right– Maurice, in his acceptance speech stated that Ford Foundation stands today because of constructive ideas by partners like ActionAid.

Last week, ActionAid presented an award to Ford Foundation in appreciation of an outstanding support in promoting leadership of women and young people in shaping governance and community benefits in the extractives sector.

While the award was supposed to be presented at the launch of AAU's 5<sup>th</sup> Strategy Paper last year, Ford Foundation missed the occasion.

While presenting the award at Miika Eco Resort Hotel, AAU's Didas Muhumuza; the Extractives Governance Coordinator together with Nickson Ogwal, the Fund-raising Director stated that while Ford Foundation missed the award gala, it had provided AAU with an opportunity to present the award in the presence of the entire staff of Ford Foundation in East Africa (Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania).

Maurice Makoloo, the Director of Ford Foundation after receiving the award thanked ActionAid for the kind gesture in a rather poetic manner.

"I have never read a proposal so brief but powerful like presented in this Award. Thank you ActionAid Uganda" he said adding that Ford Foundation stands today because of the constructive ideas from partners like ActionAid.

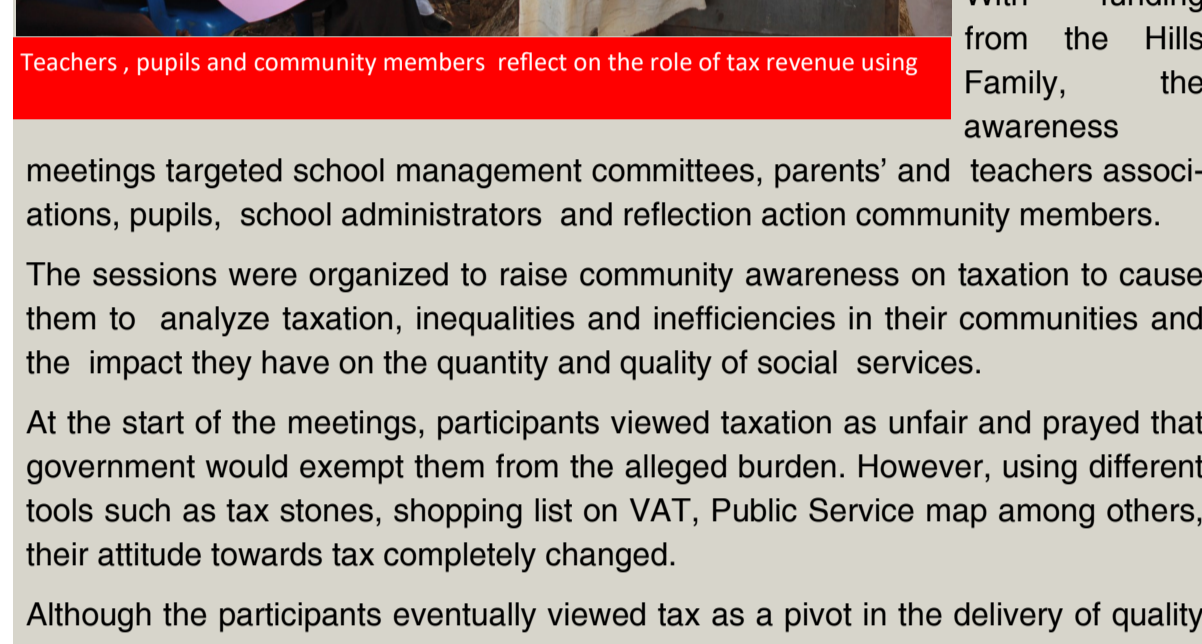
Maurice also explained that ideas that informed the work funded by Ford Foundation were from partners like ActionAid who conceived, presented and implemented them. He applauded the resilience of the staff of ActionAid Uganda who directly faced the trauma when offices were sieged and cordoned off by the Uganda Police last year.

Ford Foundation also commended the AAU Communications team for the courage it exhibited in speaking out against the siege on social media and other public spaces.

"I have been left with no option but to fully accept this award. Thank you ActionAid Uganda", he added.

Last week, Ford Foundation Eastern Africa held its partners learning forum for East Africa in Hoima (Miika Eco Resort Hotel). ActionAid Uganda was represented by Yuda Rwakoba, the Grants Coordinator and Didas Muhumuza, the Extractives Governance Coordinator. The event was very fulfilling and involved lots of sharing and joint strategizing among the grantees as well as the staff of Ford Foundation.

### Pallisa Residents reflect on Taxation vs Service Delivery!



Teachers, pupils and community members reflect on the role of tax revenue using

Last week, ActionAid Pallisa convened four awareness meetings on taxation and public service delivery in five public schools.

With funding from the Hills Family, the awareness

meetings targeted school management committees, parents' and teachers associations, pupils, school administrators and reflection action community members.

The sessions were organized to raise community awareness on taxation to cause them to analyze taxation, inequalities and inefficiencies in their communities and the impact they have on the quantity and quality of social services.

At the start of the meetings, participants viewed taxation as unfair and prayed that government would exempt them from the alleged burden. However, using different tools such as tax stones, shopping list on VAT, Public Service map among others, their attitude towards tax completely changed.

Although the participants eventually viewed tax as a pivot in the delivery of quality social services, they acknowledged the several gaps embedded in the system that have made it unfair. They cited the lack of accountability by duty bearers, the poor quality public services in the district like the ever deteriorating performance of pupils in Primary leaving exams as some of the gaps that can be closed with a fair and just tax regime.

Betty Akol, one of the community members spoke about Agurur Primary school which registered 48 failures out of the 50 candidates that sat for the Primary living exams last year.

"We are not seeing the value of paying taxes. There are no essential drugs in health centers, children keep failing every year, Roads are impassable while the police continues to rot in corruption", she said.

