

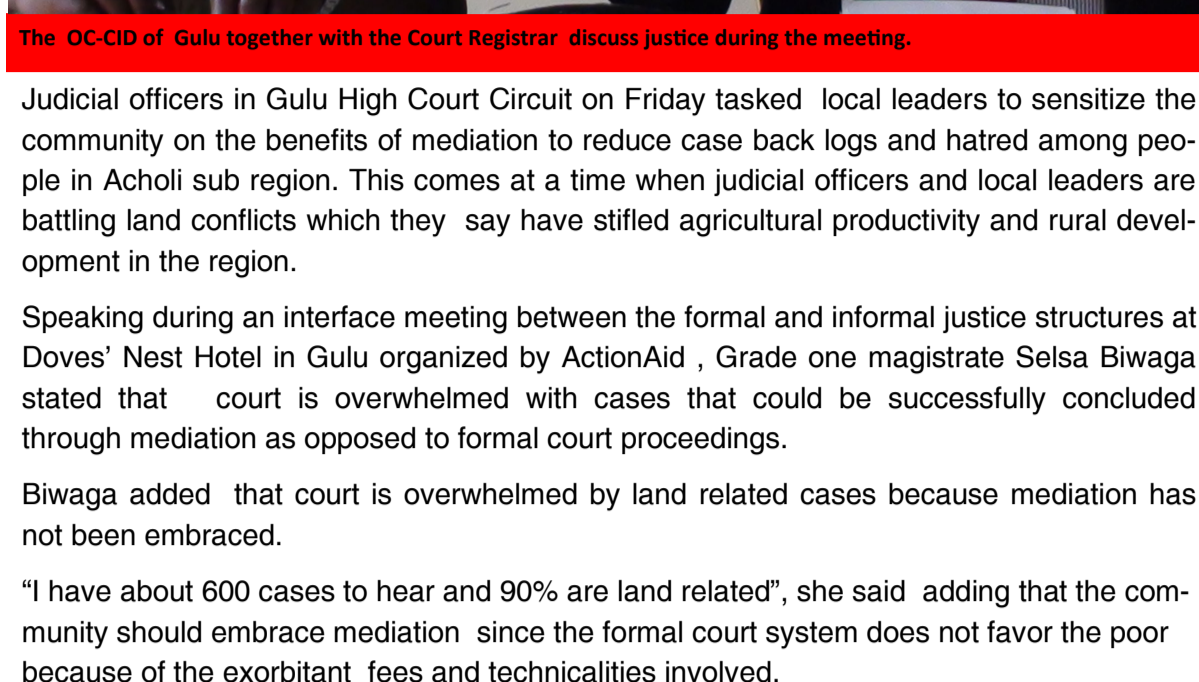


## Weekly

March 12 - 18

In ActionAid's current Strategy paper, we pledge to work towards the expansion of opportunities for young people to realise their leadership and right to better livelihood by 2022. In this edition of the weekly, we launch a platform called Youthify. This space will show case our strategies and tactics in working for better livelihoods for young people. Welcome to this Weekly edition.

### Mediation to reduce case backlog – Magistrate!



The OC-CID of Gulu together with the Court Registrar discuss justice during the meeting.

Judicial officers in Gulu High Court Circuit on Friday tasked local leaders to sensitize the community on the benefits of mediation to reduce case back logs and hatred among people in Acholi sub region. This comes at a time when judicial officers and local leaders are battling land conflicts which they say have stifled agricultural productivity and rural development in the region.

Speaking during an interface meeting between the formal and informal justice structures at Doves' Nest Hotel in Gulu overwhelmed by ActionAid, Grade one magistrate Selsa Biwaga stated that court is overwhelmed with cases that could be successfully concluded through mediation as opposed to formal court proceedings.

Biwaga added that court is overwhelmed by land related cases because mediation has not been embraced.

"I have about 600 cases to hear and 90% are land related", she said adding that the community should embrace mediation since the formal court system does not favor the poor because of the exorbitant fees and technicalities involved.

Meanwhile, Matthew Otto, a participant, stated that there is a 'clash' between the legal and traditional understanding of land management which is causing conflicts among the educated and the uneducated class of people in Acholi.

