

ActionAid Pays exposure visit to Masaka GBV Shelter



The visitors from Gulu and their hosts in Masaka at the end of the experiential learning

In a move to boost sharing of knowledge and experiences, ActionAid GBV shelter in Gulu organised an exposure visit for staff and partners to Masaka GBV shelter. The team comprised of doctors, police officers, social workers and ActionAid staff.

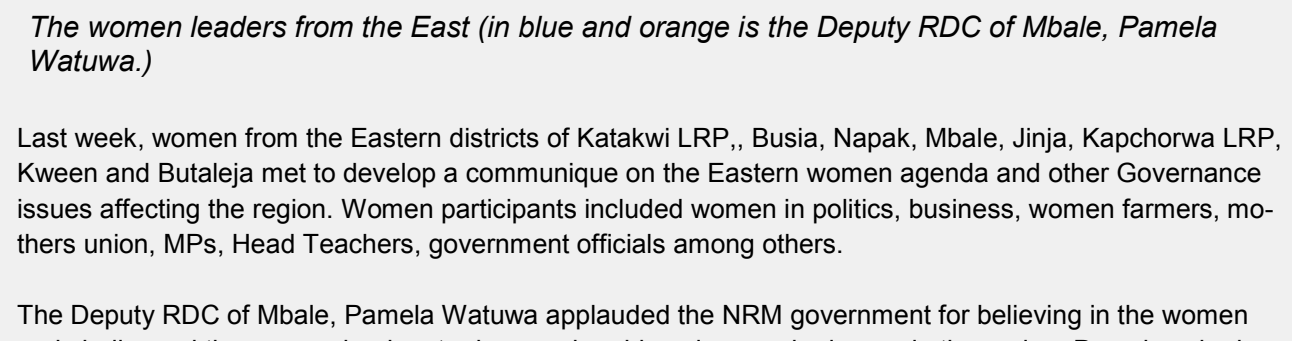
The visitors learnt from the Masaka team their experiences, lessons and best practices on GBV prevention and management. They also learnt about the functionality of the GBV Task Force in order to strengthen the GBV referral pathway and partnership of the shelter project with Masaka local Government.

At the end of the visit, the Gulu team resolved to strengthen the GBV referral pathway to improve its functionality. The team also learnt that involvement of the district local Government in the shelter activities was key for the project success as it increases project ownership hence a good sustainability plan.

The Masaka district Chairperson thanked ActionAid and Gulu team for picking on Masaka for the exposure and learning visit.

"We are motivated to keep the fire burning. I argue you to go back and make the Gulu Shelter a model in Northern Uganda," he challenged.

