

Weekly

Oct 16-22



During the staff meeting last Thursday, AAU staff assured the ActionAid International Secretary General that they feel more powerful and energised to work against social injustice like never before. In this Photo, they exhibited the power and energy and not even the Frozen accounts can dampen their spirit. Welcome to the Weekly!

AAU staff energised, Police continues to ask for support!



Above: the powerful and energised AAU staff determined to end social injustice despite the uncertainty over their next pay cheque.

Below: Staff listen to the ActionAid International AG-Secretary General during the meeting last week.

Chris Kinyanjui, the AG-Secretary General of ActionAid International last week assured staff that it is all about ActionAid Uganda in the entire ActionAid federation and they are doing everything possible to bring the situation back to normal.

Chris stated this during a meeting with all staff at head office which marked the end of his five day support visit to Uganda.

"I bring you messages of support and solidarity. Please stay firm and calm for there is so much action taking place across the federation to ensure that the situation in Uganda is brought back to normal", he said during his address.

Chris urged staff not to be distracted but rather stay focused on our mission adding that there are those that need our support and should work to keep their hope alive.

Staff were also informed that the federation has moved into a crisis mood and a crisis team has been established. The team meets daily for briefings and is strategizing according to each development on ground.

Several other staff from the International Secretariat will be deployed in the Uganda office on a weekly or monthly basis to support the team.

In response, AAU staff informed the Secretary General that they feel more energised and proud to belong to ActionAid than ever before and are still committed to the struggle against social injustice. They appealed to the Secretariat to work at ensuring that the work to end poverty and injustice continues despite the freezing of Accounts.

At the end of the meeting, staff joined in a photo moment where they jumped up high while yelling out the power within them to end social injustice in Uganda.

AAU Governing Board Sits for Extra-Ordinary session

The ActionAid Governing Board held an extra ordinary meeting last week to discuss the current developments within the organisation and come up with key resolutions aimed at bringing the situation back to normal.

The meeting Chaired by the Board Chairperson Mr Nicholas Opiyo was attended by seven members of the Board, the ActionAid Federation Secretary General (Chris Kinyanjui) and members of the Country Management team led by the Country Director; Arthur Larok.

During the meeting, the Board assured management that they were not shaken by the charges placed on the organisation by the police because they are fully involved in the running of the organisation.

While most of the decisions reached remain confidential, the Weekly can gladly report that the Board together with management are on the same page and working day and night to ensure that our work against social injustice **continues**.

Business as Usual

Just as is the norm in ActionAid Uganda, September and October are usually planning and budgeting months for the coming year. Despite the disruptions by the ongoing Police investigations, ActionAid leadership team met last week at Royal suits in Bugolobi to budget and plan for 2018.

The three day meeting saw the different units and Clusters draft plans and activities in line with the yet to be launched 5th Strategy Paper; Strengthening Struggles against Social Injustice!. Even while the accounts remain frozen, budgets for the coming year were drawn and reviewed by both the Finance team and the different implementing units.

For now, staff continue to report to work daily to carry on with the activities that do not necessarily require money to run.

Police and Government Departments Continue to ask for Support

Police Officers have continued to refer Gender Based Violence (GBV) cases to ActionAid's 10 Gender Based Violence Shelters across the Country.

In Gulu, Police officers physically visited the shelter and requested for financial support in terms of fuel to go for evidence collection for rape and defilement cases. Unfortunately, the support could not be rendered as some of this money has been blocked by Bank of Uganda on orders of the same Police Force.

The situation was not any different in Wandegaya where the police called the Bwaise GBV shelter requesting that a GBV survivor be received and given GBV response services. The officer in a phone interaction added that they really appreciate the work of ActionAid.

"You guys do a very good job. Unfortunately, I cannot speak for you because I need my job, but help us and receive this client", he said.

In Katakwi Cluster, the Office received a letter from the District Local Government requesting for financial support for the belated independence celebrations.

Nickson Ogwal, the Fundraising Director while speaking to the media stated that the cost of freezing the ActionAid accounts was not affecting ActionAid as an institution but the so many Local Governments and Government departments that the organisation works with to restore dignity and justice to the poor and marginalised communities.

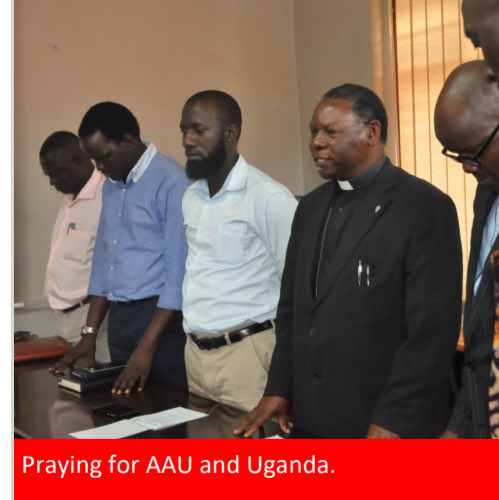
Religious Leaders Pray for ActionAid Uganda



The guests meeting the Finance team



Rev Francis speaks out



Praying for AAU and Uganda.

Religious leaders under their umbrella organization; Justice and peace Network last week paid a courtesy call to ActionAid. Six leaders drawn from Sebie, Ankole, West Nile and Central regions stated that they were saddened by the news of the closure of AAU offices and decided to come and visit but also pray with AAU.

Rev. Canon Francis Mutwatina from Mbarara used the visit to call on Government to work at ensuring that justice and peace prevail in the Country.

"As religious leaders, God has ordained us to speak for peace, equity and justice. We shall do exactly that no matter the circumstances", he said, adding that they are standing with ActionAid because just like them, the organisation stands for equity and justice.

Rev Hosea Langat from Sebei region told the story of how ActionAid interventions have increased household incomes causing families to educate their children but also live dignified lives.

"Several Ugandans have embezzled funds but their accounts have never been blocked. When we see Government freezing the accounts of an NGO that is positively transforming lives, we wonder whether this government loves its people or not", he said.

Rev Hosea added that currently, work at the Kween GBV Shelter where he comes from is at a standstill and several women may not get justice if the accounts are not unfrozen to allow the shelter provide GBV response services to the survivors.

Nickson Ogwal, AAU's Fundraising Director thanked the religious leaders for their solidarity and assured them that management is considering all possible avenues to ensure that the situation normalizes.

The religious leaders then prayed for the organisation, took a walk around office and left with a promise to visit again but also continue in prayer for both the organisation and the country as a whole.

[Click here for the NTV news story on the visit by religious leaders.](#)

Top Interviews of the week

Both National and international media continue to report about the freezing of the ActionAid Uganda accounts. Today, the weekly shares with you two major interviews by the Country and Fundraising Directors on NBS and NTV morning shows respectively.

While the NBS was an interaction, the NTV one seems to have been an interrogation.

Click [here for the NTV interview](#) with AAU's Nickson Ogwal and [Here for the NBS interaction with Arthur Larok.](#)

Ms. Stella Mukasa, the Africa Regional Director of the International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW) and member of AAU General Assembly visited one of the GBV shelters in Kampala a few days before Police ordered that Bank of Uganda freezes the ActionAid accounts. She shares her thoughts in a blog: **Halting the operations of ActionAid-who is the ultimate victim?**

[Click for full Blog.](#)

Week Ahead

- The Director of Programs; Harriet Gimbo is in South Africa this week attending the international Women Rights Platform meeting.

- All CSOs in the country will meet this week to reflect on the current attacks on civil society and pave a way forward.

- DGF will conduct an Organisational pre-grant assessment in preparation for DGF (ii) funding.