

Weekly

15 DAYS of action to support LAND RIGHTS FOR WOMEN IN AFRICA

October 3-17, 2016

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR RURAL WOMEN FARMERS

Dear Reader, Everyday, for 15 days, starting **October 3 (today) until October 17 (Monday)**, let's all show our support to the women who are at Mt. Kilimanjaro demanding their rights to land. #Women2Kilimanjaro...The Weekly will keep you informed every step of the way. Welcome to this edition of the Weekly!

The "Unprecedented" Northern Uganda Awards!



Left-Above: The LC V Chairperson of Gulu receives his award. Looking on in purple is AAU's Human Resource Director, Christine Aboke. Right are all the winners in a group photo with the guests at the dinner.
Left Below: State Minister for Local Government Jenipher Namuyangu and **Right:** State Minister for Northern Uganda, Kwiycwiny Grace make their remarks at the dinner.

Last Friday, ActionAid Uganda with financial support from Democratic Governance Facility (DGF) organised the Northern Uganda Award Ceremony to recognise the local government institutions, Political leaders and civil servants who have demonstrated consistency in delivering quality public services to the people in Northern Uganda. The awards ceremony was organised under the theme: Dedicated service; A duty of all servants.

The event was graced by the State Minister for Northern Uganda Hon Kwiycwiny Grace, State Minister for Local Government Hon Namuyangu Jenipher, Justice Owiny Dollo of the High Court, His Highness-the King of Acholi, the Prime Minister of Acholi Cultural Institution, 35 Local Government staff (chairpersons, CAOs, production officers and speakers) from the three sub regions of Acholi, Lango and West Nile among others.

AAU's Arthur Larok, who was the Master of Ceremony at the awards Dinner informed the guests that the event had been organised to recognize, reward and motivate local government civil servants and politicians who are working under challenging situations to deliver quality public services.

Three technocrats, four politicians and three local government institutions were awarded for their outstanding roles in public service delivery in the Acholi Sub regions

The keynote speaker, Justice Owiny Dollo challenged the local leaders to provide leadership and challenge some of the unfavorable government programs.

"Please work to ensure that your community members are not turned into beggars", he challenged.

The state Minister for Local Government thanked ActionAid for the creativity and innovation.

"Thank you ActionAid for recognizing and rewarding the outstanding public servants and politicians. This is an unprecedented event in the history of local governments in Uganda", she remarked while committing to work with ActionAid very closely to ensure quality service delivery in Northern Uganda.

The Weekly Publication will be profiling the ward winners every week for the whole of October. Read on for today's icon of quality service delivery in Northern Uganda.

Meet Margaret Aber, one of the Award winners!



Aber Margaret, 38 is a Nursing officer in Ogom health centre III, Pader district. She has been offering health services to the Ogom community for the last 14 years. Margaret says its not easy working in rural areas without access to transport means, clean water, and electricity among others.

That evening, after receiving the award, Margaret's eyes welled with tears of joy.

"This award has reminded me about what some patients tell me. They always plead with me to disregard the hard situation and serve selflessly for an award from God. They always plead for my help and services even when am exhausted. This award is a true reward from God", she told us.

Ogom health centre is supposed to have seven professional doctors. While these were posted to the facility, many of them have abandoned their work place, as they prefer working from Pader. This has left Margaret to at times work as a doctor to attend to the high number of patients.

"Let us stick to our ethical code of conduct to ensure that we safeguard the lives of our patients. If they must die, then their souls should leave their bodies peacefully", she advises her colleagues in the profession.

Margaret was recognised for her friendly, timely, selfless and professional services to the people of Ogom. It does not matter the time or the day. Night or day, public holiday or not, Margaret provides services with a smile to the people of Ogom.

Thank you Margaret. A bigger reward surely awaits you!

Uganda, Zimbabwe strategise ahead of UN review of Human Rights status



David Manyonga (centre in black) meets with ActionAid Zimbabwe and UN-UPR team to plan ahead of the universal review later in November.

ActionAid Uganda, under its Shrinking Political Space program and the United Nations Universal Periodic Review (UN-UPR) teams last week had a collaborative shared learning and strategic exchange visit in ActionAid Zimbabwe. David Manyonga, the Civic Space Advisor at AAU and James Nkuubi, the UN-UPR Coordinator undertook the shared learning visit. This was organized, to among others strengthen peer to peer learning between Uganda and Zimbabwe teams.

Uganda and Zimbabwe share similar Human Rights challenges. These and a few other African Countries will have their Human Rights records reviewed next month by the United Nations led Human Rights Periodic Review process. During the exercise, civil society organizations and peer governments will scrutinize the status quo.

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a unique process which involves a review of the human rights records of all UN Member States. The UPR is a State-driven process, under the auspices of the Human Rights Council, which provides the opportunity for each State to declare what actions they have taken to improve the human rights situations in their countries and to fulfil their human rights obligations. As one of the main features of the Council, the UPR is designed to ensure equal treatment for every country when their human rights situations are assessed.

The UPR was created through the UN General Assembly on 15 March 2006 by resolution [60/251](#), which established the Human Rights Council itself. It is a cooperative process which, by October 2011, has reviewed the human rights records of all 193 UN Member States. Currently, no other universal mechanism of this kind exists. The exercise takes place after every five years.

During the learning visit, civil Society leaders from Uganda and Zimbabwe agreed on a number of strategic human rights advocacy engagements they shall collaboratively execute in November at the UPR in Geneva. These include showing human rights situations in both countries in a combined photographic journey exhibition, strategic engagement of diplomats and an awareness raising public forum where human rights activists will outline status quo in the two countries.

