



**Weekly**  
Sept 29-5 Oct

Bena, above was identified as a beneficiary for the Securing Food Rights programme, her yields were poor, she worked on other peoples land to earn enough for one meal a day and suffered abuse from her husband. [Click here to read about AAU's success in transforming lives.](#)

## President Museveni's five minutes at AAU's Oil in Uganda stall



President Museveni and the Minister for Energy and Mineral Development, Irene Muloni at AAU's Oil in Uganda Stall

Last week, **the ActionAid Oil in Uganda** team was honoured to engage in a five minute conversation with His excellency the President, Yoweri Museveni about Oil in Uganda's work.

This was during the 3rd Mineral Wealth Conference organized by Uganda Chamber of Mines and Petroleum that took place in Kampala.

While at the stall (courtesy of Democratic Governance Facility), President Museveni was anxious to know what Oil in Uganda project is all about, where it gets its funding and for how long the project had been in existence.

Interestingly, the President noted that he had 'heard' about the project and was more concerned about 'whose' oil the team has always been writing about.

At the conference, the President Museveni also retracted his last year's promise of removing Withholding tax and VAT saying that taxing the investors will help clean up the internal systems of the companies.

However, in a rather bizarre statement, the president stated that government will change the mining law to allow intending investors in the mining industry to access private land that contains minerals without negotiating with the land owners.

Oil in Uganda during their field visits has noted how land wrangles and conflicts is on the increase with vulnerable people losing their land to powerful government agents. The issue of land is very sensitive in the mineral rich areas and it is upon us to empower them to stand up for a free, fair and informed consent when it comes to land issues. The president forgets that while the state may acquire individual or private land where such acquisition is for the greater benefit of the public than the individual, it doesn't mean that the owner, who the president called 'villager' should be sent off their land in favour of an investor.

Land owners also have rights that must be respected and protected and must be promptly, fairly and adequately compensated.

## AAU Meets Acitivista in Northern Uganda

Eight youth leaders met in Gulu last week to forge the way for the launch of a Northern Ugandan Activista Regional Network. The idea was borne on International Youth Day, when over 100 participants agreed that a regional network would facilitate better coordination across multiple efforts and provide a central platform to address specific challenges experienced by the youth from the region.

The meeting brought together Activista representatives from Nebbi, Pader, Amuru and Gulu, who have been seconded by their respective districts to establish the network. Over the next one year, the leaders are tasked with building support across youth structures, broader civil society, and will engage the youth on the networks purpose and mission. They will report back to the broader Activista network on progress on International Youth Day in 2015. Activista is part of the ActionAid programming which looks at the youth as change agents and the future of any country/region.

Last week the committee agreed on its terms of reference and finalised a Charter that articulates a number of priorities including land wrangles and gambling. The network is intended to act as a channel for emerging issues and to provide an interface with the national political arena.



Some of the Activista in a focus group discussion

## AAU and SEATINI set stage for discussion of seed policies



The State Minister for Agriculture launching the publication last week. Left is ActionAid's Policy and Campaigns Manager

Last week, the State Minister for Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries Hon. Zerubabel Mujimbi Nyiira launched the "Seed related Policies and Laws in Uganda"; a publication that provides an analysis of the gaps in the Country's seed related policies.

ActionAid Uganda through Australian Aid ventured into a deeper understanding of the legal frameworks surrounding seed in Uganda. Together with SEATINI and other civil society organization a study was carried out on a number of seed related policies to enhance our capacity to engage with the duty bearers on seed security in favor of small holder farmer's right to save, use and share indigenous seed.

In his remarks, Hon. Nyiira cited the document as very relevant in informing the several Agricultural review processes. He reminded participants that agriculture and food are national security issues and that seed is the genesis of life. The minister applauded ActionAid and other actors for the commitment towards providing knowledge, information and alternatives to stake holders.

This meeting was attended by 5 women small holder farmer representatives, 8 Members of Parliament. The media, Academia, Development partners and the civil society were all represented.

## Let us give Annet Opportunity!



Annet with the AAU Women Rights Coordinator. Disability will not stand in her way

Today, we are introducing to you a very remarkable lady. Her name is Annet Babirye Lwamba. She is a mother of three. When her husband abandoned her due to pressure from her inlaws, she did not lock herself in tears and self pity. She was judged as an fit to be a wife to their son due to her physical disability. She stood up and instead embraced life with courage and determination.

According to Hellen Malinga, the Women Rights Coordinator at ActionAid Uganda, Annet is a very good trainer. She has worked with Send A Cow and NUDIPU as a resource person. Her speciality is in livelihoods, enterprise selection and management and prevention Management of Gender Based Violence.

Despite her physical shortcomings, Annet has hand on skills: she can write well and demonstrates computer proficiency.

Annet is looking for opportunities for short term employment or consultancy so that she can earn a living and sustain her children. contact Hellen.malinga@actionaid.org if you have any opportunities for Annet. Let us give her chance to lead a life of dignity.

## Sebei Region demands for representation of special interest groups in the electoral commission

As a member of the Uganda Governance Monitoring platform but also one of the CSOs interested in causing positive Governance change in the Country, ActionAid organized a consultative meeting in Sebei with the aim of shaping proposals for long term constitutional stability in Uganda.

The forum, which attracted over 200 participants, was graced by the Jane Francis Huka, the RDC of Kapchorwa.. Also present were the political, cultural and technical leaders from Sebei.

The consultative meeting was held ahead of the National Consultative Dialogue organized for purposes of forging a national consensus on a new system for organizing and managing elections. Participants agreed to the fact that there is a need to reform the country's electoral management systems so as to push the country forward in the democratization process and thus deepen democracy and sustain the democratic gains so far made.

Participants were introduced to various reform proposals as well as their legal and political implications which they reviewed in four different groups. The discussions were informed by a number of issues including political parties, access to media, composition and powers of the electoral commission, term limits, and representation of special groups, military in parliament, among others.

At the end of the two day dialogue, participants produced an outcome document, demanding for representation of Special interest groups in the Electoral Commission, inclusion of political party representation in the Electoral commission and free access by the media to all electoral processes among others. These will be shared in the National Consultative meeting later this year.

## Sebei Region has no support mechanism for children with special needs; Report



Sebei Region leaders critically think through the baseline findings

ActionAid under its Violence Against Children project last week reported that the entire Sebei region (districts of Bukwo, Kween and Kapchorwa) has no support facilities for children with special needs. These were part of a baseline study results, undertaken by ActionAid to discover the different forms and natures of violence against children and how they manifest in the different districts. The survey also sought to find out if there were any support mechanisms in place that protect children from abuse.

Other findings included failure by the parents and care takers to provide basic needs to the children, absence of a remand home in the sebei region, the alarming levels of child neglect attributed to polygamy and poverty levels in the region and absence of support mechanisms and programs for children with disabilities.

The European Union supported project will be addressing some of these gaps during the period of implementation. According to the District Community Development Officer of Kween district, the findings were a true reflection of what is on ground. He applauded ActionAid for survey as it would go a long way in informing children related interventions in the district.

Rebecca Kukundakwe, the project Coordinator reckoned the commitment to make a difference in the lives of the children and called upon all stakeholders to play their part and hold each accountable to save the lives of Uganda's young generation in Sebei region.

## WEEK AHEAD

- ActionAid together with UNATU will be celebrating National Teachers day by holding a National Dialogue this week at Ridar Hotel. This will be complimented by a high level debate on Urban T.V on Wenesday morning. We shall keep you informed.
- AAU Programs, Finance and Audit Board meetings will be conducted this Friday.
- AAU and DGF will hold a meeting to support the Oil In Uganda project.