

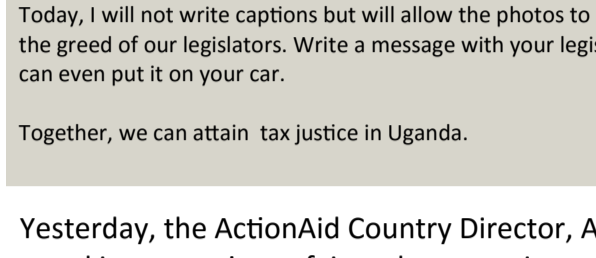
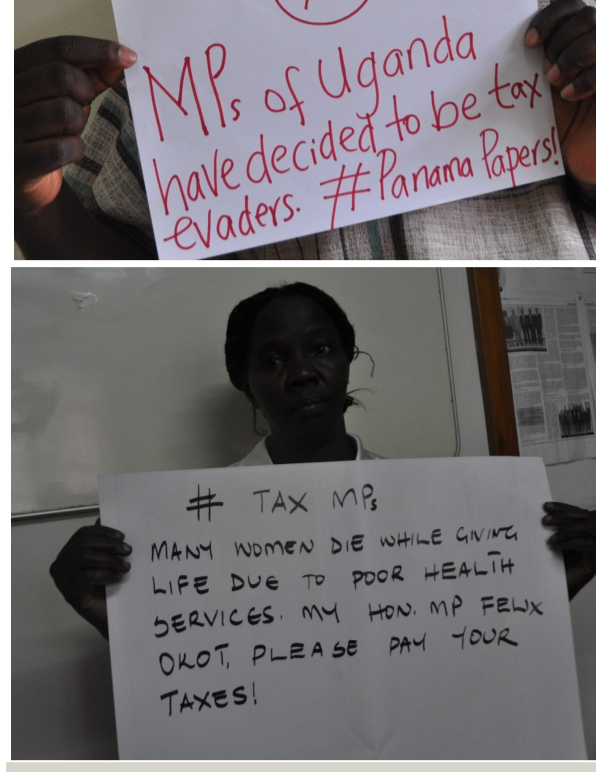
## Weekly

Nov 14 — 20



Dear Reader; we are at it again. Our legislators do not want to pay taxes. Call it greed. May be they are unapologetic. The President previously called their move politically and morally incorrect. The CSOs have called for a referendum to decide on this since the parliamentary procedures provide for the passing of the Bill into law if the President doesn't sign it at the 3rd attempt. Rise up and demand for Tax justice today. Welcome to this edition of the Weekly.

## Join the campaign to stop MP-Greed!



Today, I will not write captions but will allow the photos to speak for themselves. Join the campaign to put an end to the greed of our legislators. Write a message with your legislator's name on it and post it on Facebook and twitter. You can even put it on your car.

Together, we can attain tax justice in Uganda.

Yesterday, the ActionAid Country Director, Arthur Larok joined CSOs and individuals interested in promoting a fair and progressive tax regime in Uganda to issue a statement calling on the HE the President of Uganda to stand by his earlier position that MPs allowances should be taxed under the Income Tax (Amendment) Bill 2016. According to the CSOs under their umbrella body Tax Justice Alliance Uganda, the exemption of MPs' allowances from tax, would lead to an annual loss of over UGX 49 billion in revenue collection.

"This move by the MPs to exempt themselves from taxation is discriminatory, all other citizens pay taxes on their allowances including the medical workers, teachers and the private sector entities. Lunch allowances for medical workers and sitting allowances for district councilors are taxed why not MPs," Julius Mukunda, the Coordinator Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG) asked.

Despite the President rejecting the Income Tax (Amendment) Bill 2016 in May this year, on November 15, 2016 Parliament defied the President, and returned the Bill to Museveni, with a proposal to exempt the MPs' allowances from taxation. In his May 2, 2016 letter to the speaker of Parliament Rebecca Kadaga, the President rejected the Bill saying the move by MPs to exempt themselves from taxation was not politically and morally correct.