Justice delayed is justice denied-Justice Batema



R.L: State Minister for Gender and Culture, Hon Peace Mutuuzo, the British High Commissioner H.E Alison Blackburne, UPDF Forth Division Commander, Brig Muhanga Kayanja and the AG Director of the Regional Training facility (RTF) Mr Nathan Mwesigye Byamukama.

Last week, ActionAid Uganda joined the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) for a shared learning workshop. The major objectives of the workshop were to enhance the skills of multi sectoral stakeholders to document, investigate, and ensure legal redress of cases on sexual violence.

Over sixty participants including judicial officials, medical officers including the police, prosecutors and investigators, lawyers, investigative journalists and CSO leaders among others attended the workshop. Florence Akol the Project Officer of AAU's Bwaise Women Protection Centre spoke about the challenges and lessons learnt in litigation on Sexual Gender Based Violence.

Florence highlighted that there is inadequate investigation and documentation of sexual violence cases and this has led to withdrawal of cases in court and "commercialization of sexual gender based violence cases"

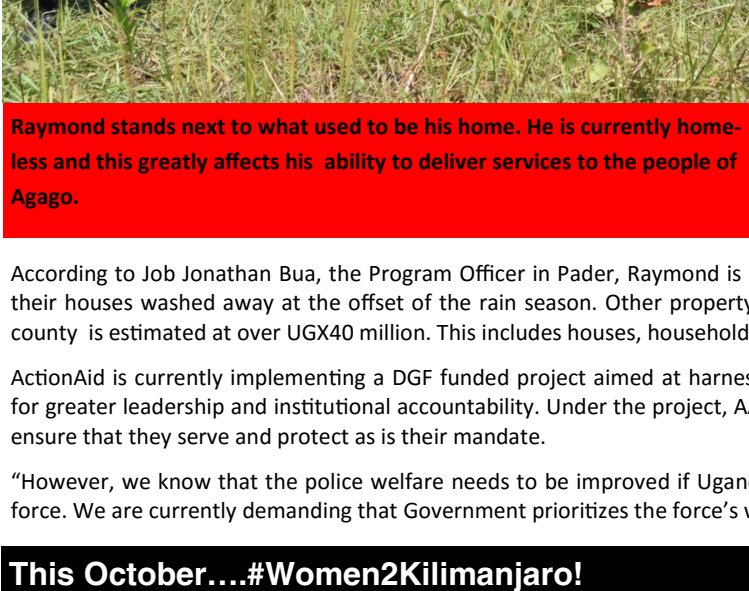
"Quite often, the investigating police officers, magistrates and lawyers negotiate the relatives of the suspects and agree to certain sums of money to kill the case. In the end, the witnesses become hostile and this frustrates the investigations and eventually prosecution" explained Florence.

On a positive note, Honourable Justice David Batema (Soroti district) and Lady Justice Dr. Winfred Nabisinde (Lira district) committed to have special sessions next month to dispense justice to sexual violence victims.

"Justice delayed is justice denied; however, justice hurried is justice buried. We therefore need reasonable adjudication of such cases considering their typography", emphasized Justice Batema.

This development comes in at a time when ActionAid together with FIDA are advocating for special courts and special sessions to handle gender based violence cases to reduce on the back log and respect to the principle that justice should never be delayed.

Why Welfare is crucial for quality service delivery



Raymond stands next to what used to be his home. He is currently homeless and this greatly affects his ability to deliver services to the people of Agago.

Last week, the police Officer in charge of Omot Sub country in Agago District, Raymond Ogwany narrowly escaped without injuries when the rain blew away his house and home.

On Monday afternoon, Raymond ran to his house to seek shelter from the rain that had just started.

"All of a sudden, I realized that my uniport was being blown away. I found myself in the garden, under the heavy rains. I had no idea what had happened or where the rest of my family was. When I gained back my reasoning, I realized that I had lost all my household items. I was consoled by the fact that my family and I had all escaped without any injuries", he said during a phone call interview.

Raymond added that its circumstances like these that affect the quality of services that they are meant to deliver to Ugandans.

"I cannot deliver quality services if my family has no descent accommodation", he added.

According to Job Nathany Bua, the Program Officer in Pader, Raymond is one of the five police officers that have had their houses washed away at the offset of the rain season. Other property that has been destroyed or lost in the sub county is estimated at over UGX40 million. This includes houses, household items, crops, animals among others.

ActionAid is currently implementing a DGF funded project aimed at harnessing Citizen Imagination, agency and power for greater leadership and institutional accountability. Under the project, AAU is targeting institutions like the police to ensure that they serve and protect as is their mandate.

"However, we know that the police welfare needs to be improved if Ugandans are to realize quality services from the force. We are currently demanding that Government prioritizes the force's welfare", added Job in an email interview.

This October....#Women2Kilimanjaro!

This October, women from Uganda together with others from across Africa will climb Mount Kilimanjaro. The women will scale the summit of Africa's tallest mountain during a six-day trek to demand fair rights to land and productive resources.

On their descent from the peak, the women will be joined by around 250 others from across Africa for a convention in the town of Moshi between 14 and 16 October that will produce a charter of demands for fair and equal land rights to be presented to the United Nations and the African Union.

Many of the women have first-hand experience of the unjust practices linked to unequal land rights in Africa, including forced evictions by big business, pollution, and being subject to unfair inheritance practices.

Show your support by taking a photo of yourself doing something to support the rural women at Mt. Kilimanjaro, Africa's highest peak. You can do any of the 3 below:

1. Take a photo of yourself climbing a mountain or a hill, and write in a piece of paper your message to the women at Kilimanjaro
2. Take a photo of yourself doing something challenging, to symbolize the mountain you face or your own Kilimanjaro; with your message
3. Or simply write your message on paper and take a photo to support land rights for women in Africa

Email your entries to me and you could walk home with a beautiful prize.