



Thank you ActionAid Greece: The Gala -gala pupils smiled and danced for the 45 Greek volunteers who constructed for them a 3rd class room block , a well and set up a play area with swings and slides last week. Welcome to the weekly!

Gala-gala;The buildings are up,But.....



Above: Left– Pupils in front of one of the classrooms at the school and **right** are the pupils inside the classroom. The construction of the new block by the Greek volunteers will enable more pupils to learn in descent classrooms.

Below: Left– Florence Apio, a parent of the school says that she must sell her agricultural produce to afford the PTA fund to send her four children to Gala-gala. Government aid to the school would reduce the burden. **Right** is Michael Oceng, the Secretary of the disciplinary committee for Gala-gala’s School Management committee. He called for Government funding of the school.

In Ngekidi Parish, Latanya Sub County in Pader district is Oyuku Gala-Gala Primary School. The school, which is neighbored by beautiful hills in the East, is one of the 9 community schools in Latanya Sub County. With a population of 415 pupils, the school has only 6 teachers, who are fully paid by the parents of the pupils.

According to Mr. Francis Alunyu, the head teacher and the only civil servant at the school, each pupil is required to pay UGX 10,000 per term as the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) Fund.

Although it was established in 2007, Oyuku Gala-Gala had no single permanent structure until 2014 when a two-class roomed block was constructed by ActionAid Uganda as a result of a Fundraising drive from staff and partners. Unfortunately, the block could only accommodate two classes. The rest of the pupils had to attend their classes under a makeshift structure.

Last year, 47 Greek volunteers visited Gala-gala and participated in the construction of an administration block. The team was moved to give more to the community. They promised to raise more funds to better the learning conditions of the pupils.

On Monday 10th July, 45 Greek volunteers(17 of them coming for the second time) started building a new classroom block for Oyuku Gala-Gala Primary School. Additionally, they also built a well and a playground for the school children. The team also spent a night in the different homes of the pupils. They were amazed at the love that the families showed them, despite their humble homesteads.

Salomi Pnevmatikou, who led the Greek volunteers, said that the reason her team was building the classroom block was to show solidarity to the people of Pader and to also improve the quality of education in the community. She also added that the construction is estimated to take a period of one month. However, the well was successfully drilled and the play ground set up fully.

However, the needs of Oyuku Gala-Gala Primary School go beyond classroom blocks, playgrounds and water wells. Much more needs to be done to provide a sustainable funding system for the school.

Mr. Alunyu says that in order to provide meals for the children and to pay staff members, the school fully relies on the PTA Fund paid by each pupil. He adds that so far, the school receives no funding from government to cater for its financial needs. This means that the financial burden is carried by the parents of these pupils.

29 year old Florence Apio is a mother of 6 children 4 of which go to Oyuku Gala-Gala Primary School. She says that she grows ground nuts which she sells in order to raise UGX 40,000 each school term in order to pay for her children’s PTA Fund.

Apio adds that when parents fail to pay the PTA Fund, the School Management Committee (SMC), which comprises of 12 members confiscates their property such as chickens, goats, or any other farm produce. To make matters worse, parents are also required to pay extra UGX 5,000 to each member of the SMC who steps into their compounds to collect the debt.

Michael Oceng, Secretary Disciplinary Committee for Oyuku Gala-Gala Primary School’s SMC confirmed that the committee regularly takes over the property of parents who fail to pay PTA Fund. He explained that if a parent has one child in the school and fails to pay the money, the SMC will take one of his or her chicken. However, if the debt involves two or more children, then the parent will lose two or more chicken or a goat that is equivalent to the debt.

In order to secure government funding for Oyuku Gala-Gala Primary School, Mr. Ocen Justin, Speaker of Pader District Local Government says that Government, through coordination of sub county and district leadership, coded the school in 2016. However since then, the school has received no government aid.

Mr. Ocen also says that although the Local Government wants to recruit at least 500 primary school teachers in Pader district, the Ministry of Finance says that there is no money to recruit and pay those teachers. However, he is hopeful that Oyuku Gala-Gala Primary School will become UPE funded in this financial year. Mr. Ocen also adds that when this happens, the financial burden will shift from parents to the government.

During a farewell event organized by the community for the guests, the LCV Chairperson of Pader stated that the district had been challenged by the Greeks and ActionAid as a whole. They promised to construct a three classroom block at Gala-gala in the near future. He asked that the district be held accountable to fulfill this commitment.

