



Weekly

March 19 - 25

Last week, Women in Namutumba petitioned the district leadership on making resolutions and decisions that affect them without their participation. They carried cloth banners with their Palms inscribed on them demanding for inclusion of all women and girls in developmental processes. Welcome to this edition of the Weekly. (Photo/Chipo/ActionAid)

The Award Winning ActionAid Mubende GBV Shelter



The Mubende GBV Shelter staff, Catherine Tusiime receives the Award from the Mubende CAO

Last Week, Mubende District Local Government joined the rest of the world to commemorate the international Women's day. The activities of the day, though belated among others recognised the role and contribution of ActionAid in improving the treatment and rights of women and girls in the district for the last 37 years.

The Chief Administrative Officer of Mubende stated that ActionAid continues to champion the fight against GBV in the district through its GBV prevention and response campaigns.

"Mubende is proud to host one of the 12 GBV Shelters run by ActionAid", she said adding that the shelter provides secure accommodation for women, girls and children who are at risk of or have been subjected to violence.

"The shelter is a safe space. It provides essential aspects of protection, services and resources which enable women who have experienced abuse and their children to recover from the violence, to rebuild self-esteem, and to take steps to regain a self determined and independent life", she said to a thunderous applauded.

Catherine Tusiime, the Psychosocial Officer at the Mubende shelter while receiving the award called on the general public to compliment the ActionAid efforts against GBV by ensuring that no woman and girl in their lives are subjected to abuse.

"We are humbled by this recognition. We are committed to all struggles against the social injustice that GBV is. Join us by standing up for all women and girls in your lives", she said.

ActionAid's Child Protection Policy Commended-Pallisa



P4C Volunteers with some of the pupils after the Child protection Policy sharing session.

Last week, Stakeholders in the ActionAid Pallisa Cluster applauded ActionAid for its significant commitment to put an end to child abuse. During the Sponsorship Child pre- message collection meeting, the ActionAid team took off time to introduce the new child protection policy and declare the organisational commitment and compliance to the document.

"As a human rights based organization, ActionAid is committed to the well being of children and our child centred activities are based on principles of the Convention of the Rights of Children 1989 and the Declaration of Human Rights 1948", stated Aggrey Kibet, the Cluster Coordinator.

Aggrey added that ActionAid does not tolerate any form of child abuse or exploitation.

"The purpose of this policy is to ensure that ActionAid has procedures in place to prevent and deal with child abuse and exploitation both in our programming and interactions with children", he emphasized.

The Policy ActionAid team took ample time to explain the different Policy implications to all stakeholders to create deeper understanding and appreciation of the document. Among the issues highlighted were the different types of violations such as neglect, emotional, physical and sexual abuse that children face in their communities and homes.

Participants later signed commitment documents and pledged to ensure that children's rights are not violated. Stakeholders also commended the uniqueness of the policy as it clearly spells out the roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders in and beyond the organization.

[Click here for the Child Protection Policy Document.](#)

AAU's Country Director Tips at Africa platform



AAU's Country Director, Christine(L) shared experience on shrinking political space and tipped colleagues from Africa on how to respond to it.

In the week ending, ActionAid's Interim Country Director, Christine Aboke was in Rwanda for a three day **One Africa team** meeting. The one Africa team refers to all Country Directors of the ActionAid offices in Africa.

The team among others met to understand and appreciate federation programmatic and structural changes and how they impact work for better domestication in the different countries. The Country Directors also reflected on deepening transformative feminist leadership, signed off peer support system for strengthening countries and reviewed the Africa Political Project.

Christine also joined the Country Directors of Kenya and Nigeria to discuss the shrinking civic and political space. She used this platform to share ActionAid Uganda's experience, challenges and learnings that came with last year's Police siege of the organization. Other Case studies were shared from Zambia, Zimbabwe, Nigeria and Burundi besides Uganda.

To continue to deliver our mission in the context of shrinking civic and political space, the meeting resolved that ActionAid be innovative and move away from the orthodox bureaucratic ways and work better with people's organizations and social movements.

The Country Directors were also tipped to maintain prudent accountability systems that will stand scrutiny from regulatory agencies but most importantly Sensitize communities on the shrinking civic and political space challenge from governments and state machinery.

Welcome back Christine.

Transitional Justice Policy not Govt Priority– Hon Lyandro



Hon. Lyandro Komakech makes his submission at the meeting last week

Last Friday, Legislators, CSOs, Local Government technical staff and politicians convened in Gulu to discuss ways of ensuring that Transitional justice is realized in Northern Uganda.

According to David Komakech, the ActionAid coordinator of the Transitional justice project, transitional justice is rooted in accountability and redress for war victims.

" It recognizes their dignity as citizens and as human beings. Ignoring massive abuses is an easy way out but it destroys the values on which any decent society can be built", he said.

