



Weekly

May 8— 21

Last week, a 25 year old man in Pallisa strangled his wife to death. Her crime was denying him sex because she was not feeling well. After several years of campaigns against GBV, do some of these cases call for a change of tactics? Food for thought. Welcome to this weekly edition!

Why Does Govt have intrest in Amuru; Residents ask!



Pictorial : Moments from last week's land week activities in Amuru.

Amuru District is in the spotlight over numerous land disputes that have over the years pitted residents and their local leaders against the government over alleged land grabbing. Multibillion investors majorly targeting to invest in agriculture have been rejected by residents and political leaders in the past years. In some instances, this has led to violent clashes.

But in a bid to provide platforms for massive community awareness on land rights, ActionAid Gulu Cluster in partnership with the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development and Participatory Ecological Land Use Management [PELUM] conducted a one week land awareness drive in the district in commemoration of the Land Awareness week. This year's land awareness week was observed under the theme: **"Together we protect our land"**.

The land awareness drive was flagged off by the Amuru Resident District commissioner, Mr Bilak Jalmoro at the Amuru Sub-county headquarters. Mr Jalmoro acknowledged the rampant land disputes in the district and attributed it to the limited knowledge locals have on land use. Mr Jalmoro said only 44 to 48 per cent of land in the district is being put into active use for agriculture while the rest of the land is idle. He encouraged residents to use their land to improve on their socio-economic welfare.

During the event, the Kilak South Member of Parliament, Hon Gilbert Olanya stated that its only by registering land that the land disputes in the area would be addressed.

"The community is ignorant on how to document their land. This is why we are mobilizing people in Amuru to register their Land. Uganda is growing rapidly and insistence on customary ownership with no proper documentation would only leave the residents without land in the near future." Olanya added.

In a speech read by the Ministry Spokesperson, the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development noted that the introduction of computerized system of land registration has improved efficiency and effectiveness in land service delivery. She encouraged the Amuru residents to utilize it to address the land disputes in the area.

The community was in agreement with the land registration but insisted that the Amuru land boundaries go up to River Omer and yet the Government denies them part of it.

"In addition to granting us access and ownership to the land next to Omer River, we want Government to come out openly and explain why it has a lot of interest in the land in Amuru" stated the residents.

Hon. Michael Lakony, Chairperson LCV-Amuru District, blamed government for the poor approach in acquiring land for investment from the locals.

"If the government wants to invest in Amuru, they should stop asking for land during rallies and radio talk shows. They will never get it. They should instead come and have dialogue with the community as the land belongs to the community" stated Lakony.

David Komakech, ActionAid's Women Land Rights Project officer stated that last week's activity covered 12 villages in Amuru Sub-county where land disputes have been registered over the years.

"We held sensitization meetings for four days with residents in Atoro, Lajalula, Layima, Bana, Mute-ma, Layamo, and Labongo ogali, Akaa, Kololo and Lakang among others. We are happy that we raised awareness of smallholder farmers and grassroot organizations on land rights, land laws and collective advocacy to enhance their effective engagements in land governance and land administration", he said.

Nwoya leaders select YESSEN Independent committee



Stakeholders during the consultative meeting last week. The community is excited about the project!

Last Friday, ActionAid successfully conducted a Participatory Consultation meeting in Nwoya District under Youth Empowerment for Self-Employment and National Development (YESSEN) Project. The YESSEN Project aims at reaching out to children and youths (out of school) to engage in gainful economic activities. It is being co-funded by ActionAid and European Union.

The meeting was attended by District and Sub County Community Development Officers, Sub county chiefs, Commercial Officers, Politicians, youth leaders and likeminded CSOs.

During the meeting, Acellam Samuel, AAU's project Officer introduced the project to the stakeholders. This was aimed at building their understanding of the project and clarifying on what their roles are. The meeting also developed a draft selection criteria for youth trainees and skilled artisans in a participatory manner.

The meeting elected the **YESSEN Independent Selection Committee**". This will bear the role of identifying and selecting both youth trainees and the skilled artisans. The committee comprises of the district and Sub County Community Development Officers, Commercial Officer, Production officer, youth leaders at district and Sub County levels and a representative from Education department. The committee was immediately tasked to come up with a harmonized selection criterion from draft criteria shared during the meeting.

The stakeholders also identified skilled artisans with ability to host youths for apprenticeship placements based on the marketability of their products within and outside the district for further vetting.

Hon. Kibwota Betty, the vice chairperson LCV of Nwoya in her closing remarks thanked ActionAid for its different programs in Nwoya.

"Am particularly excited about this youth program in addition to the Women Rights and Governance programs that are already being rolled out".

Ms Betty added that the youth project targets the future of Nwoya and will personally ensure that its successful implementation. She urged the district technical and political leaders to participate in its implementation for the betterment of the district.

ActionAid Recognised at Family Day commemoration

ActionAid joined the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to commemorate the family day last week. The event took place at the Uganda National Theatre and Cultural Centre. The event was attended by the RCC- Kampala, Mothers Unions groups from different parts of the country, Commissioners, religious and cultural leaders, CSO representatives and the media.

Hon Peace Mutuzo, the Minister of State for Gender expressed her appreciation to ActionAid for the great work done in supporting women and girls to end gender based violence. Ms Mutuzo also informed the public that Parenting Guidelines were to be officially launched by the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development.