Prior to that, Parliament had passed the Income Tax (Amendment) Bill with Section 21 (1) of the Income Tax Act, Cap 340 amended to exempt the employment income of members of Parliament, except salary from taxation. The decision provoked public outrage.

However, considering the motion for a resolution of parliament to reconsider the Bill on Tuesday November 15, the MPs across the political divide upheld their earlier stand, arguing that their salaries are already being taxed, thus no need for further taxation.

The CSOs have since launched a massive mobilization campaign to say no to the MPs' stand.

"We are going to mobilize masses to say no to this move by the MPs, if they insist they are not paying taxes, it should cut across, even doctors, teachers, local leaders should not have their allowances taxed," Imelda Namagga, a Senior Programs Officer Uganda debt network said

In the campaign, the CSOs want the youth, local council leaders and all taxpaying Ugandans to petition the President and the Prime Minister Ruhakana Rugunda, about the tax injustice by the MPs.

Early this year, ActionAid and other CSOs through their umbrella body Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG) collected over four million signatures, asking the president not to assent to the Bill, which he did.

Unfortunately, as Per the parliamentary rules of procedure, if the president rejects the Bill for the second time, the rules empower the House, to pass the Bill into law during the third time of consideration, without the President assenting to it.

The time is now for you and me to stand up and say no to this selfish move by the legislators.

## AAU staff Reflection Action Skills re-kindled!



Participants draw action matrix for rollout in their different offices at the end of the training.



The team used a body map for practical learning sessions



Immaculate (centre) shares experiences from Namutumba with colleagues during the meeting

Last week, 20 ActionAid staff convened in Kalangala for a five day meeting to revitalize the practice of Participatory Methodologies with in ActionAid and its partner Organisations.

The meeting was organised to enhance understanding and practice of participatory methodology and learning processes among ActionAid and partner organisation staff. This will rejuvenate the operations of Reflection-Action circles in the community where ActionAid operates.

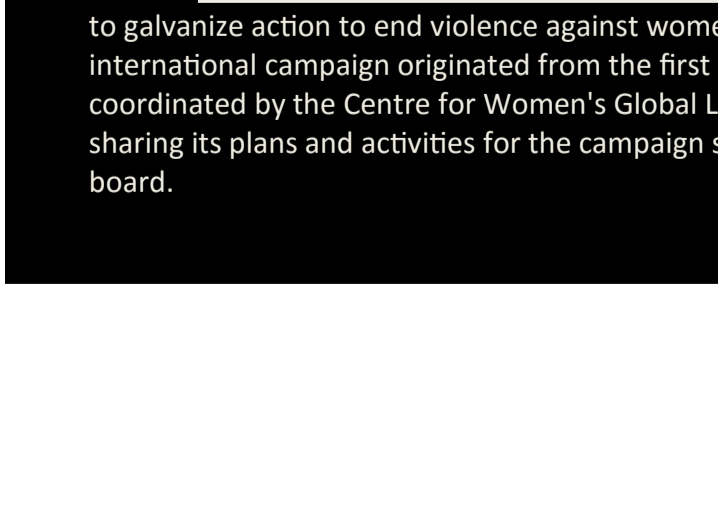
During the highly interactive sessions, participants reflected on the application of the Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) and its relation to Reflection Action. Participants shared successes and challenges encountered while using the approach and this enabled deeper learning on the use of the approaches.

To boost the understanding of the Reflection Action Methodology, participants were introduced to basic tools to be used in analysis of people's situations in relation to their Rights and power. Tools such as social audits, access and control matrix were used by the participants in practical sessions in the communities of Lwabelega, Mabigo and Nakatiba in Kalangala. This provided practical examples of the realities in the community as well as emphasizing the importance of a skilled facilitator.

