actionaid Uganda

Weekly

Feb 29— March 6

Okello attended a drama performance about GBV. It never left him the same. At one point, he thought they were acting out his conduct to his wife and children of the past 10 years. On that day, he resolved to stop battering his wife. He also supported her in her brick laying business. They are now happily married, and all their children are in school.

Every 12 minutes, A Woman dies due to GBV-Report!

ActionAid Uganda reports that one of the biggest drivers of GBV is the poor economic status of women. AAU has hence incorporated Women economic empowerment in its services to GBV survivors.

Five women are killed every hour by a partner or family member globally, according to new figures released by ActionAid International last week.

An analysis of a United Nations global crime study has revealed that an estimated **43,600 women are killed every year** by an intimate partner or family member. This is the equivalent to five women every hour or **one woman every 12 minutes**.

Sarah Carson, Women's Right's Campaigns Manager, at ActionAid UK stated that as a woman, the most common form of violence you are likely to face is domestic violence. This she said is a horrific symptom of gender inequality.

"With a third of all women experiencing some form of violence in their lifetime, the issue is a global epidemic and one which threatens the lives of millions of women every day, with women living in poverty and those facing other forms of discrimination often at greater risk."

ActionAid also estimates that **over half a million women will die** as a result of domestic violence by 2030. Despite this, almost a quarter of countries in the world still have no laws specifically protecting women from domestic violence.

These findings were launched as part of international development charity ActionAid's new briefing ***Fearless Women and Girls - leading the way, transforming lives*** which sets out the critical role women's rights groups play in tackling violence.

The report calls on the Government to commit to boosting the proportion of aid going directly to women's groups working on the frontline. ActionAid is recommending at least **£70 million** over the next three years to be taken from the existing aid budget.

Research from the Association for Women's Rights in Development shows that women's rights' organisations are chronically underfunded, with an estimated average income of just over **£14,000 a year** per year.

Local Context

Violence against Women and girls remains one of the most prevalent human Rights violations in Uganda. The World Bank estimates that one in three women will experience physical or sexual abuse in their life time. ActionAid Uganda is one of the lead agencies in the country working to attain gender equality and women's empowerment and is operating 10 GBV shelters of Gulu,Lira,Amuru, Nebbi, Mubende, Bwaise, Pallisa, Kumi, Kween and Katakwi.

Joyce Nabwire Baker, the Project Coordinator of the DFID funded Women Protection Centres affirms that Gender Based Violence undermines the health, dignity, security and autonomy of its victims and yet it remains shrouded in a culture of silence.

"At the shelters, we receive victims of violence suffering from sexual and reproductive health consequences like unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, fistula, STIs and sometimes death."

Some of the services offered include psychosocial assistance, medical treatment, legal advice, conflict mediation and economic empowerment to GBV survivors. Joyce notes that one of the biggest drivers of GBV in Uganda is the poor economic status of women. The centres have hence integrated economic empowerment in its makeup.

"We have to date equipped over 1000 women with skills in catering, tailoring, Poultry breeding and hair dressing. These women are now running businesses as individuals or in groups."

AAU has proved that economic empowerment is a driver out of GBV. As we commemorate international Womens day tomorrow, we call upon you to support the women in their lives to attain economic empowerment.

DGF Seeks learning from AAU

AAU's Nickson Ogwal interacts with Sophie (Right) and Martha (Middle)

AG-Programs Director, Chris seals off the partnership with DGF's Sophie.

On Thursday last week ,ActionAid Uganda hosted Martha Nanjobe and Sophie Racine from the Democratic Governance Facility (DGF). The team came to learn from ActionAid how it incorporates the livelihoods aspect in its programming. Sophie, the component Manager of Access to Justice at DGF commended ActionAid for the great job its doing in the community.

"We received very impressive feedback from the consultants who recently conducted an evaluation of all our partners and the work they do. ActionAid is doing a great job. We are here to learn from you", she said.

Sophie also noted that while DGF funds several CSOs to provide legal aid services in various parts of the country, they have not realised a reduction in the powerlessness and vulnerability of the legal aid clients.

Nabwire Joyce Baker, the coordinator of the Women Protection Centres stated that its for the same reason that ActionAid incorporated Economic empowerment and a focus on livelihoods in its programing.

"In our patriarchal society, you cannot realize empowerment especially of women if you don't address their economic needs. We conduct an assessment of all our clients, identify business ideas of interest and equip them with basic skills and a start up package."

Joyce added that the women then operate the businesses in groups or individually and this has transformed them into powerful women, standing up against GBV.

The meeting resolved that the other DGF partners work closely with ActionAid to complement each other, leverage resources and tap in each other's expertise. A follow up meeting will be conducted in two weeks' time to agree on the working relationship. We look forward.

AAU Country Director on Two Global Working Groups

Arthur (Left) with the steering group of the Civic Charter last week in Berlin-Germany.

Last week, our Country Director was in Berlin Germany to attend a maiden Steering Group meeting of a few Civil Society Leaders from Africa, Americas, Asia and Europe that has been tasked to come up with a Charter on Civic Participation.
Developed under the auspices of the International Centre for Civil Society, the Charter on Civic Participation is a response to the global crisis of threats to civic space and takes a positive and proactive approach to defending and expanding the space of civic actors by articulating its value and the cost of not creating an enabling environment for Civil Society globally.

In the same week, our Country Director and a few other leaders within ActionAid was appointed and endorsed by the Federation Leadership Team (FLT) to be on an AAI Strategy Development Team that will provide leadership in developing the federation's next global strategy.

The appointment of our CD on these global working groups is a vote of confidence in his contribution to work beyond Uganda and we join in celebrating this development, even if we know that it will come at some cost to his time for AA Uganda!

Have you read this year's CD's Annual message?

On Monday last week, the Country Director, in the tradition he established in the last three years released the 2016 CD Annual Message. The theme of this year's Annual Message is, '*Responding to the Fundraising Challenge by Improving Programme Quality*' and it focuses on the important nexus between programme quality and fundraising success.

The Annual Message also articulates the strategic priorities for 2016 upon which all AA Uganda leaders and staff need to contribute to. Don't be left offside, read the 2016 Annual Message now **Here**

Story of Change for the Week!

The deaf and the community they live in will never be the same. KAMBARA Deaf Development Project (KDDP) was the silver lining on a dark cloud among the deaf community in western Uganda. It was a breath of fresh air, air that reignited the deaf movement in the western Ugandan districts of Mbarara, Isingiro and Kyegegwa

KDDP was a result of a partnership initiated in 2000 between ActionAid and Uganda National Association for the Deaf (UNAD).

Details of this journey **Here**

WEEK AHEAD:

- Civil Society Organisations will have a series of post-election activities this week that ActionAid will be actively part of. These include, a Press Conference at the National NGO Forum at 11 am on Monday 7th March 2016, a visit to former Presidential Candidates, including the incarcerated Dr. Kiiza Besigye to discuss a post-election agenda for Uganda and a Post-Election CSO Leaders' Reflection on Friday 11th March 2016. Look out for the CSO statement.
- There will be another Twitter Rally tomorrow 8th March 2016 at AA Uganda Boardroom to commemorate the International Women's Day! Get online and join the discussion on how best the women's emancipation agenda can be taken forward.
- 12 Danish Coordinators are in the country this week to Visit Referral hospitals that have been hosting interns and volunteers. As part of A global volunteers programme coordinated by ActionAid Denmark, AAU been placing intern Nurses from Denmark in Regional Hospitals including Gulu, Jinja and Lira Regional Referral Hospitals.