

Weekly

February 15— 21



Last Thursday, Ugandans went to vote for their President for the next five years. President Museveni was declared winner of an election that many have described as the most fraudulent election in the last 30 years. I don't know what your experience was, but if its as recorded in this publication, we need to pray for Uganda. Thank you for voting. You did your part!

The poll that lacked Transparency and Independence!



While it was meant to be a day of free and fair elections, there were more guns, tear gas and bullets than voting materials. When agitated Ugandans questioned why there was late delivery of polling materials, it was quicker to spray tear gas and shoot bullets than to explain to them peacefully.

Ugandans went to the polls last Thursday to vote for their president for the next five years and over 400 legislators. Unfortunately, the election that granted President Museveni an extension to his 30 year rule has been criticized for lacking transparency. Museveni's main opponent, Dr Kizza Besigye who has since been under house arrest has denounced the election as a sham.

"We have just witnessed what must be the most fraudulent electoral process in Uganda," stated Besigye, calling for an independent audit of the results that gave one of Africa's longest-serving leaders a 60.8 percentage win.

The United States on Friday urged Museveni to stop the security bodies from harassing his opponents. Another of Museveni's rivals, former Prime Minister Amama Mbabazi, had also been put under house arrest but was later released.

The EU observer mission said that the election had been conducted in an intimidating atmosphere, while Commonwealth observers said the poll "fell short of meeting some key democratic benchmarks".

Eduard Kukan, chief observer for the EU mission, added that the poll had been undermined by a "lack of transparency and independence" of the Ugandan electoral commission.

"State actors created an intimidating atmosphere for both voters and candidates," he added.

While speaking to the media for the first time after he was declared winner, Museveni dismissed the above observations with arrogance, stating that he did not need anyone to lecture him on how elections should be conducted, having organised the same from as early as his high school days in Ntare.

ActionAid's role in the build up to Thursday's election

AAU started preparing citizens for last week's election as early as 2014. Together with other CSOs, over 15 regional forums on Free and Fair elections were conducted in Toro, Bukedi, Teso, Kigezi, Busoga, Sebei, Ankole, Bugisu, Buganda, Karamoja, Bunyoro, Acholi and West Nile and Kampala. The result of these forums was the Uganda Citizens Compact on Free and Fair Elections.

The document demanded for new independent and impartial electoral Commission and that the new commission compiles a new clean and verifiable register of voters. There was also a demand that the military should have no involvement in the electoral process among others. Unfortunately, these reforms were not adopted. This partially explains why last Week's election "fell short of meeting some key democratic benchmarks." Click [here](#) for the Uganda Citizens Compact on Free and Fair Elections.

In addition to the above, ActionAid took part in the development of the 2016-2021 Citizens Manifesto. This Manifesto was generated through a robust countrywide consultative process and is informed by 29 different Manifestos. These include all the 14 regions of Uganda, and special interest groups such as the women, Teachers, Youth, people with disabilities, Private Sector, among others. View citizens manifesto [Here](#)

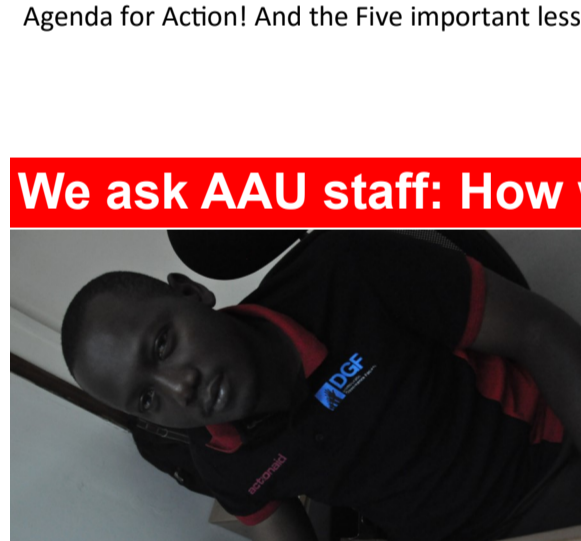
During the Campaign process, ActionAid with the CSO fraternity conducted an analysis of the presidential candidates' manifestos. The analysis was proposed to inform Ugandans which Candidates manifesto and by extension Presidential candidate was closest to addressing concerns, demands, expectations and commitments expounded in the citizens manifesto of 2016-2021.

AAU's Country Director, Arthur and other civil society leader participated in several radio and television debates to prepare Ugandans for the Election Day.