He added that though leaders in Acholi are promoting registration of Customary land to have the Certificate of Customary ownership, it will only put Acholi land on market and breed more conflict.

"This Certificate of Customary land Ownership will actually breed more land conflicts since people will sell off their land and start to encroach on that of others", he said.

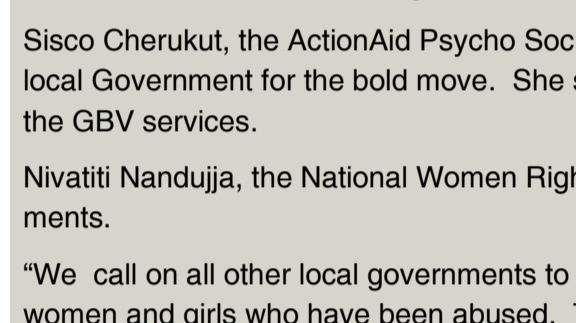
Olesen Theodus, the Deputy High Court Registrar warned the meeting about some local leaders and individuals who are extorting money from desperate community members during land related disputes. He also attributed the delay in hearing and disposing off cases to the inadequate judicial officers, corruption, poor land tenure system, population increase and poor land management.

The interface was organized to amplify the voices of women and other vulnerable groups to enhance access to justice in view of improving the delivery of legal services and other related peace building initiatives in the region. This Project is funded by Australian Government.

### Kween GBV Shelter Construction Starts



James, a male Champion was visibly excited at the kickstart of the construction.



Donald, an Inspirator with the AAU Kapchorwa office took part in the concrete mixing

The Kween District Local Government has started the long awaited construction of the Gender Based Violence (GBV) Shelter which is located in Binyiny Town Council.

Once completed, the shelter is expected to provide temporary shelter for GBV Survivors. The building will house a first aid room, dispensary, counselling rooms, dormitories, offices for ActionAid Uganda Women Protection Centre (WPC) and Male Champions.

The construction had been delayed due to political wrangles in regard to shelter location. However, in November last year, there was consensus among the district political and technical leaders together with the elders on the shelter's location.

The local government hence injected UGX 20million towards the project. The project is expected to be complete in three years and will cost approximately 280 million Uganda Shillings.

The Kween District Planner stated that the local government appreciated the role of the shelter and hence devoted funds to its construction.

According to the demographic health survey 2015, GBV stands at 66% in Kween and the District Planner said that construction of the shelter was one way of bringing this percentage down

James Cheptatar, one of the Male Champions at the kween GBV Shelter said that the shelter will come in handy for clients who often cant make return journeys to their homes due to long distances.

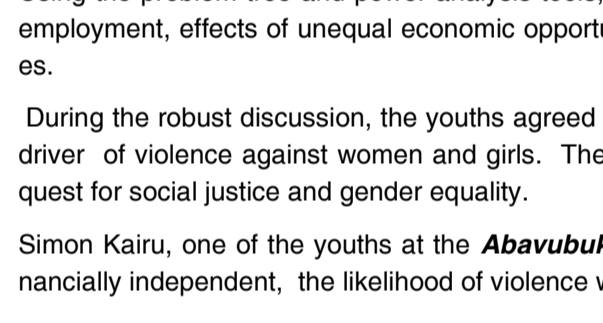
"But most importantly, we shall have a safe space for women and girls who have been abused and don't feel safe to go back to their homes", he said.

Sisco Cherukut, the ActionAid Psycho Social Officer at the GBV shelter applauded the local Government for the bold move. She said that the shelter, once complete will improve the GBV services.

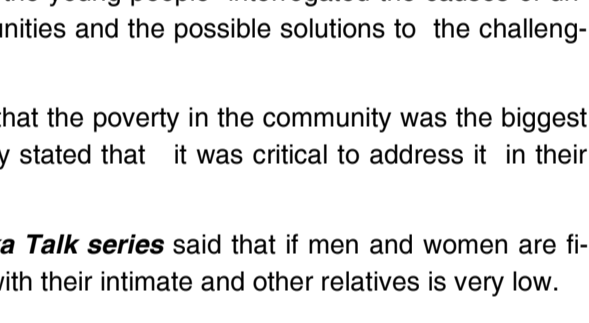
Nivatiti Nandujja, the National Women Rights Coordinator was elated by the developments.

