



Nov 28—4 Dec.

Dear Reader; The president returned the Income Tax Bill to parliament for the second time, no call for celebration yet because this time round, he is silent in regard to the clause that exempts legislators from paying taxes on some of their allowances. According to Rule 132 (9) of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, if the President returns the bill twice, Parliament can pass it into law. This seems quite complex for you and me; and will leave it at that. Welcome to the Weekly!

Katakwi Women demand for Pads for their girls!



Above-Left: The Katakwi women cycled and walked to the District headquarters to demand for the allocation of resources to procure sanitary towels for the girls. **Above-Right:** Women present their demands to the district power holders.

Below-Left: The elders line up to burn the alcohol sachets. They said that alcoholism is fuelling GBV in the district. **Right -Below:** The symbolic burning to ban alcohol out of Katakwi.

Katakwi district women on Thursday petitioned district leaders demanding for allocation of money to address gender based violence and provide sanitary pads for young girls to reduce school drop outs. Ms Apolot Miriam, a Toroma county resident led the petitioners who rode bicycles to the district headquarters to hand over the petition to the district chairperson Mr Elakas Walter Okiring during the celebration of 16 days of activism and world aids day organized by ActionAid Katakwi Cluster.

"We women of Katakwi demand that the district allocates money to supply sanitary pads in schools. Girls absent themselves from school during their menstrual days due to lack of pads and this has increased the number of girls dropping out of school", the petition reads.

President Museveni while campaigning for re-election in November last year promised sanitary pads to schooling girls to curb the drop out rates:

"I want all our daughters to attend school and remain there until they complete their studies. One of the reasons that force our daughters out of school is that when their periods start, they do not have sanitary pads. When they are in class, they soil their dresses. So they run away from school", he stated.

Unfortunately, despite this pledge and the several demands from advocacy groups, no money has been allocated to this cause in the 2017/2018 FY. In fact, the current Minister of Education, who is also the first lady of Uganda is tight lipped about the situation.

Land ownership

Women also asked district leaders to make pronouncements on women's rights to own, control and use land and other productive resources.

"Women and girls have been denied access and control of gainful resources in Katakwi and this perpetuates violence against women and girls," a petitioner scribed on a manila paper.

Mr Elakas said the district council will take into account the petitioners' demands while budgeting during the next financial year. He applauded ActionAid for championing sensitization programs which have mobilized women to demand for their rights. He added that the current challenge is that men have failed to appreciate the need to respect women rights and often consider the women demands as a challenge to their masculinity.

"A section of men are suspicious that NGOs have conspired with women in the district to weaken their societal and family positions", he said while calling for the involvement of males in the sensitization programs.

Benjamin Tukei, the AAU Program Officer Katakwi Cluster informed this publication that they have started a male Champion group that is supporting with the sensitization and reporting of GBV cases in the community.

"The model men or male champions are conducting peer to peer sensitization against GBV among men and are encouraging women to seek for redress at the GBV shelter", he added.

Ban alcohol

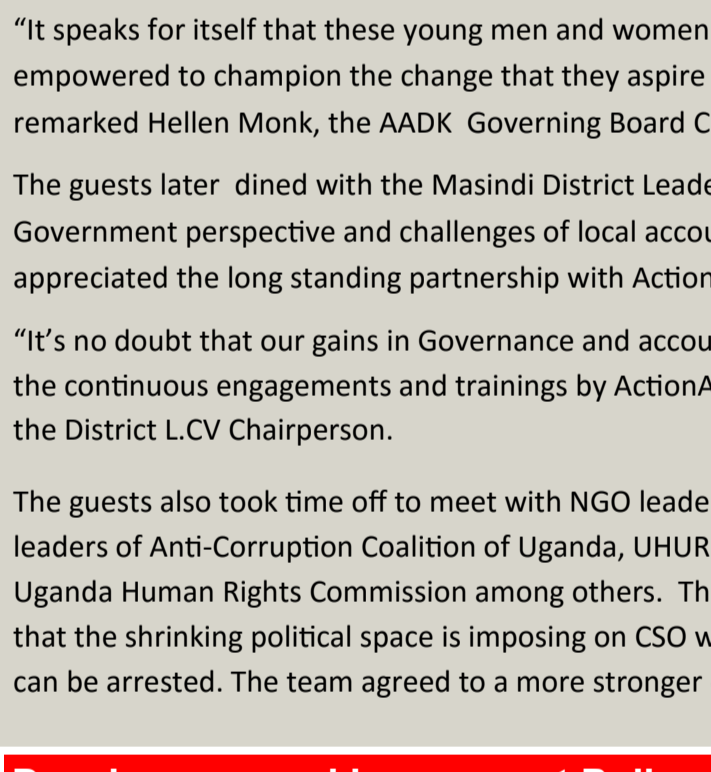
Religious leaders, elders and opinion leaders also presented a petition demanding for an immediate ban and regulation on the consumption, sale and distribution of highly toxic alcoholic products. These products, the community believes have contributed to an increase in GBV cases reported in the district. In a symbolic move, the leaders collected all alcohol sachets and set them on fire as a sign that the drink is not welcome in the district.

