



Weekly

April 9—15

Dear Reader, in 2013, ActionAid launched the Tax Justice Campaign. The organisation rallied people to honour their duty of paying taxes, but also called on duty bearers to ensure that more tax revenue is allocated to the priority sectors of health, education and agriculture. Last week, ActionAid and its partners rejected the tax proposal on Social media, find out why in this edition.

(File photo/ActionAid/Samanya)

Inspirators Talk sustainability



Left: The inspirators and advisors also visited one of the youth groups in Lira to reflect on how best they can support them. Right is Donald, one of the Inspirators and Fiona Awilli, the Partnerships Officer supporting the youth to make a manure pit.

During the ActionAid People for Change review meeting conducted in Lira last week, the inspirators and Advisors applauded the program and called on management to work towards strategically integrating their skills and knowledge into ActionAid Uganda programming.

Speaking during the meeting, David Moses Okello, the Cluster Coordinator of Gulu acknowledged the value addition that the inspirators and advisors have brought to the ActionAid programming.

"They have boosted our knowledge and skills. They have also introduced to us new ways of campaigning against social injustice", he said.

The meeting agreed that Inspirators and Advisors find ways of ensuring that their support is sustainable to ensure continuity even after their contract periods expire.

In fact, Ger Odock, the Social Movements Inspirator called upon the Inspirators and Advisors to come up with sustainable capacity building strategies so that no gaps are created when contracts end.

"We should ensure that all the technical input we give to the people does not create a dependency syndrome and leave a gap once an Inspirator or Advisor leaves".

It was however observed that there was a misunderstanding of the roles of Advisors and Inspirators hence the need to popularize it so as to address challenges such as high expectations of the Country ActionAid staff which often breeds conflict.

Ivan Mpagi, the ActionAid People For Change Program Coordinator stated that the review of the program will be an annual event where strategies, approaches and methodologies for ensuring skills and knowledge transfer yield results even after the placement will be discussed.

The meeting was attended by all ActionAid Inspirators, Advisors and staff from offices where the inspirators are placed.

The People for Change programme, as employed by ActionAid focuses on collective learning and action by global citizens from diverse countries and cultures. Under this program, Inspirators and advisors only from foreign countries and some times continents are employed to boost the ActionAid programming against social injustice.

Inspirators are cross-national placements of development experts and practitioners, who have the right experience and knowledge to empower and share experiences with local partner organisations within our focus areas. Their placements are between 3 to 9 months and focus on the practical development activities carried out by our partners. Advisors on the other hand are specialised professionals who have special competencies, experience and knowledge to advise and empower our partners and to strengthen the country programmes. Their placements are usually one to two years.

Busiki Men and Women Face off in GBV Dialogue



The women, in their group accused men of fueling GBV

To create a platform for the community and duty bearers to share ideas on how to eliminate Gender Based Violence, ActionAid Busiki, during the child Sponsorship mass message collection exercise engaged the community in a heated discussion on the causes and effects of GBV.

The community members were placed in two groups (male and female) to create a safe space for them to freely discuss issues that are affecting them. After the group interactions, the men and women spoke out about the vice that GBV is, accusing each other for fueling it.

All participants agreed that GBV was a result of partners not appreciating each other, selling of family produce without collective agreement, polygamy, child neglect among others.

Isiiko Geoffrey, one of the community members stated that Gender Based Violence is everyone's business and both men and women should work together in ensuring that the identified challenges are solved collectively.

The women and men generated solutions together and promised to work on the areas that were pointed out by either party to end the GBV vice.

Sarah Nabongho, another community member thanked ActionAid for the space to speak out on GBV, which the patriarchal nature of society often forbids.

Bikomawa Steven, the area LC1 Chairperson thanked ActionAid for the constructive program while the Community Development officer of Namutumba appealed to the district leadership to go to the communities and listen to the people before coming up with resolutions to address what they perceive as the issues on ground.

Immaculate Awori, the ActionAid Busiki Program Officer said that the open air public debates are helping the communities to speak out against social injustices such as abuse of women but more importantly facilitating community led solutions to address the several social injustices.



The men only group prepare their presentation on causes of GBV

ActionAid and partners dismiss Tax on Social Media!