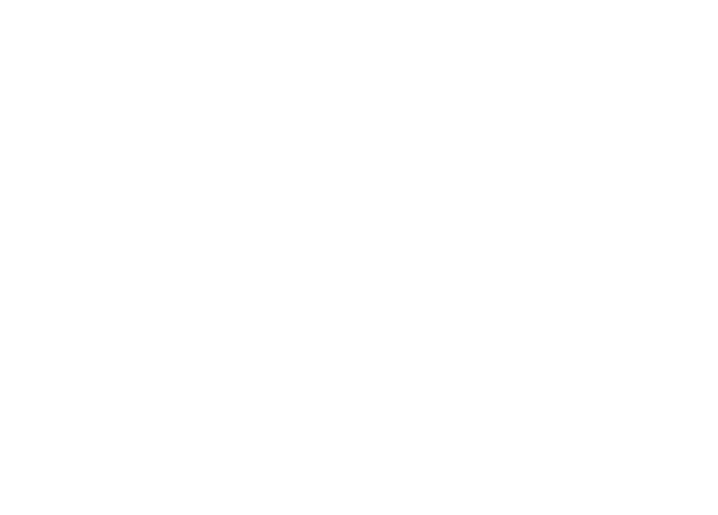
The participants shared tactics on ensuring the establishment and full operation of Reflection Action Groups. At the end of the five days, staff were equipped with energy, strategies and tactics to champion the methodology in the different ActionAid offices.

Reflection-Action is ActionAid's harmonised participatory methodology. Within a Reflection-Action process, AAU is able to facilitate comprehensive analysis by people living in poverty, of power relations, Human Rights, vulnerabilities, actors and institutions among others. The process starts from community analysis of their own context and builds into a cumulative way, looking at the connections between local, national and international levels. Reflection-Action is thus the bedrock for building people's agency, starting with their own conscience as this is key to successful implementation of ActionAid's human rights based approach.

## ActionAid Launches model Girls' Dormitory



The structure of the newly constructed dormitory for the girls in Mulabana primary school



One of the pupils handing over a petition to the District LCV chairperson demanding for more dormitories in the district.



The chairperson of Mulabana parents (left) handing over a gift to ActionAid staff at the event last week.

ActionAid officially handed over a Girls' dormitory to Mulabana Primary School in Kalangala last week. The dormitory was constructed to address the challenges that girl children on the island district face in trying to access quality public education.

"The girls have been walking long distances to and from school. In some cases, girls travel from one island to another in boats amidst the waves to access school. By the time they get to school, they are too tired and soaked in water. This forces many of them to drop out of school at a very early stage", observed Edmond Olowo, the Program Officer in the ActionAid Kalangala office.

The dormitory facility was constructed as a model to Kalangala District Local Government as one of the strategies to improve girl child enrolment and retention in school as well as completion. The District Education Officer, Mr Nseko Emmanuel thanked ActionAid for the investment and the challenge to the local government.

"The dormitory is going to address the risks around children traveling from one island to another to get to school and provide a conducive learning environment for the girls" he said.

He further commended ActionAid for initiating the school feeding program as this has resulted into improved performance and increased enrolment and retention in schools.

Richard Olong, the Manager of Partnerships and Capacity building at ActionAid emphasized that ActionAid is committed to working towards the realisation of quality public education for Ugandan pupils especially the girl children.

The Chief Guest, Mr Lugolooobi William who is the LCV Chairperson of Kalangala Islands commended ActionAid for its contribution to the development of the district and pledged to allocate resources to equip the dormitory with beds as well as invest in constructing dormitories in other schools.

The parents of the school handed over a gift to ActionAid to express their gratitude to the organisation.

## Week Ahead

⇒ This week, Arthur Larok, the ActionAid Country Director will be working from the Katakwi Cluster Office. This is part of the ActionAid management decision for all Directors to work from the upcountry offices to appreciate the community dynamics and hence offer better support to the offices.

⇒ **The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence are Here-**From 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, to 10 December, Human Rights Day, ActionAid will join the rest of the world to roll out the **16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence Campaign**. This is a time to galvanize action to end violence against women and girls around the world. The international campaign originated from the first Women's Global Leadership Institute coordinated by the Centre for Women's Global Leadership in 1991. ActionAid will be sharing its plans and activities for the campaign soon. Look out for them and get on board.