As we look forward to Gala-gala becoming Government aided, we are grateful to the Greek team for selflessly giving their time, resources, and expertise to the children and parents of Gala-gala!

It was not site-seeing, but real hard work!

When you read that 45 Greeks were in the country to construct a classroom block and a well at Gala-gala in Pader, you probably dismissed it. You may have thought that they came to pass time and probably over see the construction. Well, you are in for a surprise. The Greeks were not in the country to tour and simply oversee work being done. They participated in the construction hands on. In fact, they worked as the community looked on. They build a foundation for the classroom block, installed swings in a play area and dug a well for the pupils. Take a look at how hardworking and generous these people are in the pictorial below , and be challenged to give a bit of your time, resources and energy to your community.



The Greeks’ visit to Bwaise GBV Shelter

Last Saturday, the 45 Greek volunteers visited Bwaise Gender Based violence shelter. While there, the guests were welcomed by a dance performance by the orphans and vulnerable children supported by ActionAid through a local partner (MAWDA). Also present were the ActionAid and partner staff.

Henry Nickson Ogwal used the opportunity to thank the team for giving selflessly to Uganda. He also spoke about the ActionAid campaigns against Gender Based violence that had given birth to the shelter model.

“This shelter provides holistic services to GBV survivors. We offer psychosocial, legal, economic empowerment, mediation, temporarily shelter, among others”, he said.

Nuru Nabunya, the Executive Director of MAWDA explained that since the shelter was established five years ago, the slum community has registered a great reduction in the incidents of GBV.

The guests were humbled by Asia Kigongo, a GBV survivor who is now a successful business woman. Asia explained that ActionAid awakened energy, hope and determination in her life after an encounter with GBV. She now runs a saloon and is using the profits from the business to construct a flat. She promised to host them the next time they visit Uganda. One of the volunteers requested Asia for a hug that lasted for over 5 minutes. She explained that she couldn’t handle half of what Asia had gone through and was in admiration of her courage and resilience.

The guests took time off to admire and buy the beautiful crafts made by the GBV survivors under the different partners (MAWDA and Tusitukilewamu). They also shared cozy moments with the children and did not want to leave, even when the call to board the bus came.

Pallisa unveils program to curb youth unemployment

ActionAid Pallisa Cluster last week unveiled an innovation training program that they hope will curb youth unemployment in the district. The program started by training youth in creative skills such as soap and chalk making.

According to Shiba Namulinda, the Cluster Program Officer, the cluster has a holistic program of curbing youth unemployment by inspiring the youth to enable novel innovations that will create new contributions to reducing the youth unemployment challenge in the district and the country at large.

The half day training equipped young people with practical skills to enable them start own home projects and facilitate access to sustainable economic opportunities. When asked how they will use the knowledge, the youth committed that they will start their own projects to solve the problem of unemployment and transfer the knowledge to other young people in their community who have not got the opportunity to attain the skills.

After the training, the youth were joined by the district leaders in a dialogue aimed at addressing the challenges that the youth face in the community.

The youth stated that while they had acquired the skills, they were not certain of attaining start up capital since the officers in charge of the several youth funds seek for bribes before awarding the funding.

“You either have to be relative to the technical team or give a bribe to benefit from these funds. We are now stuck”, they chorused, one after another.

However, the District Development officers of Pallisa and Kibuku dismissed the allegations and challenged the youth to gather evidence and open up corruption charges whenever they are asked for money to access the free youth livelihoods funds.

The RDC of Pallisa, in his closing remarks challenged the youth to change their attitude towards work especially in agriculture and work for their improved livelihoods.

In April, Cabinet drafted a new \$246,227,260 (Shs887b) National Action Plan to address the problem of youth unemployment in the country that is affecting 87 per cent of graduates.

In the past two decades, government’s attempts to address youth unemployment has been through generic development policies and schemes such as the Poverty Alleviation Programme, the Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture and the National Youth Livelihood Programme. It’s hoped that interventions such as the Pallisa cluster training can supplement Government efforts to address the problem affecting majority of Uganda’s population.

Reflections from Washington



As Arthur’s stay in Washington quickly comes to an end (how time flies), he writes about the art of writing. He in away can pass as an expert on the subject, having delivered a blog for this publication and several articles for the Newspapers every week.

So, can you also write? Yes you can, find out how [in today’s blog Here](#).

Week Ahead

- ActionAid Uganda will hold the 48th ordinary board meeting this Saturday.
- In the bid to produce a Cost recovery Policy for the ActionAid federation, the consultants commissioned by the International Secretariat are in Uganda for an interface with staff this week.