"We call on all other local governments to emulate Kween and plan for safe spaces for women and girls who have been abused. This is the kind of commitment we are looking for to ensure sustainability of GBV services to women and girls even when the projects end", she appealed.

### Abavubuka Talk series Debate GBV VS Economic Empowerment



Left: Some of the participants in the Abavubuka Talk series pose for a group photo after the session. Right is the session in progress.



"If a woman is economically empowered, chances that she will stay in an abusive relationship are very low. Most of the young women here are abused on a daily basis because they financially depend on their male partners, explained Florence Nairimi, an Activista member.

Nairima said this during last week's **Abavubuka Radical Thursday Talk**, an episode that was used to unpack the effects of lack of economic empowerment among women and girls.

Using the problem tree and power analysis tools, the young people interrogated the causes of unemployment, effects of unequal economic opportunities and the possible solutions to the challenges.

During the robust discussion, the youths agreed that the poverty in the community was the biggest driver of violence against women and girls. They stated that it was critical to address it in their quest for social justice and gender equality.

Simon Kairu, one of the youths at the **Abavubuka Talk series** said that if men and women are financially independent, the likelihood of violence with their intimate and other relatives is very low.

"Additionally, financially stable men and boys don't have time for vices such as drug abuse and sexual harassment of women in public places" he argued.

According to Susan Achen, the Uganda Women's Network Coordinator in Namutumba, out of the 72 cases of GBV that have been reported at their office, 25 are directly a result of the low economic status of women and men.

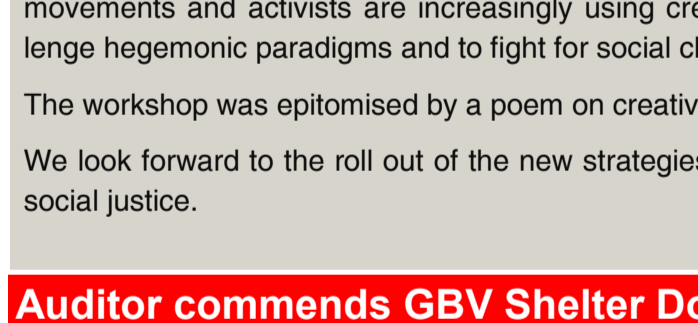
"Most of the cases are about property grabbing, land disputes and disagreements in use of family income", she said.

The youth agreed to the need for radical mind transformation of young people living in rural areas who often see themselves as victims and not key agents of change in both their lives and communities.

"We should not wait to be employed but rather take advantage of the many economic opportunities availed in our community and create jobs. It is also our duty as young people to safeguard women's and girls' rights to attain balanced development", said Moses Kairuko.

The Abavubuka Radical Thursday talk was launched this month by the ActionAid Busiki office to provide a platform to young people to ignite positive change and work towards the attainment of social justice.

### Activists Trained in Creative Activism



AAU's Policy and Campaigns Manager maps out skills, Roots and emotions during the training last weekend

Last week, Actionaid Uganda, in collaboration with the Centre for Applied Human Rights (CAHR) at the University of York engaged a group of artists, academics, activists and development practitioners to explore how to use arts as a tool for creative resistance, create alternatives and imagine new ways of being and doing. The workshop used theatre, story, image, dance, and music to cause participants to think about the world differently and to describe promising and contagious strategies for building a more just and sustainable world. As part of this revealing exploration, participants rooted ourselves in their own communities and used visual art to draw own

interpretations of what communities look like.

The training acknowledged dominant paradigms within development and the way these can constrain the ability of actors, especially those with relatively little power, to imagine and articulate alternatives.

Among others, the training discussed tools such as disruptions, performance and translation through local cultural expressions of dignity, resistance, claim making, and utopias as reference points to identify and reframe international development and promote new & emerging practices that have the potential to be genuinely transformative.

Participants learnt that while there is an increasing interest in the use of creative participatory methodologies in development (e.g. theatre, film, storytelling), their potential is too often limited by dominant cultures of development that privilege elite assumptions about priority agendas. Yet, outside the context of traditional development projects, new social movements and activists are increasingly using creative and artistic approaches to challenge hegemonic paradigms and to fight for social change.