"This will guide families on how to raise God fearing and patriotic generations for a corrupt free society", she announced.

she promised to initiate a National Circular on the negative, positive and progressive cultures and their implications to the family.

Nivatiti Nanduja, ActionAid's Women Rights Coordinator used the forum to speak about ActionAid's support to women and girls at a family level. Ms Nanduja spoke about the school programs to vulnerable children and the GBV campaign that aims at attaining peaceful homes and families for a peaceful nation.

The International Day of Families is observed on the 15th of May every year. It was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 1993 with resolution to reflect on the importance of family bonding and relationships. The day aims to promote awareness of issues relating to families and increase knowledge of the social, economic and demographic progression that affects families.

Ban Ki-moon, the former Secretary General of the United Nations proclaimed that "Equitable social and economic development depends on fair legal frameworks and social norms that support the rights of women and children. Discriminatory laws and practices that do not give equal rights to all, and that suppress women's and children's rights, have no place in contemporary families, communities, societies and nations.

Pallisa Residents Speak out on Fake Agric.Inputs

Last week, ActionAid pallisa Cluster held an Agricultural sector review meeting. ActionAid organized the meeting to provide a platform for citizens to demand for accountability in the critical agricultural sector.

During the well-attended dialogue in Gogonyo and later Kasasira (Kibuku district), the farmers boldly expressed their frustration over the poor quality agriculture inputs that were supplied by the local government.

"Most of the inputs were of poor quality and failed to deliver. This was made worse by the late delivery", stated Kedi Apulasi, one of the community members. The community also accused the agricultural officials of unfair distribution of the inputs, often leaving out women and the disabled.

Christine Adong, another community member added that the Agricultural Officers were not only discriminative but also corrupt.

"You either need to be a friend or a relative to the officers to get the inputs. The other way is to bribe the officers to benefit from the programs. This is very unfair and should stop" she remarked angrily.

Farmers further expressed their dissatisfaction with the operation wealth creation guidelines. One of the guidelines states that farmers who can't afford to plant one acre and above have no access to certain inputs and yet most of the people in the community own less than an acre of land. They appealed to government to reconsider this guideline.

In his response, the District Agriculture officer for Pallisa Mr. Okoboi Joseph told farmers that inputs are always tested before distribution to assess their quality.

"Unfortunately, not all inputs are tested and that accounts for the poor quality inputs that you are speaking about", he said to the not convinced audience.

During the meeting, community members were sensitized on the fall army worm including the recommended pesticides for use. Farmers were informed that government is currently under taking extensive research to identify long term solutions to the pest.

"Although Pallisa district received 40 liters of striker and 170 liters of rocket pesticides from central government to support farmers, this is way too little compared to the number of farmers in the district" said Mr. Okoboi. He advised the disgruntled farmers to find alternative ways of accessing these pesticides to save their gardens.

Sagati rose, a farmer shared her experience of using neem leaves to make organic pesticides and urged other farmers to try it out since many of them cannot afford the cost of pesticides.

Anti-Corruption caravan yields improved services in Pader

During the recently concluded Northern leg of the anti-corruption caravan, the NBS journalists who were on the caravan documented and aired a story on the poor state of health services in Pader District.

Particularly, Pader Health centre (iii) was put on spot. Residents accused the health workers of reporting late to work and leaving early, absenteeism from work, the poor hygiene at the facility among the poor.

The story attracted the attention and Action of the Directorate of Health Service Monitoring in the Office of the president. The office tasked the Resident District Commissioner of Pader to follow up the case and submit a detailed report on the state of the facility to the President's Office. In partnership with ActionAid, the monitoring visit was conducted and the report submitted.

The health facility staff has since improved their services in fear of what may happen when the health monitoring unit reacts to the report. We shall keep you posted on the developments. [Click here to view the NBS story about the](#)

Reflections from Washington

Last Monday, Arthur took a break from the thematic examination of ActionAid's 5th Country Strategic Paper. He instead wrote about Dr Stella Nyanzi, and why, its you my reader and not Dr Stella who needs to change.

"With all the broken promises politicians make, we need more people like Stella Nyanzi across the country who stand for justice in order to pile more people on a failing regime whose leaders argue that their priority is to build roads even when their citizens are dying of hunger in Teso and feeding on grass and termites. With 1,000 more Stella Nyanzis, using their own style but pursuing the same goal, we can at least have 999 active if 1 is arrested..." reads part of the blog. [Click here for more reading of this insightful blog.](#)

Today, Arthur takes us back to the thematic examination of the 5th Country Strategy. In the 1st and 2nd blog of this series of a theme-based exploration of Action-Aid Uganda's forthcoming 5th Strategy Paper, he examined the meaning and implications of two important concepts underpinning our next strategy - social justice and extreme poverty.

This week, one in which the strategy will be laid before AA Uganda's General Assembly, our top most governance body for discussion and hopefully approval, we write about changes in the context of our operations, requiring us to change as well or at the very least recognize that it can't be business as usual.....

[Read on here](#) as we wait to see if the Strategy will be approved come this Saturday. I will be there to capture all the moments for you!

Week Ahead

- ActionAid will conduct its Annual General Assembly this Saturday at Hotel Africana. During the Assembly, the 5th Country Strategic Paper will be presented to the Members of the Assembly for review and possible approval.