

# actionaid Uganda Weekly

Nov 7 — 13



Dear Reader, as we count down to the official launch of the 16 days of Activism against Gender based violence; what are you doing to make homes and schools safe for the children?? Welcome to the Weekly.

File Photo/ActionAid/Samanya

## CD Sets tone on Civic charter as 80 AAU Staff sign up!



Above: Arthur Larok at the Global Perspectives Conference at Heinrich Böll Foundation in Berlin.

Below: Police Director of Human Resources and Spokesperson signs the civic Charter two weeks ago. (file)

The Country Director, of ActionAid, Arthur Larok was part of a Global Steering Group that was set up to develop the Global Civic Charter since the beginning of the year. He was elected by the Steering Group to make a Keynote on the Civic Charter at the opening of a 3-Day Global Perspectives Conference held at the Headquarters of the Heinrich Boll Foundation in Berlin.

His keynote titled: 'The Civic Charter: Another Passing Fad or the Missing Link' raised considerable debate as he challenged NGOs not to think about Shrinking Political Space as a new phenomenon but an historical struggle between the power in people and people in power. He urged the over 200 international audience to look at shrinking political space, not as a struggle for NGO operating space but rather an attack on people's right to shape their own destinies.

Arthur argued that shrinking political space robs the world of people's ingenuity and contributions to solve some of the world's most pressing challenges like persistent poverty, extremism, climate change and inequalities.

The full text of CD's Keynote remarks has been placed on the website of the Heinrich Boll Foundation and can be read [Here](#).

As Arthur called upon the world community to strengthen their focus on shrinking political space, ActionAid staff in Uganda responded and 80 staff have so far signed up to the Civic Charter. This should be celebrated as testimony on how ActionAid Uganda staff are connecting with global struggles. The CDs office will award the first 3 staff who signed up as well as the 80<sup>th</sup> staff. Don't miss out --- the Civic Charter is still up for signing and you can do this through [this link](#)

## US-Official pledges support to NGOs



Left—Arthur Larok, Seth Miller and Margaret Sekajja during the meeting at ActionAid offices last Monday. Right above is Arthur and below— Margaret, both elected to represent NGOs on the NGO bureau. They are pending approval of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Last Monday, the Political Officer at the US- Embassy in Uganda paid a courtesy call to the elected NGO representatives to the National NGO Bureau. Seth Miller met Arthur Larok and Margaret Sekagga at the ActionAid Offices. Arthur is the Country Director at ActionAid while Margaret is the Executive Director of Human Rights Centre.

The US Embassy was interested in hearing from the elected representatives of the NGO's to the National Non Government Organisations Bureau about the ongoing NGO regulations development process. The regulations are being developed jointly by Government and NGOs under the leadership of the Uganda National NGO Forum.

On this matter, the meeting agreed that Arthur would use his position in the NGO sector to work towards ensuring that NGOs remain steadfast and firm on critical positions as provided for in the regulations. These, among others include; NGO representation on the Bureau, the wide ranging inspection powers accorded to Government by the law and the unfortunate manner in which QuAM(the NGO Certification mechanism) has been integrated in the law.

The team also discussed the broader governance challenges that Uganda is facing and their implications to the NGOs.

Miller was appreciative of the NGO concerns and promised to be an ambassador of the concerns within the donor community.

In the coming two weeks, there will be a national consultative meeting on the developed NGO Regulations convened by the NGO Forum. The Regulations will later be submitted to the Minister of Internal Affairs.

On November 26, 2015, Parliament passed the [Non-governmental Organisations \(NGO\) Act, 2016](#).

Among other restrictive provisions, section 5 of the Act establishes a National Bureau for NGOs, which is granted broad powers that include the ability to refuse to register an NGO, to issue and/or revoke permits, and to restrict the employment of foreign nationals.

## WestNile Students debate oil and gas!



A debator from Uringi ss articulates issues of oil and extractives. The school won the debating competitions and took home a prize

Last week, the ActionAid Extractives Governance team together with the Nebbi cluster organized a schools debate on array of oil and gas related topics in a first of its kind community awareness initiatives in West Nile Region. The debate attracted students from six schools from Nebbi and Pakwach districts.

The grand finale of the debates between Uringi SS and Pakwach SS was a climax of a two-day interesting, informative and educative experience. The Nebbi District Natural Resources Officer, Fueling Doreen described the debates as innovative and unique.

Uringi SS won the competition.

According to Ivan Mpagi, the AG-Extractives Governance Manager, the students of Uringi were articulate, knowledgeable ,entertaining but also demonstrated that they had read widely about the oil and gas industry in Uganda.

During the debates, Students fairly demonstrated awareness of the oil and gas sector to the surprise of their teachers and stakeholders at the event.

"We are impressed with the level of knowledge that you have exhibited. We want you to carry on with the debates outside the school environment. You are the future of our Oil and Gas industry", stated Ceasor Ongeiwun, the Chairperson of the debate sessions.

Oryekwum Gabriel, the Municipal Social Services Officer of Nebbi hailed ActionAid for the initiative and challenged other NGOs to involve the young people in their programming as they are not only the future but the majority population in the country.

He also encouraged the students to actively engage in such debates to groom themselves for future leadership positions.

## WEEK AHEAD:

- ⇒ The European Union will conduct a structured dialogue with CSOs this week at Serena Conference Centre.
- ⇒ ActionAid will be hosting the International Food Security network at Royal Suits in Bugolobi.
- ⇒ ActionAid will convene a meeting at Hotel Africana this Thursday in preparation for the CSO collective work for the Anti-Corruption week.
- ⇒ As part of the New Country Strategic Paper development, ActionAid staff are today discussing two think pieces; on Feminism and working with Political parties. These pieces will guide the strategic direction that ActionAid will take for the next five years.