



Gender Transformation & Empowerment



THE 3RD NATIONAL WOMEN'S WEEK

*"In Unison, Confronting the Unfinished Business.
United Women Can!"*

2016



Editor

Rita. H. Aciro–Lakor
Executive Director.

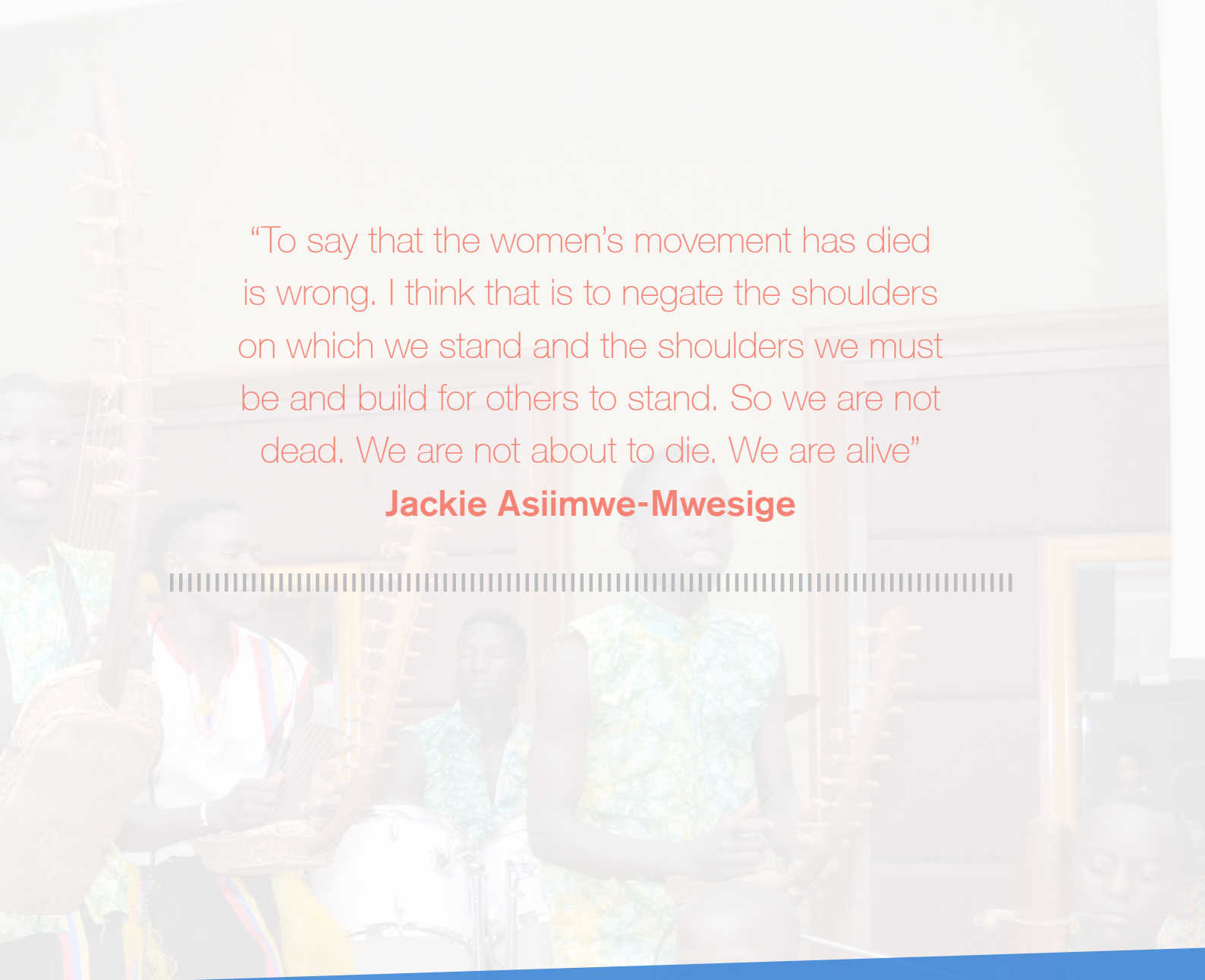
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“To say that the women’s movement has died is wrong. I think that is to negate the shoulders on which we stand and the shoulders we must be and build for others to stand. So we are not dead. We are not about to die. We are alive”