ActionAid will continue to engage in the collective civil society peaceful post-election activities for the betterment of our country. We shall keep you informed and updated in the Weekly publication

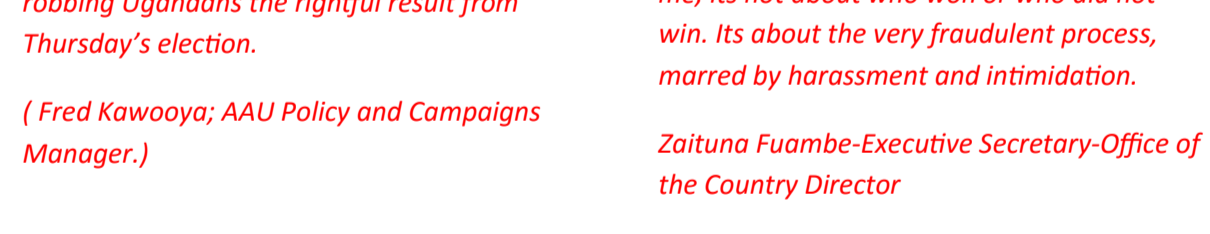
Arthur has also authored two intriguing blogs. [Click](#) to read; Beyond the Election Frustration: An Agenda for Action! And the Five important lessons from the vote for change that never was [Here](#)

We ask AAU staff: How were the Elections?



I must commend Ugandans for coming out in large numbers to vote. However, am saddened that the consent of Ugandans was robbed. There are so many polling stations including mine whose votes did not count. I find it regrettable that I went to vote. May it haunt the Electoral commission forever for robbing Ugandans the rightful result from Thursday's election.

(Fred Kawooya; AAU Policy and Campaigns Manager.)



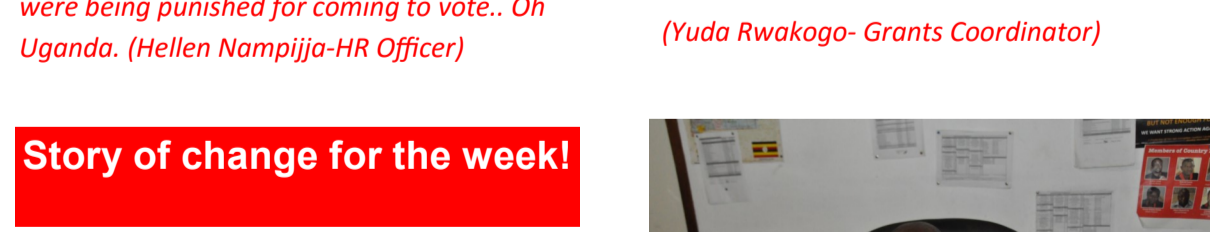
This election was very frustrating for me. I had to move from one polling station to another looking for my name in the Electoral commission Website that I was meant to vote from a given point. After finalising my station, the process was disheartening. For me, its not about who won or who did not win. Its about the very fraudulent process, marred by harassment and intimidation.

Zaituna Fuambe-Executive Secretary-Office of the Country Director



The Elections were very disappointing. Am very sad. We are less than a kilometre from the Offices of the Electoral commission but we received voting materials at 2pm. Can you imagine! After enduring the scorching sun, our results were not considered at the National tallying centre. Then there was the tear gas that was sprayed! One wonders if we were being punished for coming to vote.. Oh Uganda. (Hellen Nampijja-HR Officer)

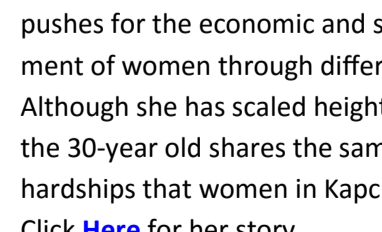
(Hellen Nampijja-HR Officer)



It's the worst election I have witnessed in my life time. I strongly believe that there was a calculated map out of the opposition strongholds and hence the decision to delay delivery of voting materials. How can the Electoral Commission announce final presidential results without including those from Kampala, Wakiso, Jinja, Mbale, Gulu and Kasese?

(Yuda Rwakogo- Grants Coordinator)

Story of change for the week!



She might not be celebrated nationally, but her contribution to women in Kapchorwa district has

greatly impacted lives.

Irene Cheptoek, the chairperson of Kapteret Multipurpose Cooperative Society, constantly pushes for the economic and social empowerment of women through different programs. Although she has scaled heights of triumph, the 30-year old shares the same script of hardships that women in Kapchorwa face. Click [Here](#) for her story.



I did not vote. On the polling day, voting materials arrived at about 2pm in Gabba, my polling station. Despite being late, the package received lacked several items like pens, covers to the ballot boxes and some ballot papers. The angry crowd destroyed the voting materials. What followed was tear gas and live bullets.

(Albert Nyahakuma-Audit Manager)

WEEK AHEAD:

- The Human Resource Directorate will recruit the Women Rights coordinator this week.
- The Securing Food Rights For Agriculture project team will be travelling to Nairobi for a review meeting this week.