

## Weekly

September 14—20

Margaret Aryema from Oyam is now a successful mixed farmer after getting back her land with the support from ActionAid under the Berkley Women Land Rights Project. Widowed in 1995, this mother of five did not have access and control of the land that her husband left behind for close to 18 years until AAU intervened in 2013

### Cultural Leaders pledge Fairness in Judgments



(Left) The police and judicial leaders facilitating the sessions in Kumi last week. (Right) The Speaker of Parliament, Hon Rebecca Kadaga commits to play her role to end GBV in Uganda (File Photo)

In a bid to boost the fight against GBV, AAU Kumi LRP in conjunction with the Iteso cultural Union (ICU) conducted a community awareness and sensitisation of sub county and Parish ICU committees on the legal frame work relating to Family and land. The committee members were taken through the succession act and the Land act to enhance their knowledge in the management of customary land. The Marriage and Divorce Bill was also discussed.

Recently, while at a national land grabs awareness conference at Fairway Hotel, the meeting was surprised by the Kaberamaido legislator who openly stated that women have no right to own and control land in their matrimonial homes. Its also important to note that of all GBV cases reported in the Teso region, land conflicts account for 70%.

The LRP Coordinator of Kumi, Miriam Cherukut adds that the Women Protection Centre in Kumi receives 7 to 10 cases of GBV daily, of which 5 are land related.

"This training, we believe will contribute immensely to the operationalisation of the referral pathway in response to GBV prevention, but most importantly bring about a positive response in the management and conclusion of land and family disputes," she said.

"We have been making mistakes during judgements, we have not been considering the law but our sentiments as men, and this will now change!" said Odele Charles, a clan leader from Mukongoro Sub county.

Those who attended the sensitisation attested that there has been increasing levels of Violence against women due to land wrangles, with many losing land to men who connive with the clan leaders to rule in their favour.

"It is now our role to inform our colleagues who have not come for the meeting, such that we do not go against the laws of this land while administering land related matters!, said Osele David, also a cultural leader.

### Start Planning now; Busiki appeals



Moving forward, AAU is working to ensure that women too attain leadership in their localities in this election period so that the above male dominated meeting can have some ladies

AAU Busiki LRP brought together 177 Local Council (I) chairpersons for a meeting last week. According to Ednance Kiiza, the LRP Coordinator, the main purpose of the meeting was to equip the chairpersons with the new planning guidelines and periods since these were changed effective the current financial year. Unlike in the previous years where the process would start at the village and parish levels with the generation of local priorities in October, the process will effective this year start in September.

According to Teopista Masia, the Program Officer in Busiki, the local council Chairpersons are the head of the planning at the village level and play a pivotal role in the mobilization of citizens to be part of the planning in the different localities.

"The main purpose of this is to have communities set their own priorities basing on the community major needs and ranking them accordingly".

The chairpersons appreciated the training and even remarked that most of them were not aware that the planning had started.

"Thank you ActionAid for opening our eyes. We were living in the dark and would only wake up when it's too late. We are going to embark on the process. Better we are late than not planning at all", remarked Sabakaki Vicent, the local Chairperson of Kisega Village in Ivukula Sub county.

### AAU part of Environmental Regulations Review.

The National Environment Act and Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) regulations are undergoing review. As is the requirement for any review, CSOs have been given room to input their recommendations to the law, ActionAid Uganda inclusive.

ActionAid was part of the three day meeting that concluded that EIA is key and must be made compulsory for all developers of any public or private project. Special interest was in the mineral and oil sectors.

Special emphasis was drawn to the need to regulate artisanal miners who were singled out as the lot that is hardly assessed before carrying out mining activities.

According to Dr. Jennifer Hinton, Executive Director Auranda Minerals, local governments collect over UGX .2millions a week in tax from local miners, an act that is illegal for the local Governments hardly declare this money.

Flavia Nalubega, an Editor at ActionAid's Oil in Uganda Project insisted that oil companies and sector service providers should not be sheltered from undertaking EIAs at the cost of rights holders.

Key among the recommendations was the commitment to ensure that those who undertake environmental assessment should do it in line with the law, desisting from compromise.

### Country Director discusses civic space at the UN



The Country Director of AAU (Right) during his presentation on "New Frontiers on Defending Civic space" in New York last week.

As mentioned in the last weekly, our Country Director was in New York last week representing ActionAid International (AAI) at a Panel convened by the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF) to commemorate the International Day of Democracy (IDD).

Organized around the theme, Civil Society Space, the IDD Panel Discussion took place at the UN Headquarters in New York and featured other participants from the UN itself and other international organizations. Our Country Director, who is also the Chair of AAI's Working Group on Shrinking Political Space presented a paper on 'New Frontiers on Defending Civic Space' in which he makes a case for NGOs to be more socially embedded and harnessing the infrastructure they have with ordinary people that they serve to defend and expand their space.

This paper has been summarized in a blog on this [Link](#)

Well done CD!

### WEEK AHEAD:

- ActionAid's Anti-Sexual Harassment 10 day campaign is in day six today. ActionAid stands for zero tolerance to Sexual Harassment at the work place for both men and women.
- Harriet Gimbo, the Programs Director at AAU and Hellen Malinga, the National Women Rights and Gender Equity Coordinator are in Australia for the next three weeks to among others discuss the transitional justice programming for Uganda. They were joined by the International Chairperson of the ActionAid Governing Board, Irene Ovonji Odida
- Fred Kawooya, the Policy and campaigns Manager will Join SEATIN for the Tax meeting in Entebbe.
- The Country Director will be in Luweero this week to take part in the Global Action on the Sustainable Development Goals.