Jackie Asiimwe-Mwesige

THE 3RD NATIONAL WOMEN’S WEEK

*“In Unison, Confronting the Unfinished Business. **United Women Can!**”*



Word from the Executive Director

By any standards, the 3rd National Women's Week 2016 was a great success. The overwhelming takeaway from participants was that they left better informed, re-energized and inspired to take action on behalf of Ugandan girls and women to realize the Women's Manifesto and beyond. This women's week comprised of activities and events spread out over a period of 7 days from 15th–21st October 2017.

The women's week brought together a diverse group of women, girls, men and boys representing different concerns, geographical regions and ages. They also came from different vantage points: women's rights organizations, mainstream non-governmental organizations, grassroots based organizations, the private sector, the informal sector, academia, government (local and central), media, and foreign development agencies.

Throughout the different activities it was evident that girls and women are the drivers of social change. Targeting and investing in them not only benefits individuals, but creates a ripple effect that

stirs socio-economic and political development of the nation. This is why the women's week is so significant. It provides time and space for different actors to come together, connect, explore, learn from each other, network and find cohesions for concerted action across sectors and issues. The women's week exhibits that there is a large and powerful constituency working for girls and women in Uganda.

On behalf of UWONET, I wish to convey our cordial appreciation to the UWONET members, partners and women's week participants, uniting the women's rights and development community, bringing attention to the most persistent issues affecting girls and women, and shifting the course of our collective actions. Special thanks to all the service providers who made the women's week a reality.

United Women Can!

Rita H. Aciro Lakor,
Executive Director–UWONET

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List of Acronyms

CBOs	Community Based Organizations
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DGF	Democratic Governance Facility
ED	Executive Director
EOC	Equal Opportunities Commission
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoU	Government of Uganda
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MFPED	Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development
NDP	National Development Plan
NGOs	Non–Government Organizations
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMEs	Small Medium Enterprises
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UCI	Uganda Cancer Institute
UN	United Nations
UWONET	Uganda Women’s Network
VAT	Value Added Tax
VAW/G	Violence Against Women and Girls

3rd National Women's Week 2016

The 2016 women's week was the third, having held the 1st and 2nd in 2012 and 2014 respectively. They are held every two years to track and monitor progress.

The 3rd National Women's Week was held in Kampala, Uganda from 15th–21st October 2016 taking different forms and structure including spiritual, advocacy, lobbying, mentorship, charity, dialogue, and networking activities.

The 3rd National Women's Week hosted by Uganda Women's Network and UN Women was organized under the theme: *"In Unison: Confronting the Unfinished Business! United, Women Can"*.

The **overall goal** of the Women's week is "A vibrant and influential women's movement advocating for gender equality and equity".

The **specific objectives** of the 3rd National Women's Week included:

- ⇒ To create a space for women's political dialogue.
- ⇒ To create networking spaces and opportunities between the women's movement and government institutions/structures.
- ⇒ To rejuvenate the interface with women across the spectrum.
- ⇒ To create space for younger generation to interact with the older generation to replenish the women's movement and advocacy agenda.

Introduction

Reflection is an important process and piece of feedback – a way of learning, maturing and celebrating successes and checking whether the progress is still on the chosen path. The missing linkage within the women's movement was a formally recognized space for reflection to increase learning, effectiveness and sustainability of change.