David called upon stakeholders to work at ensuring that war victims and their dignity is put first as this will signal a renewed commitment to make sure ordinary citizens are safe in their own countries .

Hon. Lyandro Komakech, the Chairperson of the Greater North Parliamentary Forum stated during the meeting that Seven years after the Ugandan government developed a National Transitional Justice Policy, the draft still awaits cabinet approval causing frustrations for both experts and war victims.

"The draft policy is before cabinet. It's their mandate to approve it and pass it to parliament to be debated and passed", he said adding that unfortunately, the policy is not on the cabinet's priority list.

Several stakeholders also acknowledged that conflict affected communities are angry that government has failed the Transitional Justice Policy process for Uganda and should be aware that the 'dust has not yet settled'.

"The needs of war victims in northern Uganda are immense especially for the women" stated Hon. Betty Aol Ocan, the Gulu District Woman Member of Parliament.

Betty added that such communities need major economic and psychosocial support, a task that is currently left to a patchwork of civil society organizations and yet a dedicated government programme on recovery and psychosocial support would make a massive difference for these affected communities.

The stakeholders however recognized the infrastructural development under the different donor funded programs like the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund, Northern Uganda Reconstruction Program and Karamoja Livelihoods Improvement Program among others. They however expressed the need for software programs to deal with the psychological legacy of war and legal aid as an interim measure awaiting the policy.

ActionAid used the occasion to unveil the transitional Justice Study report to stakeholders in Northern Uganda. The report entitled 'Making Transitional Justice Work for Women' was disseminated to stakeholders. This was done to inform the National Transitional Justice Policy processes for Uganda.

The study was conducted in 2016 in Democratic Republic of Congo, Northern Uganda, and Kenya, by ActionAid in collaboration with the University of Sydney supported by Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). [Click here for the full report.](#)

Namutumba Women demand for Inclusion



Fatuma(left) read out the petition during the ceremony. Centre are women matching demanding for inclusion while right, the RDC addressing the women and other stakeholders.

Last week, ActionAid Busiki LRP together with the young women in Namutumba District petitioned the District leadership to ensure meaningful participation in decision making processes by women and girls.

The petition was presented during the District Belated Women's Day celebrations which were marked under the theme; **The Time is Now: Rural and Urban Activists transforming women's lives"**.

The young women were particularly not happy that decisions and resolutions on social injustices that they continue to grapple with such as gender based violence, property grabbing, land disputes, poor health services, lack of youth friendly services, unequal access to economic opportunities such as the Youth Livelihood Programme (YLP), forced child marriages and defilement are often made without their participation.

"Mr Speaker Sir, the structural, cultural and social barriers to women and girls' participation in public life should be addressed if we want to achieve gender equality. The time is now for that to happen. We call for total inclusion of women and girls living in rural areas in matters that affect our lives.", read the statement in part.

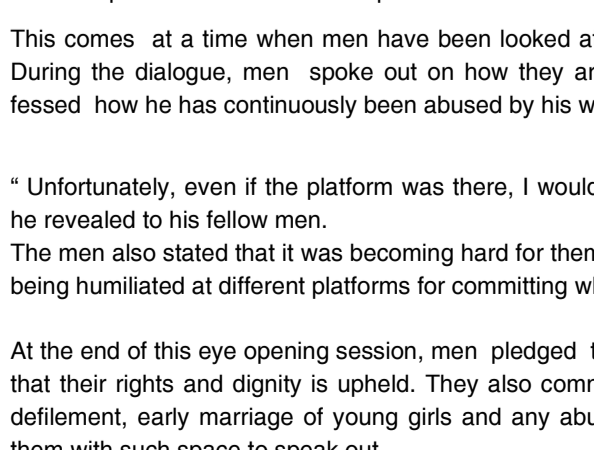
Elijah Madoi, the Chief guest and RDC of Namutumba stated that Women and girls participation in public life is crucial for women's social and economic advancement. He called on all state holders to work at ensuring that women are not left behind.

To ensure that the different stakeholders do not lose sight of the issues raised, the LRP supported young women in recycling litter and coming up with cards which had the challenges that woman and girls are facing inscribed in them. These were distributed to the different key stakeholders namely the Resident District Commissioner (RDC) for Namutumba, the District Speaker, the Chief Administrative Officer, Chairperson LCV, District Police Commander, District Community Development Officer and the Secretary Gender among others.

Prior to the celebrations, ActionAid Busiki participated in a district leadership dialogue which focused on the role of the local government in unlocking women and girls potential for economic and social transformation.

"The time is now for government and civil society organizations to ensure that no one is left behind", stated ActionAid's Immaculate Awor.

EU checks YESSSEN Project Progress



Elizabeth(on blue blouse) with ActionAid staff while visiting the GBV shelter in Gulu

ActionAid hosted the European Union Task Manager of CSOs, Ms. Elizabeth Ongom.