According to Shiba Namulindwa, ActionAid Programs Officer, the reflection meetings are drivers of community led advocacy initiatives to demand for better social services.

The sensitization meetings attracted over 200 participants and there was a drastic change of participants' attitude as result.

#### About Hills Project

This is a three year project funded by the Hills Family and is being implemented in Nebbi and Pallisa. The overall project goal is to increase the attention paid to the need for progressive use of tax revenue to improve the quality of public education. The project aims at attaining a community where people are aware about their right to free quality education and understand that taxation should be progressive and that taxes are a public resource that pays for public education.

### Danish Medical students on Learning placement in UG.



The Students with the Danish Ambassador and some AAU staff

ActionAid Uganda in collaboration with ActionAid Denmark is hosting seven students from Denmark for a one month health study tour. The students (six nurses and one radiographer) will work with St Francis Hospital Nsambya and Gulu Regional Referral Hospital.

The objective of the health study tour is to provide Danish health students with an insight and understanding of the health care system in Uganda, and give them inter-disciplinary health perspectives as well as knowledge about health care in Uganda in line with their own specific disciplines.

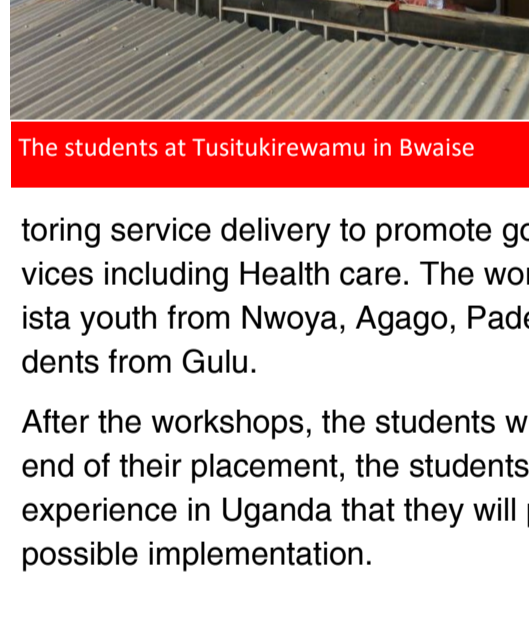
Upon their arrival in Uganda last Monday, the students visited ActionAid Uganda office where they were inducted into the Ugandan setting. ActionAid worked and more specifically the health sector.

The students also held a meeting with the Danish Ambassador to Uganda H.E Mogens Pedersen at the Danish Embassy. While there, they discussed Danish cooperation and development aid to Uganda.

Additionally, they visited Tusitukirewamu in Bwaise (a Community Based Organisation) to gain a better understanding of the economic, social and cultural cost and impact of HIV/AIDS in Uganda. They were also introduced to some of the interventions carried out to support people living with HIV/AIDS to live positive and productive lives.

The team is currently traveling to Gulu. ActionAid Gulu office has lined up three workshops for the students. These will address Women Rights & health service delivery, Human Rights and Medicine. The students will also be introduced to ActionAid work of monitoring service delivery to promote good governance and right to better social services including Health care. The workshops will also have representatives of activist youth from Nwoya, Agago, Pader and Amuru districts and some medical students from Gulu.

After the workshops, the students will proceed to their different placements. At the end of their placement, the students will come up with a project about their learning experience in Uganda that they will present to ActionAid Uganda and Denmark for possible implementation.



The students at Tusitukirewamu in Bwaise



Students interacting with a person living positively at Tusitukirewamu



Young women learning to make wallets and key holders last week

Last week, the LCV Vice Chairperson and Secretary for Gender and Children Affairs in Namutumba District, Amina Batega challenged young women in the District to use their talents and reclaim their lives.

Speaking during a mentorship session organized by ActionAid Busiki office on Valentine's Day, Amina shared her life experiences of struggling to excel in a highly patriarchal society. She urged the girls never to give up.

"Do not look down upon yourself. There are so many things that you can achieve in life, you just need to believe in yourself and work towards your dreams. I am a living testimony," she said with a smile and passion.

The mentorship session was organized under the theme; **"Love Begins With Me" #selflove #youngwomenmatter,**

According to Chipo Bangira, an Inspirator, participants were taken through the concept of self-love and how it was important for their personal development. During the discussions, a number of challenges were identified by the girls. These included: lack of economic opportunities, unavailability of youth friendly Sexual Reproductive Health services, discrimination, labelling and sexual abuse.

The participants were also taught how to make necklaces, key holders and serviette stands as part of economic empowerment drive.

Fatuma Muwanika, one of the participants stated that the session never left her the same.

"I have acquired several life and income generating skills. I have met other young women, and together, we shall work to build and change our lives", she said.

Immaculate Awor, ActionAid Busiki Program Officer, stated that ActionAid was working towards the creation of safe spaces for young people to build their confidence and have critical conversations on issues that are affecting them.

"We have realized that we cannot ignore the power relations that come into play when young women are participating in public spaces especially young mothers who are in most cases discriminated and labelled. We are making deliberate efforts to build their skills and knowledge as part of personal development, build strong peer to peer systems and increase their sphere of influence in their localities and beyond in line with the AAU Country Strategy Paper Five", she concluded.

### Week Ahead

- The last set of interviews for the position of the country Director are happening this Thursday and Friday. As you may have read in the Country Director's new year message, the Country Director is expected to start work in April. We keep our fingers crossed as we pray for the best candidate to win!
- ActionAid is currently hosting Maddie Hordern, the Assistant Director of NGO Program, Performance and Quality section at DFAT. She is in the country to review ActionAid's work in Extractives Governance which is funded by DFAT. Details on her visit in the next edition of the Weekly.