

Weekly

February 1—7



A big thank you to the Alistair Berkley Charitable trust for funding the Women Land Rights Project in Northern Uganda. The prescription that women need for their dignity is not one that can be dispensed in a pharmacy, it's a prescription for power, land ownership, access and control. February is here. Mobilize your households to prepare to vote. Welcome to the Weekly!

ActionAid unveils Fair Green and Global Project



(Left) AAU team joined by the ActionAid Netherlands team and CSO representatives that will be implementing the five year project. Right is the team strategizing in focus group discussions on how best to implement the project for dignity and justice of Ugandans.

Last week, ActionAid unveiled the Fair Green and Global Project at Royal suits Hotel in Bugolobi. The five year project will be implemented in partnership with ActionAid Netherlands, Solidarity Uganda, Legal Aid Providers Network, Recreation For Peace and Development and SEATINI Uganda.

According to the AAU policy and Campaigns Manager, Fredrick Kawooya, the project aims at strengthening corporate accountability particularly in regard to community land rights and in fulfilling their tax obligations as part of their social responsibility.

“Together with our partners, we shall build community resilience to engage and hold the state and business corporations accountable for their actions. We want all Ugandans to enjoy their rights to a life of dignity”, he said.

Fred added that this will be achieved by promoting responsible corporate and states investment practices for respect, promotion and fulfilment of the rights of men, women and the youths to land.

The project will also be working to enhance equity, fairness, and transparency in tax generation for state and corporations as well as effective allocation and utilization for quality of social services.

The Government of Uganda is in the practice of giving out free land, tax holidays and exemptions and loans to corporations under the guise of developing the country. Unfortunately, most of the land give away happen on communally owned land which is not titled. The processes of these give a ways are usually done secretly and with limited involvement of citizens. Even where the investments are clearly agreed upon, the legal contracts do not exist or have not been made available to government officials responsible for foreign investment or to local communities and stakeholders affected by the agreements. As a consequence, thousands of people have been displaced, losing access to vital natural resources such as water supplies, farmland and other forest products with immense abuses of human rights.

We look forward to a total transformation of the above situation after the five year project.

Bukedi Region lays on table its manifesto



(Right) some of the residents from Bukedi Sub region that turned up for the launch of the region's manifesto. Right are some of the political aspirants during the heated debate. They were challenged to respect the social contract (citizens manifesto) for the development of the sub region.

The people of Bukedi sub region have demanded that their incoming political leaders pay attention to the increased corruption levels in the region, poor quality education and youth unemployment. This was at the launch of the Bukedi Region Citizens manifesto held last week at Country Inn Hotel in Pallisa. The event was attended by over 150 local political, cultural and civil society leaders.

All the region registered very poor grades in the recently released Primary leaving examinations. Only 1% of the registered pupils attained the first division.

The Resident District Commissioner of Pallisa, Mr Baker Bateganya emphasized that Politicians should not simply politicize the issues raised in the manifesto but rather work towards addressing them.

“I urge all incoming leaders to regard our manifesto as a mutual accountability yard stick. This is a social contract between all elected leaders and the citizens”, he said.

The launch was concluded with a debate by the political aspirants from all electable categories in the region; Members of Parliament, Local councils and special interest groups. The aspirants debated on how best they will tackle the poor health services, environmental degradation, the deteriorating agriculture sector and unemployment, all of which were highlighted in the region's manifesto.

In preparation for effective citizen participation in the 2016 elections and beyond, the 2016-2021 Citizens Manifesto was developed and launched by the civil society of Uganda. The Manifesto was generated through a robust countrywide consultative process. The Bukedi citizen Manifesto is hence one of the 29 other manifestos that informs the National Citizens Manifesto. The 29 include the 14 specific regional manifestos, the special interest groups' manifestos such as Women, Youth, Farmers, people with disabilities among others.

Women Protection Centres team Re-strategizes!

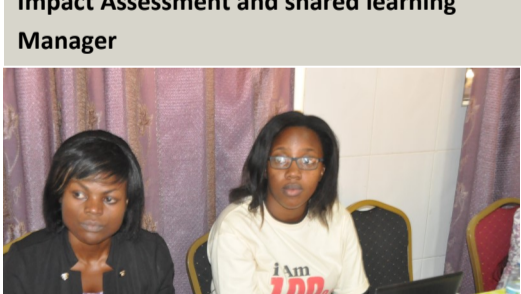


Joyce Nabwire, the Project Coordinator shares thoughts with Arthur (Right) the Country Director and Stanley (Left) the Impact Assessment and shared learning Manager

It was a bee hive of activity at Kakanyero Hotel in Gulu last week as the AAU Women Protection Centre (WPC) staff and the MIFUMI selected to conduct their project review meeting. Gulu was selected to host the activity to achieve regional balance since most of the past reviews have been conducted in Kampala.

“More importantly, we chose Gulu to foster peer learning from the Gulu Gender Based Replication Shelter which we consider as a model shelter for violence in other areas,” said Joyce Nabwire Baker, the Project Coordinator of the Women Protection Centres.

During the Review, Arthur Larok, AAU's Country Director asked the WPC team not to just deliver services but to mobilize the community to rise up against GBV.



Some of the project staff from MIFUMI at the review.

“Try as much as possible to identify icons against GBV. These will be very effective in communicating messages against GBV as well as challenging the patriarchy practices where GBV is rooted”, he said.

The Gulu District LCV Chairperson, Ojara Martin Mapenduzi, while addressing participants promised continued support to the Project in the district.



The Mubende team strategizes.

“We shall not allow the shelter to close even after the project comes to an end in April. It has supported so many women to attain justice and a life of dignity. If it requires us to raise funds from else where, we shall do that,” he assured.

Gulu District Local Government has already allocated UGX10000000 to support the operations of the shelter.

The team took off time to visit the Gulu Gender Based Violence shelter. Natukunda Matilda, the Project Officer in Nebbi describes the shelter as a total home away from home.



Policy influencers launch the Gulu GBV shelter in 2014.(file photo)

“It's a very unique shelter. There is entertainment for the clients, a play centre, child friendly bedrooms, a kitchen, and many other beautiful things. It's a home not a dormitory”, she remarked during a phone call interview.

Matilda added that she is going to aggressively lobby the district officials to work with her to ease mobilization, reconciliation of GBV cases but also for sustainability of the project.

Since December 2014, the WPC project has under gone transition, that saw AAU and MIFUMI receiving funds from DFID for the 13 Shelters under the Bridging fund. The shelters are Nebbi, Gulu, Lira, Amuru, Masaka, Mbarara, Mubende, Moroto, Bwaise, Pallisa, Kumi, Katakwi and Kween.

MIFUMI operates the three shelters of Masaka, Mbarara and Moroto while ActionAid operates the rest. This bridging fund commenced in July 2015 and will end in April this year.

Story of change for the week!



After joining a REFLECT group, 37-year-old Ayet Margret has improved her life standards significantly and she is now active in politics as chairperson for the Women League under the NRM (National Resistance Movement) in Anaka Sub County.

[Click Here](#) for Margaret's full story

WEEK AHEAD:

- Chris Byaruhanga Musiime, the Managing Editor of Oil in Uganda is in cape Town, South Africa for the Mining Indaba Meeting