

actionaid Uganda

Weekly

Oct 24— 30



Dear Reader, this weekly is dedicated to the children, especially those from rural Uganda who struggle against all odds to remain in school. In the photo, the children admire their own photos from another camera. File Photo/ActionAid/Samanya

Work Hard to get to the top; Girls Inspired!



Above: Girls from Amudat Secondary school traveled all the way to Kampala for the conference. They said that they had been inspired at the conference to say no to harmful cultural practices such as early marriages and Female Genital cutting.

Below-Left: Girls from Gayaza High school at the conference.

Last week, ActionAid in collaboration with its partners organised the Girls Arise Conference in commemoration of the International Day of the Girl child. The conference that took place at the Uganda Manufacturers Association Show ground in Lugogo is one of the activities that was held during the 3rd National Womens Week. The conference was organised to create awareness on key issues affecting the girl child.

Speaking to the 500 girls who attended the event, Rita Achiro, the Executive Director of UWONET and also a member of the ActionAid General Assembly challenged the students to identify their niche and set their brand early in life.

“You are not just the girl population in your different schools. You are powerful and with determination, you can influence your school positively in so many aspects. The time is now”, she challenged.

Beatrice Byemanzi a lawyer and an advocate inspired the girls not to give time and space to people who reduce the power and energy within them.

“Remember always that no one will give you the space and power. We live in a very patriarchal society that believes all the power belongs to the males. Rise up today and claim what is rightfully yours. You are the future of this country”, she added.

Honourable Miria Matembe cautioned the girls not to be deceived that any man could love them more than their parents.

“Appreciate the effort of your parents. Don't place your self at a level you haven't reached but work hard every day to get to the top. The positions we hold today in society will be held by you after a few years from now. Please work hard for them. This country needs you”, she concluded.

With such interactions, we can only look forward to a strong women's movement in future but more importantly Gender equality and equity.

UG-Police to sign civic Charter this week!



Top Police Officers share a light moment with David Manyoga, the Civic Space Advisor at ActionAid Uganda. The police welcomed the Charter and pledged to append their signature this Thursday. We shall capture the moments .

The Uganda Police Force (UPF) has welcomed the global Civic Charter as a progressive step in building a society that values, advances and protects the participation of citizens in all affairs of society. The Assistant Inspector General of Police, Andrew Felix Kaweesi indicated to this last Monday during a brief interaction between ActionAid and the Police.

During the meeting that was organized by ActionAid and attended by the top Police leadership, the Police welcomed the idea of involving them in popularizing and ensuring that the Charter is implemented for the benefit of the general populace.

“We also want to commend ActionAid for its continuous effort to strengthen the collaboration with Uganda Police Force. Its only through harmonious relations like these that we can improve the outcome of people's participation”, stated Kaweesi at the meeting.

Kaweesi agreed to circulate the Civic Charter within several units in the Force including the Human Rights and Legal Service, Community Affairs Department, Police Training, Research & Planning and Public Relations. The Police agreed to formally sign the Charter this Thursday.

The Civic Charter provides a global framework for people's participation in shaping their societies. The two-page document, which people and organisations can sign on to and use as a basis for joint action, articulates a common set of civic and political rights. Based on universally accepted human rights, freedoms and principles, the Civic Charter serves as a reference point for people claiming their rights. It can be used as a tool for awareness-raising, advocacy and campaigning. The Civic Charter promotes solidarity among local, national, regional and global struggles to defend the space for civic participation.

[Click here to sign the charter.](#)

Children demand for Accountability in Pallisa



Florence speaks about the hardships at the Forum last week

Ten year old Naiki Florence is in Primary five at Kasasira primary school. With tears welling in her eyes, she yells into the microphone, speaking about the hardships she has had to endure to stay in school.

“I walk bare footed to and from school every day. I go without meals. Sometimes, my parent cannot even afford to buy for me a book and a pen”

Florence's home is about 4kms from her school. During the rainy season, she endures the rain to and from school. During the dry season, she endures the scorching sun. Her parents live in extreme poverty often going without meals the whole day and this is greatly affecting Florence's education.

According to the 2015 Expenditure review for Uganda, about 67% of Ugandans are either poor or highly vulnerable to poverty. The World Bank adds that even those who are below twice the poverty line are likely to fall back into poverty.

Its against this background that ActionAid Pallisa Cluster organized a Children's forum aimed at promoting and protecting children's rights amidst the extreme poverty conditions in the community.

According to the District Community Development Officer, over 20 girls in pallisa are either raped, defiled or forced into marriages. Unfortunately, all the victims don't realize justice ,due to the poverty levels in the community.

During the meeting, the children demanded for feedback on a petition they submitted last year from the district authorities. Among others, the children were demanding for the arrest and prosecution of all defilers, the punishment of teachers who dodge teaching and the provision of midday meals to all pupils.

The Education Officer, in response assured the pupils that their issues were being worked on and he would get back to them in record time.

“The department is sensitizing all relevant stakeholders to promote children's rights and a bylaw has been passed for all parents to send children to school with food come 2017”, he said.

At the end of the forum, the children prayed that the several challenges that they are faced with will be addressed. Some of the particular challenges pointed out include difficulty in getting to school (long distances); not being able to afford school-(related) costs; children having to work to generate income for the household or girls being married off early for financial advantage among others.



Children read out the challenges they face at the forum



The children raise their hands to participate in the discussions at the forum

WEEK AHEAD:

- ⇒ The Programs Director of ActionAid Malawi is in the Country for an induction in his new role as the Director Programs in ActionAid Malawi
- ⇒ AAU's Country Director is back in office after attending the Civic Charter Steering Committee meeting in Berlin last week
- ⇒ ActionAid Uganda will bid farewell to its longest serving staff this Friday at Hotel International Muyenga.