The National Women's Week was then conceived in 2012 as a biennial space aimed at providing a platform to reflect, review and revive the women's movement in Uganda. The National Women's Week was designed to re-energize spaces for discussion, rethinking and reviving the women's movement. This space brings together women and men from different walks of life and across sectors to network, share knowledge and experiences in an effort to seek comprehensive solutions to challenges that impede the attainment of goals set out by the women's movement.

The National Women's Week serves as a platform for the women's movement to dialogue and create a culture where knowledge is shared, a common understanding on collective values and trust is built, individual and collective practices documented and a sense of awareness as empowered agents generated.

Achievements of the 3rd National Women's Week

The Women's Week gathering has grown in size and scope each time. In 2016 over 800 individuals met over a period of 7 days from 43 districts across Uganda.

The **#UGWomensWeek** social media engagements managed to reach over 3.1 million Twitter accounts and the hashtag was also displayed on the timelines of over 5.8 million Twitter users from all around the world. UWONET's Facebook page alone, reached over 81,900 Facebook users over a period of 8 days (15th–22nd October 2016). The onsite and online participation results make the 2016 women's week the largest space in Uganda to focus on gender equality and women's rights in the past decade.

The women's week served as an accountability forum providing an opportunity for government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to inform the public on government's progress and plans to improve the status of women and girls.

Through the generosity of individuals and institutions, cleaning supplies and equipment worth 10 million shillings were donated to the Uganda Cancer Institute.



Voices of Attendees

"This is so good to interact with women from other districts".

"It was very fabulous conference and I wish we come back next time and we learn in core about girls arise".

"This was great to share experiences, testimonies and stories of change".

"I am speechless. These conferences should be more often. Once every 3 months. I will take the path of Victor Ochen to increase community service."

"We need more empowerment to the youth especially girls to build the next generation mostly in the villages they should be empowered as much as possible"

"Women have power to take the course and lead a revolution and all will fall in line".

"I learnt that there is no force compared to a girl to be determination to rise".

"This discussion was a good measure towards creating an understanding based on the truth and teachings in the various religions".

Attendee Commitments

"I want to start a project in my village Nyamuyanja Isingiro to eradicate school dropouts".

"I will work hand in hand with the women caucus in my district - Rukungiri and ensure that other women benefit"

"I will organize meetings at sub county levels and then village levels in Kiboga with the help of parish councilors"

"I will work on conducting research on women's political participation by center for constitutional governance"

"I will write about this as part of my blog"

"I will advise Mayuge district to start supporting women instead of celebrating women's day"

The 3rd National Women's Week in the Media

The two main daily newspapers—the New Vision and the Monitor—provided extensive media coverage of the 3rd National Women's Week with editorials, articles and images of the events. Social media platforms (Twitter and Facebook) served a great purpose of live reporting and engaging the online community to be part of the various events at the week.

Print Media captions

*"Women activists on Monday marched for 10Km from Rugby grounds in Lugogo to NWSC premises in Bugolobi to highlight what women go through to access safe and clean water. The activists held banners and water vessels on their heads. In response to the women's concerns, Ministry of Water and Environment's Joseph Eyatu Okot said NWSC service coverage and acceleration programme will provide safe water to 250 towns by 2020" **Daily Monitor 19.10.2016.***

*"As discussions for the next national budget go on, women activists are pushing for tax exemptions as part of interventions for empowering women economically" **Sunday Vision 23.10.2016.***

*"Women activists under their umbrella UWONET have petitioned the Speaker of Parliament Rebecca Kadaga seeking more representation of the Electoral Commission" **Daily Monitor 24.10.2016.***

*"October 15-21 was the third national women's week. Lots of presentations were made, lots of discussions held out and lots of resolutions passed. It was exciting to see and feel the palpable gusto with which the participants fought for the cause. At the event, the agenda was set, now it is time to start implementing it. And this will take more than the activists. It will take the whole nation!" **New Vision 25.10.2016.***

*"The Office of the Auditor General has donated items worth Shs 5 million to the Uganda Cancer Institute. This was in commemoration of the National Women's Week, one of the platforms established by UWONET" **Daily Monitor 25.10.2016.***



Social Media Interactions



THE 3RD NATIONAL WOMEN'S WEEK

"In Unison, Confronting the Unfinished Business. United Women Can!"