Ms. Elizabeth was with ActionAid for an update on YESSSEN project implementation but to also interact with the project beneficiaries directly.

In company of ActionAid staff implementing the EU funded Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Self Employment and National Development (YESSSEN) project, the team visited the youth groups in Amuru and Nwoya.

The youth groups shared their project milestones since the inception of the project. They pointed out that while it was not rosy rolling out their income generating activities, they were being guided by the seven pillars of climate resilient sustainable agriculture (CRSA) that they acquired in one of the trainings.

Currently the youth groups are opening and clearing their gardens as they wait for the inputs to plant.

The youth said they were glad to be part of this project and will do everything in their power to ensure that their lives are transformed.

Elizabeth also visited the ActionAid run Gulu Gender Based Violence Shelter. While the shelter is funded by DFID, EU is interested in learning from ActionAid as they work to address the issue of gender analysis and response in all their projects.

Kalangala Residents Trained in CRSA

ActionAid Kalangala conducted training of small holder farmers on Climate Resilient Sustainable Agriculture in the three sub counties of Mugoye, Bujumba and Kalangala Town Council last week.

The main objective of the training was to equip farmers with knowledge and skills to adapt to the effects of climate change. The training mainly focused deeper understanding of the concept of Climate Resilient Sustainable Agriculture with emphasis made on the different pillars of Climate resilient Agriculture. These included Women Rights and Gender Equity, Soil conservation, Sustainable water management, Agro biodiversity , livelihoods diversification, value addition, market research(Collectivism) and support to

farmers' organisations.

The lead facilitator Mr. Fredrick Kawooya and ActionAid's Manager of Policy, Advocacy and Campaigns observed during the training that most farmers are now addicted to the application of Agro chemicals without bearing in mind the associated side effects to the environment .

"The fact that farmers have resorted to the application of agro chemicals, they face a challenge of counterfeit products in the market", he said. Fredrick added that the training equipped farmers with the knowledge and skills adapt organic manure and pesticides which is sustainable and less hazardous to the environment.

Katakwi Girls Decry defilement– School Heads perpetrators!

Left are some of the girl pupils in Katakwi. They felt disappointed by te leaders for not protecting them from abuse. Right is the men only dialogue.

During a dialogue meeting organised by ActionAid Katakwi Cluster, Children from several primary schools in the district expressed their disappointment in the district leadership and parents for failing to guarantee girl child education.

" We are faced with so many challenges that affect our education", stated Lilian Acele, a primary seven pupil in Kokorio primary school.

"We are defiled by our own teachers and we lack sanitary pads. To make matters worse, we have female teachers to attend to girls' challenges while some schools have no female teachers at all. Unfortunately, our leaders are doing nothing about it".

The pupils added that the situation is not any better at home as parents choose to keep them busy with domestic work with not time for revision.

The Kyoga Region Police Spokesperson, who also attended the dialogue agreed to the pupils' claims. He said that the district registered the highest cases of defilement in the entire region last year. The perpetrators include two heads of primary schools that did not stop at defiling but also infected their victims with the HIV virus.

Mr. Eiakas, the district political leader pledged to deal with the perpetrators with an iron hand.

"I will work with ActionAid and other stakeholders to ensure that justice if delivered and that children's rights are upheld in the district", he promised.

Informed by this trends, ActionAid Katakwi committed to work with schools and community structures to have men only dialogues, spouse dialogues, spaces for girls initiatives and youth councils in communities as way of fighting women and girls rights violations.

Men only dialogue convened.

As had been resolved, ActionAid Katakwi later in the week convened a men only dialogue to discuss how men can partner with women if empowerment of rural women and girls is to be achieved.

This comes at a time when men have been looked at as the greatest challenge to women and girls dignity. During the dialogue, men spoke out on how they are experiencing gender based violence. One man confessed how he has continuously been abused by his wife and yet there is no platform for him to speak out.

"Unfortunately, even if the platform was there, I would not speak out for fear of being laughed at by society", he revealed to his fellow men.

The men also stated that it was becoming hard for them to be the good men that society wants them to be after being humiliated at different platforms for committing what they termed as small offences to their women.

At the end of this eye opening session, men pledged to protect and support the women in their lives to ensure that their rights and dignity is upheld. They also committed to police each other and report perpetrators of defilement, early marriage of young girls and any abuse. The men also applauded ActionAid for providing them with such space to speak out.

Youthify Youthify Youthify Youthify Youthify Youthify

Hey there!, our journey to youthify continues this week.

New week, new focus, new energy, new ways of being – great start to your life wherever you are at. Hope the weekend was fantabulous for you because it surely was for us here at Youthify!

[Click here to find out our hero this week and why he is actually our hero.](#) Enjoy the week, and yes, shout out to your programming too to youthify!