



Weekly

Mar 9 - Mar 15

Pader Women demand passing of the Marriage and Devorce Bill

In a bid to strengthen the relationship between ActionAid and its sponsors, Pader LRP rolled out a massive message collection last week. The exercise involves generating quality messages and photos from the children to their sponsors, counting of missing children and documenting the progress in programming of the sponsored communities.

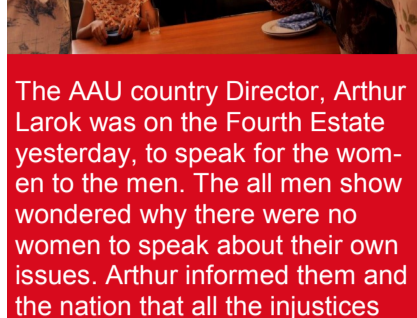
During the message collection where over 719 child messages are to be obtained from both Awere and Ogom Sub Counties, the Women of Ogom called upon government officials to stop politicizing the issues in the Domestic Relations Bill. Instead, they should ensure that citizens are adequately sensitized of the contentious clauses so that the bill can pass.

"Over 90% of women in Uganda are vulnerable to land grabbing because of the ambiguity in the Ugandan Land Policy and the Land Act which would be clarified in the Domestic Relations Bill," said Betty Balisallamu - Legal officer at Caritas.

She added that many of the relatives of the deceased husbands have pushed the unmarried widows out of their deceased husbands land claiming they were not legit. This has deprived women of access, utilization, and ownership of land. The women called upon the Government structures to note and take forward these issues.

As is the norm, ActionAid took the opportunity to involve the parents in education and community awareness sessions alongside the message collection.

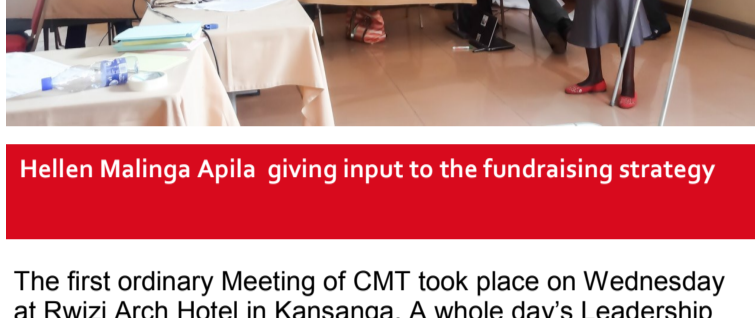
Country Director takes on men on women Issues



The AAU country Director, Arthur Larok was on the Fourth Estate yesterday, to speak for the women to the men. The all men show wondered why there were no women to speak about their own issues. Arthur informed them and the nation that all the injustices that women are often subjected to are perpetuated by men and hence men need to take stage and speak about these injustices. We shall be sharing with you the video before close of week.

Earlier in the week, the CD appreciated the women at AAU head office with a cake. Arthur told the excited women staff in the presence of their male colleagues that recognising the role of women and putting them first will start from within. Thank you Arthur for starting with your own house, to recognise women!!

Key outcomes from CMT- and Fundraising Strategy meeting



Hellen Malinga Apila giving input to the fundraising strategy

The first ordinary Meeting of CMT took place on Wednesday at Rwizi Arch Hotel in Kansanga. A whole day's Leadership Meeting on the AA Uganda Fundraising Strategy followed it hot on the heels. Both meetings were timely and successful.

The CMT Meeting reviewed performance since the year begun from all Directorates. It was also the final preparations from statutory first quarter committee and board meetings scheduled for March and April. The top 10 issues discussed and resolved at the CMT and fundraising meetings, both of them chaired by the Country Director were as follows:

- a) Completion of the Fundraising Strategy by Wednesday 18 March, in time for the Board Committee Meetings on 20 March. A cross-functional task team was put in place to accomplish this.
- b) The CSP IV Review Roadmap was discussed, as was an internal process paper to make the process more inclusive, involving and empowering. Detailed updates will be shared in due course.
- c) A decision was made to renew the contract of KGN, the organizational lawyers up to end of 2015.
- d) It was decided to engage KPMG to provide tax compliance and advisory services for 2015.
- e) A decision was reached to write warning letters to all line managers who haven't completed 2015 appraisals by the last deadline.
- f) A decision was reached to adopt a more stringent and conservative reserves management given current financial and funding realities.
- g) A decision was reached to effect more stringent penalties to all staff that do not comply with advance policy provisions. Details will be communicated by HROE Director.
- h) Following CMT's concern about performance of projects generally which continue to cast the organisation in bad light. For the projects EU-VAC and DGF where absorption has been a challenge, CMT instructed programmes leadership to take decisive actions on performance.
- i) CMT was impressed and applauded innovations by the Projects Manager to track critical contract management obligations and pledged unequivocal support and action on emerging issues.

ActionAid voted best performing NGO in Amuru



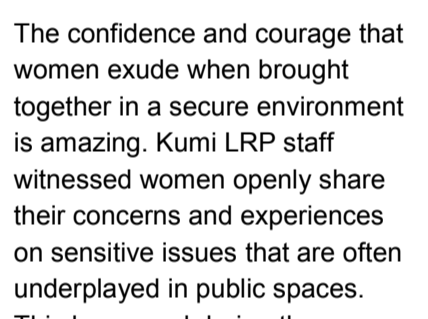
M.P.'s joins the dance to celebrate the district milestones.