Gender Transformation & Empowerment



Pre-Week Events

Prior to the main women's week activities 17th–21st October 2017, two critical events were hosted by UWONET and her members. The two events aimed at delving into two critical elements for women's movement building, that is, young people and religion.

The Girls Arise Conference: Growing Our Ranks, Inspiring the Next Generation



A student participating in a self-awareness exercise during the conference

Featuring dynamic presentations, the **2nd Girls Arise Conference¹** convened on 15th October 2016, connected secondary school (high school) girls and boys and university students to relatable role models and encouraged healthy relationships, leadership discovery, and creative self-expression. The conference aided the girls and boys in attendance to celebrate girls' abilities and initiated a process where they appreciate young women's leadership and their role in the women's movement.

Each of the 7 mentor spokes passionately about the significance of building girls' self-confidence and leadership skills, exploring their strengths, learning and practicing new skills to become more self-assured, and take part in discussions about opportunities for social change. The mentors shared personal testimonies covering a number of areas including; reproductive health, youth empowerment, employment in male dominated careers, peace building, women's movement building and young women's leadership. The 2nd Girls Arise Conference was concluded by a certificate giving ceremony for students that participated in an essay writing competition.

¹ Convened by: Uganda Women's Network (UWONET), Action Aid International Uganda (AAIU), Action For Development (ACFODE), Uganda Youth Network (UYONET) and Solidarity For Youth Empowerment (SOFOYE). Saturday 15th October 2016

Highlights from the mentors



“Seeking and educating oneself on reproductive health and sexuality information, avoiding self-treatment, joining social networks and clubs that promote healthy living and keeping friendships with the right people who won’t peer pressure is important to live a healthy life”

Dr. Jennifer Nabukenya Ssengooba.



“Everyone has a story (past) that defines their present. Our stories are varied since God created each one of us differently and uniquely. Our journeys are different. Our joys and sorrows are an important part of our journey so we need to appreciate them”

Beatrice Byemanzi.



“Policies are the tides that make us move, provides an enabling environment to succeed with minimum struggle”

Isabella Akiteng.



“Do not wait for anyone to give you the power to cause change but rather grab it and use the available resources to start your projects of change”

Esther Nakajjiko.



“You should go out to work do what is right and not seek social acceptance or being told that you are nice”

Rosebell Kagumire.



“Activate yourself to promote a peace generation in order to protect future generation. Work towards peaceful transition of power in the country and make a choice to remain peaceful, and nurture a culture of peace in your families, and schools in order to bring about peace in our nation and Africa”

Victor Ochen.



“I wanted to become a lawyer in order to defend the marginalized such as my mother’s friends. My father wanted me to study education or nursing because he thought law was a masculine course. He even threatened to disown me but I insisted on studying what I wanted. It was law that would lead me to my dream; pleading for the abused women. If you don’t have a dream that drives you, you will not succeed”

Hon. Dr. Miria Matembe.

National Prayers for the women of Uganda



Member of the Baha'i Faith explaining the two wings analogy

Spirituality is often discussed in such general terms that no attention is given to either women or gender. Yet spirituality is a critical factor that shapes our ways of life. It is against this background that the **National Prayers for Women of Uganda²** were held during the 3rd National Women's Week on at the National Bahai Center.

The concept of gender equality is best exemplified in the Baha'i Faith basic principles of the equality of women and men. In the Baha'i Writings, women and men are compared to the

two wings of a bird. If one wing is allowed to remain weak, the bird will not fly. It is not until both wings are fully developed that the bird will be able to fly. Similarly, not until both women and men are able to develop to their full capacity will the prosperity of the world be possible. To conclude the prayers, the congregation sang a song: "With two wings we can fly. With two wings we can soar through the air. With two wings we can soar through the sky. With two wings we can fly."