According to the district chief administrative officer Mr Lorwor Jimmy, men in Katakwi consider alcohol as treatment for their anger and frustration.

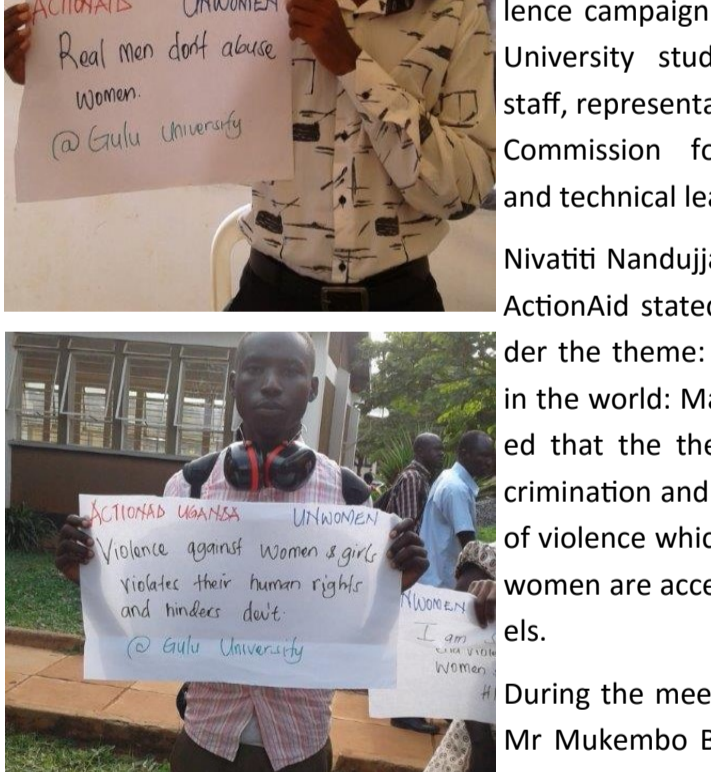
"It has been so dangerous because men move with packed sachets of alcohol in their pockets and can drink at any time. The result is violence against women and children" he stated.

He pledged his support for the anti-alcoholism campaign as a way of addressing GBV in the district.

ActionAid Denmark team inspired by AAU work



While in Masindi, the AADK team met with the youth leaders. They were amazed at their level of involvement in the governance of the district.



The AADK team in a group photo with AAU leadership team last wednesday.

Last week, ActionAid Uganda was privileged to host the top management team from ActionAid Denmark (AADK). The team of five comprised of the AADK Governing Board Chairperson and her Deputy, the AADK Country Director, the International Director and Communications Officer. The guests were on a learning visit and started their Interaction with the AAU programing at head office where they met with some senior management staff.

The Programs Director at AAU, Harriet Gimbo updated the guests on the ongoing Country Strategic Paper V development, an area of interest to the guests. The AADK Board Chairperson appealed to the Uganda team to share lessons and think pieces from the development process for their learning and deeper reflection on their own future programing.

The guests then proceeded to Masindi Local Rights program. While there, the team got a deeper understanding of the AAU Participatory Democracy work specifically around strengthening civic participation, Accountability, transparency and civil society

capacity strengthening.

The ActionAid Denmark Country Director was amazed at the level of youth organization in the LRP. These have formed a youth Budget Advocacy group and they are closely monitoring the District and Sub country budget allocation, and utilization to ensure that the priority sectors such as youth, Health, Agriculture and Education are getting a fair share of the resource cake.

"It speaks for itself that these young men and women have been nurtured and empowered to champion the change that they aspire to see in their community", remarked Hellen Monk, the AADK Governing Board Chairperson.

The guests later dined with the Masindi District Leadership. These shared the Government perspective and challenges of local accountability. The District Chairperson appreciated the long standing partnership with ActionAid.

"It's no doubt that our gains in Governance and accountability as a district are a result of the continuous engagements and trainings by ActionAid", added Hon Kanaginagi Atenyi, the District LCV Chairperson.

The guests also took time off to meet with NGO leaders. Among those met were the leaders of Anti-Corruption Coalition of Uganda, UHURU institute, Uganda Youth Network, Uganda Human Rights Commission among others. The leaders discussed the challenge that the shrinking political space is imposing on CSO work and ways in which the situation can be arrested. The team agreed to a more stronger collaboration and partnership.

Develop a sexual harrasment Policy-Gulu University advised!



Last week, ActionAid together with her partners organized a dialogue at Gulu University on nurturing a violence free society. The activity is also part of the 16 days of activism against Gender based violence campaign.

The meeting was attended by the University students, teaching and non-teaching staff, representatives from UN-Women and UN High Commission for Human Rights, Cultural, political and technical leaders in the region.