ActionAid Amuru joined the rest of the world to celebrate international Women's Day. The function attracted girls and Women from all walks of life; students, legislators, professionals among others. The Chairman LCIII, who welcomed the guests, remarked that all stakeholders from homes to the highest office in the land should empower women.

"When women are empowered, they shine like stars, and continue to light and inspire the whole World." he said.

Amuru district used the occasion to count their gains on the journey of women empowerment. The district has registered an increase in the enrolment and retention of girls in primary schools. The district also positively noted the recruitment of women in leadership positions like the District Chief Administrative Officer and Acting District Education Officer. These were called upon to use their offices to advance the women in the district. At the end of the occasion, ActionAid was voted the best performing NGO in the district. It was recognised for working closely with the district, which ensures sustainability of its work, but most importantly putting the people at the forefront of their interventions.

Kumi Girls demand for free sanitary towels



Girls at the conference. They demanded for free distribution on sanitary towels to girls in schools.

The confidence and courage that women exude when brought together in a secure environment is amazing. Kumi LRP staff witnessed women openly share their concerns and experiences on sensitive issues that are often underplayed in public spaces. This happened during the one-day's women conference in Kumi in commemoration of international Women's Day.

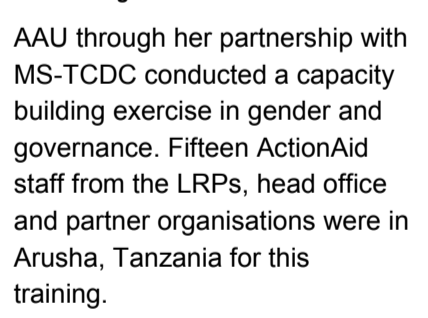
The over 100 Women who attended the conference noted that domestic violence, limited access to sexual and reproductive health as well as lack of meaningful participation in leadership were undermining their potential to rise up. The girls on the other hand wondered why sanitary towels to school going young girls cannot be given free of charge and yet the whole nation knows that it is the major reason why they continue to be very irregular at school.

Women also expressed concerns on matters pertaining to decision making over their bodies as commonly exhibited in marital rape.

"Even when am preparing food for the family, my man will demand that I leave the work and serve him with sex and resume later to prepare the food, which he also wants in time," remarked one participant.

With support from ActionAid, the women generated a memorandum with all these issues that they presented to the district leadership and legislators as the district commemorated

I now appreciate Gender Concepts - Denis Semwanga



Timothy Kabaale, one of the participants receives a certificate after the training in Arusha last week

AAU through her partnership with MS-TCDC conducted a capacity building exercise in gender and governance. The LRP's, head office and partner organisations were in Arusha, Tanzania for this training.

According to Denis Semwanga, a Finance officer who attended the training, it is not business as usual in his work.

"I now understand gender issues very well. I am now able to review budgets in relation to gender based budgeting. Even as I look through the accountabilities, I will be looking out to number on women and girls that a particular disbursement impacted," he said.

Denis adds that all people need this training to better support and embrace the gender issues that

ActionAid International launches L.A.N.D Platform



The L.A.N.D platform crew at the end of the deliberations in Maputo.

31 ActionAid International member states that subscribe to the L.A.N.D platform were in Maputo, Mozambique last week for first ever face to face meeting that saw the official launch of the platform.

L.A.N.D platform, an initiative by ActionAid was formed to give leadership and direction to the federation on land, agriculture, natural resources, and defending the rights of the commons/marginalized communities.

During the five-day meeting, also attended by AAU's National Livelihoods Coordinator Peter Clever Kalule, all previous deliberations of the platform on email and skype were agreed upon and formalized. Terms of reference for the L.A.N.D platform were also finalized and approved. These clearly highlight aspects of composition of the platform, roles, monitoring, and accountability

The platform members agreed to have three working areas; Land & Agriculture, Natural Resources & Extractives, and the "Land For" campaign.

The platform will contribute to the wider community of practice for broader knowledge and information sharing.

School dropout figures worry Kotido leaders



Kotido leaders deliberate on a move to increase enrollment and retention in schools.

On Thursday last week, ActionAid joined the Kotido District Local Government extra ordinary meeting to discuss the status of education and protection of school going children. The meeting was convened to discuss circumstances leading to the very steady reduction in enrolment and completion levels of mainly primary school children as revealed by a recent report.

ActionAid Project Officer David Okello appealed to the District Council to establish Education Ordinance and the Sub-Counties to make by-laws that can be enforced for parents to take children to school. David highlighted that this is the only strategy to domesticate the already existing legal instruments like the Children's Act 2006 and Articles 30 and 34 of the Uganda Constitution. Members also agreed that it was prudent to increase budgetary allocation to education in the district.

The meeting agreed that all sub counties will enact by laws to ensure that all children are in school. ActionAid and other CSO's were called upon to launch stay in school campaigns to change the mind-set of the children and their parents and hence stay in school.

The meeting chaired by the Resident District Commissioner attracted district technical and political staff, civil society organizations in the area, The Uganda police, and UPDF

WEEK AHEAD

- The CD will this week attend the Annual General meeting at the NGO Forum.
- Tax Power meeting on illist financial flows from the Mbeki high level panel report to the African Union will be held this week at Golf Course Hotel.
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