Pre-week Pictorial



² Convened by the National Bahai Committee for the Advancement of Women at the Bahai Temple. Sunday 16th October 2016

Main Week Events

The main week activities were kicked off by a number of outdoor events expanding the women's week's reach to communities. Each unique in nature, these events drew attention to pertinent issues affecting women and girls including: water accessibility and cancer treatment, culminating into a storytelling and a sisterhood bonding evening.

Water Walk

Walking 2 Km along Jinja road from Kyadondo Rugby Club to National Water and Sewerage Cooperation International Resource Center Offices, 200 women and men, girls and boys made a public outcry on the limited availability, poor accessibility and costly affordability of clean and safe water. The water walk³ provided a platform for stakeholders to amplify the voices of women in asserting their right to water and sanitation through a petition that was submitted to the Ministry of Water and Environment.



Hon. Tezira Jamwa (UWONET Chairperson), Ms. Perry Aritua (ED-WDN) among other women and men during the water walk along Jinja road road carrying items used to collect water

Eng. Joseph O. Eyatu–Commissioner of Rural Water Supply and Environment, Ministry of Water and Environment a on behalf of the Government of Uganda acknowledged the women's role in providing water for the household and the attendant challenges. He received the women's petition and pledged government's commitment to address issues raised in the document. The water walk showcased women as important stakeholders in water management and demonstrated their key role in water conservation, harvesting and management of water sources.

³ Availability, Accessibility And Affordability To Clean And Safe Water For Women Enhanced Development: Make It A Reality For Women. Convened by Uganda Women's Network (UWONET), Slum Aid Project (SAP), Water Aid and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). Monday 17th October 2016

Charity Visit to the Uganda Cancer Institute



Handover of charity items to UCI by UWONET and OAG

Ahead of the charity visit⁴ to the Uganda Cancer Institute (UCI), UWONET staff led by Sandra Komuhiimbo on Monday 17th October 2016, paid a courtesy call to the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) to officially receive cleaning supplies and equipment that would be donated to the UCI. The official charity visit to the UCI took place on Tuesday 18th October 2016 at Mulago Hospital.

In her remarks, **Rita H. Aciro Lakor–Executive Director, UWONET**, noted that apart from advocacy actions, UWONET made the decision to touch base with some of the realities experienced by health personnel, care givers and patients in the quest to address women's

health – one of the key areas of focus for the week.

Caroline Bonabana, Chairperson of the Women's Forum at the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) informed the gathering that resources were collected from individuals within the Institution for this purpose.

Dr. Victoria Walusansa, Deputy Director, Uganda Cancer Institute, noted that the management and staff were excited and yet humbled by the donation of cleaning materials from UWONET and the Women's Forum at the OAG. She highlighted that two thirds (2/3) of the patients at the Cancer Institute are women; and, three quarters (3/4) of the caregivers are women.

Around the Fireplace Networking Evening

Around the fireplace networking evening is a storytelling initiative themed "Reflection on Our Movement, a Journey of Many Years" and intended to create space for women across generations and class to interact and share experiences and celebrate the achievements of the women's movement.

The storytelling session illustrated that no longer are women passive recipients of information, but rather, active contributors who are shaping real societies. It demonstrated that women are creative, innovative and tirelessly changing their realities and those of other women. They have rewritten history for the next generation to grow up claiming their rights, dignity and freedoms.

In recalling the struggles and achievements of different generations the need to acknowledge and document the foundations of the women's movement such as the Mother's Union was strongly emphasized and the need to work and create synergy between the various women's organizations was highlighted as a strong sustainability measure.



Cake cutting at the fireplace networking evening celebrating sisterhood.