ActionAid's Jennipher Achaloi addresses members of the Tax Justice Alliance last week

Last week, ActionAid in partnership with the Southern and Eastern Africa Trade Information & Negotiations Institute (SEATINI) convened the Tax Justice Alliance (TJA) members for a two day retreat to discuss the 2018/2019 Financial Year tax Bills.

The retreat was convened to develop a CSO position paper for further engagement with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and Parliament in the budgeting process. The retreat enabled the TJA members to reflect on the rationale of each tax proposal and provide informed policy recommendations for adoption.

Also in attendance were taxation experts from Uganda Revenue Authority, private practice and civil society. These guided the discussions on the Tax proposals and their implications on domestic revenue mobilization.

Among the policy proposals discussed was the introduction of taxes on Savings & Credit Cooperative Society Organisations (SACCOS). The members welcomed the reintroduction of taxing SACCOS which had been exempted in financial year 2016/2017. They argued that there was evidence that SACCOS are accumulating a lot of profits.

It was noted that some of the tax proposals were burdensome to tax payers and may result into double taxation. Members agreed that the proposed tax on social media could amount to double taxation, and draws the country's efforts back in as far as promoting ICT is concerned. It was also recommended among other things that URA sensitises the public on the percentage tax increase on the different items so that traders do not take advantage of the situation to unfairly increase prices of commodities while blaming it on tax increments.

On 3rd April 2018, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development tabled before parliament the Tax Amendment bills for FY2018/19. These include the Excise Duty (Amendment) bill 2018, the Stamp Duty (Amendment) bill, 2018, the Tax Appeals Tribunals (Amendment) Bill 2018, The Traffic and Road Safety act 1998 (Amendment) bill 2018. As was stated by the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development during the 2015/2016 budget speech, the government intends to increase domestic revenues by 0.5 percent annually through taxation. However, this comes at a time when the tax burden and heavy debt repayment is being felt by Ugandan tax payers.

Board Committees sit while Country Director makes support visit

The ActionAid Governing Board Programme Committee sat last Friday at Fairway Hotel. The committee took time to review and approve the organisational annual work plans and the 2017 annual report.

The AG-Program Director, Fredrick Kawooya received constructive feedback from the committee members and is currently incorporating the changes in both documents before they are flagged off.

This week, the Finance & Audit committee of the ActionAid Governing board will be sitting at the same venue. The main agenda items will be the review of the 2017 audited accounts and the internal audit charter.

During the same week, the ActionAid AG-Country Director, Christine Aboke made a support visit to the Mubende Gender Based Violence shelter. Christine was surprised by the high number of male clients who have received services at the shelter. She however challenged the shelter team to plan and put in place a children's play area as this will ensure that the children feel at home as their parents or themselves receive services.

She also advised the shelter to adopt leisure activities such as knitting, making mats and bakery for the women clients that are housed at the shelter as this will distract their minds from the violence they are dealing with and expedite their recovery.

Christine will continue to make visits to other ActionAid Cluster offices to among others check on the rollout of the 5th Strategy paper but also make contact with the different local governments where ActionAid works.

Youthify Youthify Youthify Youthify Youthify Youthify



This week, we focus on a very interesting conversation between one of Jesus' disciples and three random strangers – Google it or look it up somehow.

What is critical for us to share from Peter's denial of Jesus is the aspect of integrity. Broadly defined, integrity refers to a state of being whole and undivided.

Integrity is about our actions being consistent with our internal set of values or what we stand for, no matter what. This is extremely difficult because as humans, we are both gullible and fallible! However, we can we ask ourselves; as we work with young people, are we truly exercising integrity? Are we aligning our actions with what we stand for when it comes to young people?

As we implement this first year of ActionAid's 5th Strategy paper, may we be leaders of integrity as we forge a progressive way ahead for young people. May we not be like Peter who denied Jesus when the going got tough. Have an awesome week!

Week Ahead

- The Recruitment process of the Country Director is going on very well. Keep your fingers crossed for the finally selected best candidate.
- The Finance and Audit Board Committee meeting will be held tomorrow at Fairway Hotel.
- DFID will visit ActionAid tomorrow for the SURGE(GBV Shelter Project) review meeting. The DFID team will also visit the Mubende GBV shelter for a more practical review of the GBV shelters.