Women in Politics: When the Wise women leaders in the East came together

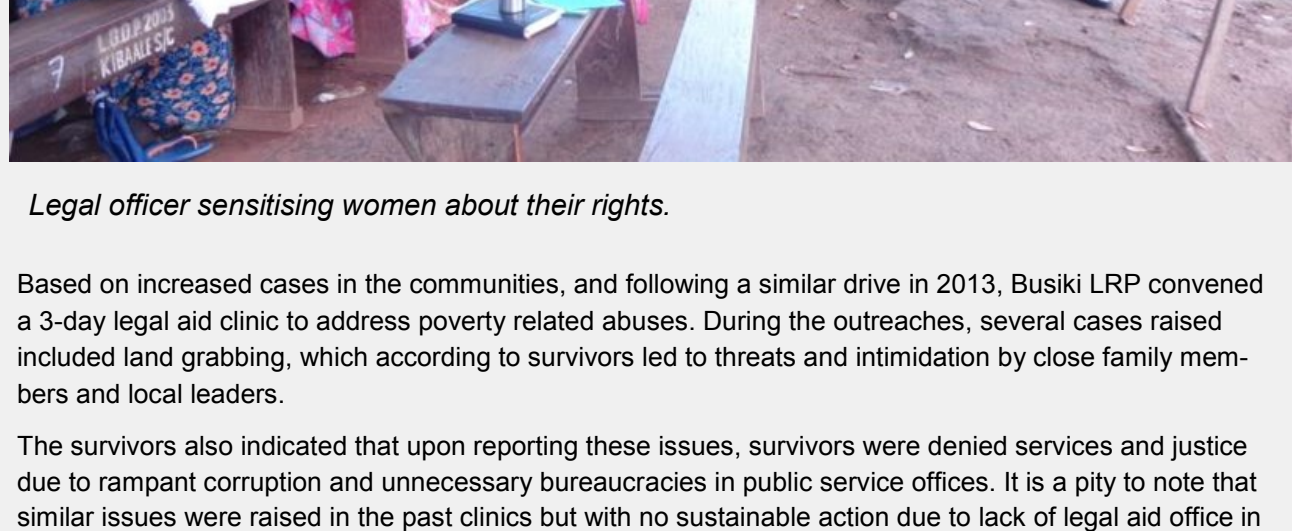


The women leaders from the East (in blue and orange is the Deputy RDC of Mbale, Pamela Watuwa.)

Last week, women from the Eastern districts of Katakwi LRP., Busia, Napak, Mbale, Jinja, Kapchorwa LRP, Kween and Butaleja met to develop a communique on the Eastern women agenda and other Governance issues affecting the region. Women participants included women in politics, business, women farmers, mothers union, MPs, Head Teachers, government officials among others.

The Deputy RDC of Mbale, Pamela Watuwa applauded the NRM government for believing in the women and challenged the women leaders to do more in addressing gender issues in the region. Pamela asked participants to think harder when she shared her experience of a monitoring visit to Masindwa Primary school where no single girl is in school because of the high defilement prevalence. At the end of the deliberations, the women agreed to make the Women Agenda a political and campaign issue. This would be a great success as only women are the only sex that gives unwavering support. ActionAid was represented by Christine Kellen Namutebi, the Governance program Officer.

UWONET/BUSIKI LRP partnership to bring economic justice to GBV survivors in Namutumba

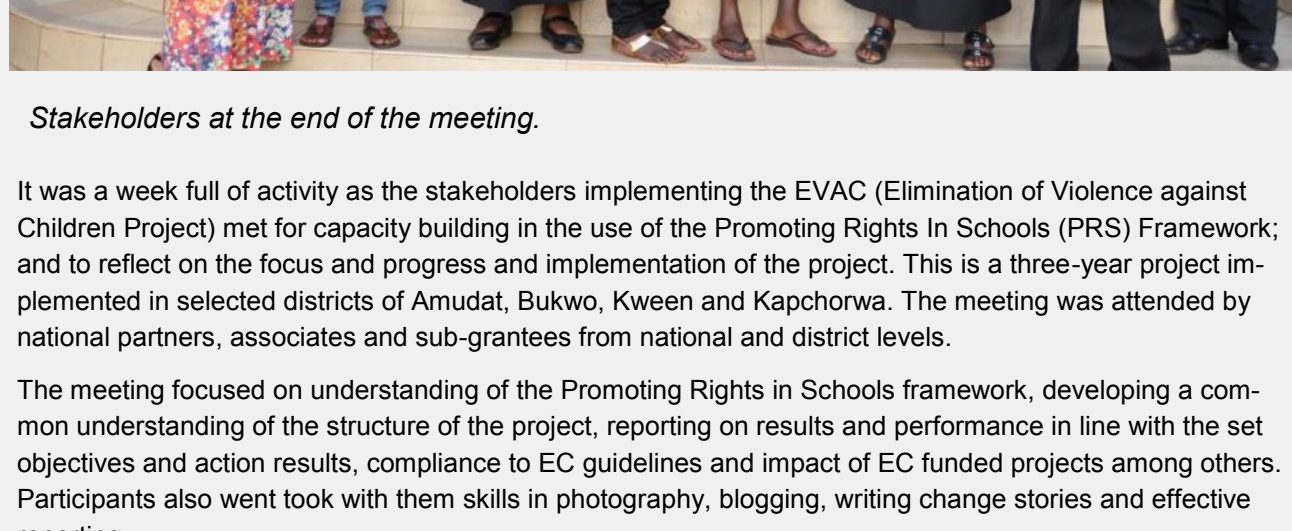


Legal officer sensitising women about their rights.