4 Convened by Uganda Women's Network and Women's Forum at the Office of the Auditor General. Tuesday 18th October 2016

Women's Week Kick Off Pictorial



Grand Opening Ceremony

The grand opening ceremony attended by 430 participants, was honored to have the Office of the Prime Minister as the chief guest and Dr. Thelma Awori as the keynote speaker.



In her capacity as **UWONET Executive Director, Ms. Rita Aciro Lakor** delivered an opening address to the audience before inviting several speakers and the chief guest. Ms. Aciro hoped that the women's week would provide opportunities for reconnection with the different issues that women have engaged with over the decades while building solidarity among women and men to work together hand in hand in overcoming gender discrimination.



Mr. George Olinga, Bahai Faith (National Bahai Committee for the Advancement of Women) led the opening prayer emphasizing that "Men and women alike are the revealers of His names and attributes, and from the spiritual viewpoint there is no difference between them".



Hon. Tezira Jamwa, Chairperson, Uganda Women's Network delivered the key policy message of the women's week noting that the theme of the 3rd National Women's Week is grounded in the women's manifesto and called upon Parliament to prioritize the five priority concerns in the Women's Manifesto.



SDG 5 and Key strategies for engagement for the women's movement: Agripinner Nandhego, Programme Specialist; Political Participation and Leadership, UN Women Uganda. She noted that gender inequality is rooted in cultural perceptions and therefore the need to sensitize communities. She said that advocacy for women's rights was not just a women's issue and therefore the need to work with gender sensitive men.



Keynote Address—Social movement building; benefits and strategies for the women's movement in Uganda: Dr. Thelma Awori. Patriarchy and dominance always re-invents themselves creating new challenges to women's rights and empowerment. The keynote address called for new and innovative strategies to confront the new challenges faced by women in their pursuit for gender equality and empowerment.



Role of opposition in development: Alternatives on key government processes for the women of Uganda: Hon. Angelline Asio Osegge, Soroti District Woman Representative. Hon. Osegge emphasized the need for women to work together and pull each other up. She hoped to have this practiced by women in parliament as a measure to ensure the continuity of women's leadership. She implored women to champion the women's development agenda at the various levels. She called on members of parliament to strengthen partnership with CSO's because there is a lot of research done by the CSOs which needs to be captured in policies.



While delivering the official opening speech, Ms. Dorothy Kisaka, Advisor, Office of the Prime Minister noted that "It will take the effort of everyone because the desired change in a woman cannot be delivered by women themselves, it's only achievable if we all have a common voice."



Launch of the Women's Mobilization Song-UG Women Rock

Feminist music has featured on the world's music charts since the first wave of feminism. Feminist songs all have in common is a decidedly pro-woman message to uplift, empower, and inspire women. In the same spirit UWONET and Joanita Kawalya, a renowned female musician, composed and produced 'UG Women Rock' - a unifying song celebrating womanhood, sisterhood and the contribution women have made to the social, economic, cultural and political development of Uganda. The women's mobilization song is a uniquely powerful mode of expression and chosen a strategy for empowerment of women of Uganda. The song is sang in three languages English, Luganda and Swahili.



3rd National Women's Week Conference

The 2016 Women's Week Conference was grounded in the Women's Manifesto 2016-2021 and therefore was the most structured and focused to date with 30 concurrent session across 6 thematic areas over a period of three days. As is customary at Women's Week conferences, parallel sessions were spearheaded by UWONET members and partners — 36 organizations who outlined the program. The women's economic empowerment and cross cutting thematic areas had the majority. For the first at time at a women's week conference, 3 research presentations were made by academic researchers and 2 sessions were led by grassroots women's organizations.