Nivatiti Nandujja, the women Rights Coordinator at ActionAid stated that the event was organized under the theme: "from peace in the home to peace in the world: Make Education safe for all". She added that the theme recognizes that structural discrimination and inequality is perpetuated by a cycle of violence which does not end even when girls and women are accessing education at the different levels.

During the meeting, the University guild president, Mr Mukembo Ben recognized the need for equal gender representation in all spaces as this would provide room for women friendly deliberations, decisions and recommendations.

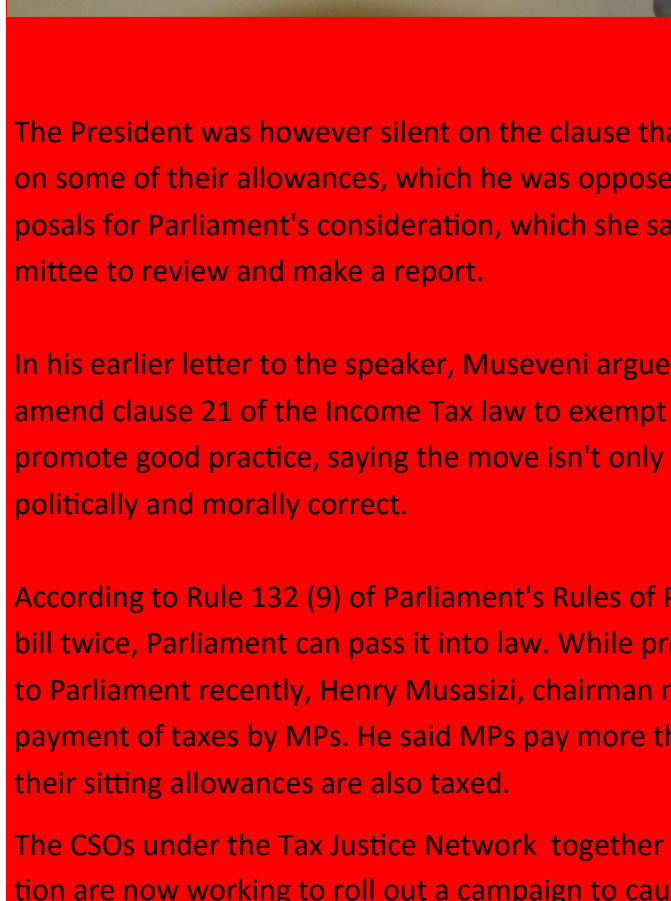
"In the guild cabinet, am proud to say that we have equal gender representation. Am calling upon all other leadership categories to ensure equal gender representation, not just in numbers but in actual decision making", he added.

The Gender focal person in the Acholi cultural establishment -Ker Kwaro emphasized the institution's pronouncements against GBV and these have been documented and shared in all spaces including the University. He warned perpetrators of GBV to do so at their own risk.

The district Police Commander used the space to appeal to students to always desist from having strikes but rather look for alternative peaceful means of ensuring that their grievances are addressed.

Some of the key recommendations to the University by the stakeholders was a call for an immediate review, passing and implementation of the University review policy. This should be done in close consultation with the students through their leaders. The University leadership was also advised to urgently develop a sexual harassment policy to protect especially the female students to help in the prevention of sexual violence.

Campaign Updates: #MPTax Exemptions-Bill returned to parliament



Amendment Bill 2016. The Speaker of Parliament, Rebecca Kadaga told the plenary on Tuesday afternoon that Museveni had returned the bill, which was passed for the second time two weeks ago, to parliament for review of Section 6.

Section 6 states that in case Government grants a petroleum exploration license after 31st December 2015, the allowable deductions shall be subject to the limitations on deductions specified in the Production Sharing Agreements.

The President was however silent on the clause that exempts legislators from paying taxes on some of their allowances, which he was opposed to. The Speaker says there other proposals for Parliament's consideration, which she says will be sent to the Finance committee to review and make a report.

In his earlier letter to the speaker, Museveni argued that the decision by the legislators to amend clause 21 of the Income Tax law to exempt themselves from paying taxes, doesn't promote good practice, saying the move isn't only injurious to revenue efforts, but not politically and morally correct.

According to Rule 132 (9) of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, if the President returns the bill twice, Parliament can pass it into law. While presenting the Finance committee report to Parliament recently, Henry Musasizi, chairman noted that there is a misconception on payment of taxes by MPs. He said MPs pay more than 40 million shillings annually, while their sitting allowances are also taxed.

The CSOs under the Tax Justice Network together with the Kampala City Traders Association are now working to roll out a campaign to cause the president to pronounce himself on clause 21 of the Bill that exempts legislators' allowances from being taxed.

Week Ahead

⇒ This week, ActionAid and her partners will conduct an anti-corruption marathon and music festival in Gulu to commemorate the anti-corruption week. Join us to race against corruption this Friday.

⇒ AAU and her partners will conduct a women's economic empowerment forum this Thursday at Makerere. The chief guest will be the Speaker of Parliament, Hon Rebecca Kadaga.