Based on increased cases in the communities, and following a similar drive in 2013, Busiki LRP convened a 3-day legal aid clinic to address poverty related abuses. During the outreaches, several cases raised included land grabbing, which according to survivors led to threats and intimidation by close family members and local leaders.

The survivors also indicated that upon reporting these issues, survivors were denied services and justice due to rampant corruption and unnecessary bureaucracies in public service offices. It is a pity to note that similar issues were raised in the past clinics but with no sustainable action due to lack of legal aid office in the LRP. ActionAid is now partnering with UWONET, which has a legal officer to ensure economic violence against women in Namutumba becomes history.

We now understand the EVAC Project



Stakeholders at the end of the meeting.

It was a week full of activity as the stakeholders implementing the EVAC (Elimination of Violence against Children Project) met for capacity building in the use of the Promoting Rights in Schools (PRS) Framework; and to reflect on the focus and progress and implementation of the project. This is a three-year project implemented in selected districts of Amudat, Bukwo, Kween and Kapchorwa. The meeting was attended by national partners, associates and sub-grantees from national and district levels.

The meeting focused on the understanding of the Promoting Rights in Schools framework, developing a common understanding of the structure of the project, reporting on results and performance in line with the set objectives and action results, compliance to EC guidelines and impact of EC funded projects among others. Participants also went took with them skills in photography, blogging, writing change stories and effective reporting.

At the end of the four-day meeting, participants were excited:

"Now, I know this project in and out and will implement in full blast" commented one of the participants.

CD Faults President on State of the Nation Address

As it has often been the case, ActionAid was invited by NTV, the most viewed and popular television station in Uganda to be part of a panel to analyse the State of the Nation Address delivered by the President of the Republic of Uganda on June 5th at the Serena International Conference Centre. Our Country Director, Arthur LAROK, represented us. The other members on the Panel moderated by Charles Bwogi, the NTV Business Editor were Morrison Rwakakamba, Presidential Assistant for Research and Mr. Charles Ocici, Executive Director of Enterprise Uganda.

In his submission and while acknowledging some important points made by the President, the CD thought the State of the Nation Address fell far short of expectations. In terms of process, he faulted the Speaker's long introductory account that instead of inviting the President to account to the nation sounded like the Speaker instead accounting to the President and thanking him for the support to Parliament in the past year.

The State of the Nation Address itself, according to the CD was repetitive of previous state of the nation addresses, and did not show any meaningful measure of accountability. The State of the Nation, according to the CD 'lacked a human face' as previous ones preferring to dwell on statistics that really don't mean much for the ordinary Uganda.

Ugandan public servants are not being paid on time, if at all, the service delivery situation especially in health is in dire need for a revamp, teachers and nurses can barely live due to their poor pay, children cannot concentrate in class because there is no lunch provided and wives of police officers are demanding for better living conditions, are issues that would have been worth addressing.

On Agriculture which the president spent over 60% of his time talking about, the CD noted:

"I have, ever since I set foot in a classroom heard that Agriculture is the backbone of the Ugandan economy...and yet never has the sector in recent times got more than 5% budget allocation! All the president says about agriculture is rhetoric that must be matched by more funding to the sector and intra sector allocative efficiency..." the CD remarked.

He also picked issue with the bad joke the president made about the government not wanting to 'cause civil war in Uganda' by returning the Marriage and Divorce Bill, an important piece of legislation that would greatly engage with structural impediments to the emancipation of women.

The CD also faulted the address on important matters that were missing the all together, key among them: the State of Uganda's armed forces in Sudan; the leadership vacuum in the Judiciary where the country for over 1 year has not had a substantive Chief Justice; strategies for increasing revenue, especially through curbing wasteful expenditure.