The workshop was epitomised by a poem on creative activism by Susan kiguli.

We look forward to the roll out of the new strategies and tactics learnt in the struggles for social justice.

### Auditor commends GBV Shelter Documentation system



The Auditor going through some of the Shelter documents last week.

Last week, the ActionAid Mubende Gender Based Violence shelter hosted the Maxwell Stamp appointed auditor, Mr Ssenkima Erias from Jasper Semu Associates.

Ssenkima was in Mubende to verify and assess the impact of the Supporting Uganda's Response to Gender Equality (SURGE) project that is being implemented by ActionAid. The auditor was also interested in testing the operation and control systems of the shelter.

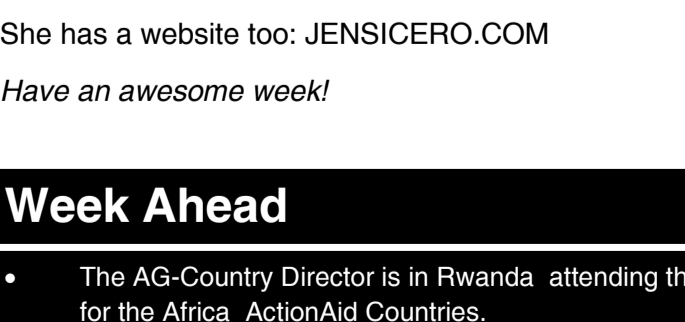
In his interaction with the shelter staff, Ssenkima sought to verify if the shelter meets the minimum legal standards and operating procedures of GBV shelters.

Among others, the auditor checked the financial system at the shelter, level of professionalism of the staff, record keeping, project visibility, inventory register, sanitation, hygiene and safety.

The auditor advised the shelter team to plan and make the shelter more friendly to people living with disabilities by putting in place certain structures and employing a staff to attend to them. He also recommended that a Toll free helpline be instituted to make the services more accessible to the population since not all potential clients can sustain a paid call to make inquiries at the shelter.

Ssenkima among applauded the records and documentation system that he found at the shelter. His report will be shared in this publication when ready.

### Youthify Youthify Youthify Youthify Youthify Youthify



Hey there! A very warm welcome to our weekly column that seeks to **youthify (make something appear younger or newer than it is)** you and the work you do with young people.

This is a space to connect, interact and make life happen in the most fun way possible. The idea is growth with every issue. So fell free to share, comment, feedback and make the space much safer, fun and transforming for you and me!

This week we focus on personal leadership growth. The focus of Objective 4 in our CSP is all about transformation. I invite you to pull out your CSP copy and check out the objective on young people. How can we grow as people at a personal level? How can we transform the lives of those we work with? Take a stock of your life and see where you need to grow and make life happen.

Start small, it could be a decision on how you manage your time, eat, lead, love and you name it. Just choose to grow and transform. I hope to hear all about your journey as we transform our personal lives.

**Recommended reading for the month:** You Are Badass: How To Stop Doubting Your Greatness and Start Living an Awesome Life by Jen Sincero.

She has a website too: JENSICERO.COM

Have an awesome week!

### Week Ahead

- The AG-Country Director is in Rwanda attending the week long Country Directors' meeting for the Africa ActionAid Countries.
- ActionAid will be Launching the African Governance Architecture project this Wednesday at Sheraton Hotel. The Launch of the project will bring together critical stakeholders from the East African community, Government agencies, Parliament of Uganda, Elders forum, Religious leaders, business community and Civil society organizations to discuss and appreciate the values of the African governance architecture, the African charter on democracy, elections and good governance, and how they can be made a reality, and guide in solving some of the current democratic and governance challenges Uganda is facing. The chief guest will be the Speaker of Parliament, Hon Rebecca Kadaga
- ActionAid is currently hosting guests from the EU. These have travelled to Gulu to interact with youth that are benefiting from the youth Empowerment for self employment and national development project (YESSEN). They will also visit the Gulu and AMURU GBV operations to learn how they are addressing GBV.
- The Policy and Campaigns Manager at ActionAid is in Kalangala Training farmers in climate resilient sustainable Agriculture. The idea is to provide profitable alternatives to the fishing community for better livelihoods.