Read more of the CD's reflections in an Analytical Note he is preparing for the AA Uganda Policy Team under the title: **'Lacking a Human Face: State of the Nation Address falls far short of expectations'**. This piece will be ready by the next AA Uganda Weekly. Also watch the 'State of the Sleeping nation' on this link - <http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=Nja0vBivm7Q> and finally on this link - <http://www.statehouse.go.ug/media/presidential-statements/2014/06/05/state-nation-address-he-woweri-kagula-museveni-president-re>, you can find the full 'State of the Nation Address'

State of Art Boardroom- Just the beginning



Work in progress- look out for the fresh and refurbished boardroom.

For staff outside Kampala, you have reason to travel to Kampala. Thanks to the Administration unit, we now have a staff boardroom to be proud of:

"This is not yet complete. Look out for the state of art furniture, art pieces and a plasma screen" said Christine Aboke, the HR/OD Director. "We are looking forward to the plasma screen, on which we shall watch the World cup". Officially, it will kick off this Thursday. All matches are between 9pm and 6am. Staffs are urged to prepare accordingly, so that after watching the matches all night, the struggle to end poverty is not encroached on during day with naps in our rest room. May your team take the cup.

Communication training in Amuru



Participants at the Communications training in Amuru

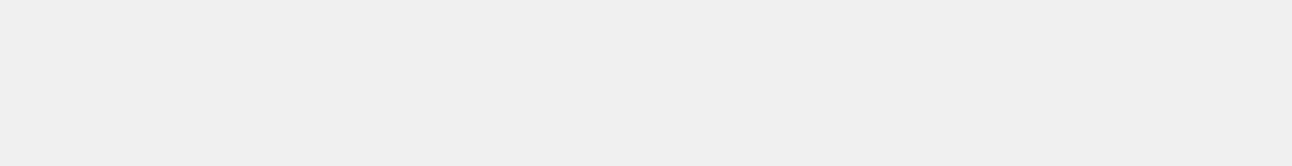
Throughout last week, staff from the Amuru LRP and, the Women Protection Centre (WPC) and partner organisations participated in training about documenting change. Communications Advisor Soren Bjerregaard facilitated the training, which was a combination of theory and practical exercises.

Not only did the participants get a clear idea about how to write different kinds of change stories and take photos. They also collected stories that will be published.

"This training gave hands on advice on how to select and produce change stories. We also went to the field to document how our centre has helped women overcome domestic violence. Those stories will help us demonstrate or work to the outside world," said Project Officer at the WPC Josephine Laker.

Identifying different levels of change, writing tips, case studies and action photos were among the topics covered on the workshop.

Partner Synergy meeting in Lira



The Democratic Governance Facility held a Partner Synergy Meeting with partner organisations in the Langi and Acholi Sub-Regions at Margharita Palace Hotel in Lira from 5-6th June 2014. ActionAid, the major/ biggest partner in transparency and accountability monitoring in Northern Uganda was invited to contribute to the agenda of building networks, synergies and enhancing capacity of DGF funded partners in ensuring responsive, people centre and accountable social service delivery with critical focus on the reconstruction efforts in NUSAF I & II, PRDP and other social service delivery mechanisms.

At the end of the meeting, participating partners agreed to greater cooperation in implementation of activities for strength in numbers and augmentation of the gains CSOs have contributed to the reconstruction efforts in Northern Uganda. AAU was accorded leadership to coordinate the anti-corruption efforts among the clustering done in the meeting with primary responsibility of coordinating and spearheading CSOs involved in anti-corruption work within the region. AAU was represented by the National Coordinator Just and Democratic Governance (Florence Obua) and Programme Officer for governance, Timothy G. Kabaale.

Week Ahead!

- The new members of the general Assembly will be orientated into their new roles this Friday the 13th while the General Assembly will take place on Saturday the 14th.
- This morning, we welcomed interns into the organisation. They will stay with us for the next two months. Please make learning fun for them.
- Watch out for the National Child Rights Convention this week, as we commemorate the day of the African Child.