Parallel session by attendance

Thematic Area By Popularity	Number Of Sessions	Average Number of Attendees
Women's Economic Empowerment	7	463
Women's Health	3	141
Women, Politics and Decision Making	6	229
Women's Education	1	67
Women's Land and Property Rights	1	137
Cross cutting themes	7	331
Research presentations	3	143
Grassroots led sessions	2	74

Parallel sessions

Importance of networks in enhancing women's rights and gender equality: Experience of Nakere Rural Women Activists (NARWOA) in Karamoja. Convened by: Nakere Rural Women Activists and Uganda Women's Network (UWONET).



The Uganda Women's Network engages in both women's local and national organizing. UWONET's interventions over the last decade have demonstrated optimism about the significance of women's local activism. These interventions have been guided by two principles: 1) to build bridges and align agendas and 2) to leverage and connect local organizing and activism with national advocacy and policy work. In the session NARWOA shared her experience following the capacity building support provided by UWONET to deepen their gender consciousness leading them to form the Kotido district women's network that NARWOA provides leadership to.

Through working together, network members find it easier to create awareness about women's rights

and mobilize communities to challenge the deep rooted negative social practices such as FGM, widow inheritance and rape as a team rather than as individuals; and through the network, members mobilize women to seek VCT and HIV testing and cancer screening—breast and cervical. As a consequence, women and women's organizations in the network have gained greater visibility in local development processes and legitimacy as political and social actors. Discussions at the session showcased that women's engagement in local activism, has offered insightful indigenous knowledge about development strategies and participation in national organizing.

Exchange learning and sharing was recommended as one of the strategies that will strengthen effectiveness of the district women's networks through the integration of creative and innovative ways for the social and economic advancement of women. It was also recommended that regional women's weeks be held to allow for more rural women to participate and the adoption of regional concerns for national level advocacy. The district women's networks demonstrate the ability of women's organizing to create cross ethnic, cross generational and cross national coalitions enriched by the diversity of resources, knowledge, skills and experiences. The session provided an understanding of the women of rural women's groups and organizations who have been traditionally left out of the development movements.

Situational analysis of women's land rights, access, ownership and control and its linkages to economic growth or not and justice for women in Uganda: Key drivers to attainment of Uganda Vision 2040 and Uganda as a middle income country by 2020. Convened by Prof. Josephine Ahikire, School of Women and Gender Studies– Makerere University and Uganda Women's Network (UWONET).

The session posited that although the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda guarantees women's land rights, the land tenure systems which have largely remained patriarchal in design make it extremely hard for women to have full land rights in Uganda. It was highlighted that women's land rights are closely related to their relationships to men as daughters, wives, mothers and sisters. It was therefore not surprising that women own only 17% of all registered land which is only 20% of the total land in Uganda. In order to address this, the research presented made several recommendations including: individual and personal initiatives by women to demand for and protect their land rights including those of their daughters; support for the enactment of the marriage and divorce bill; penetration of and engagement with cultural institutions on decisions making on land; and further research on land and land rights across the country to inform social and policy decisions.



Prof. Josephine Ahikire making a presentation

Increasing women's participation in private sector decision making: the case of Uganda's firms. Convened by Miriam Katunze, Economic Policy Research Center, Uganda and Uganda Women's Network (UWONET)

Women's participation in managerial positions is critical to economic development and is linked to improved firm performance as noted in global (SDG 5), regional (African Union Gender Policy) and national (NDPII and National Gender Policy) development frameworks. The research presentation at this session noted that while there is increasing employment for women in Sub-Saharan Africa, most of the women are employed in low quality jobs with a large presence in vulnerable employment, that is, where they have uncertain and irregular incomes. Statistics from the research indicated that women's share in top management positions remains low standing at 26% compared to 74% of men in Sub-Saharan Africa, while in Uganda it stands at only 15.3%. The research presented theoretical explanations for the low numbers of women in managerial positions including: organizational theories – firm's history, company policies, and employment practices; institutional theories – gain legitimacy and industry specific factors such as service industry's high affinity for female employees; individual level determinants – human capital and social role theories - mentorship, networks and women less inclined to illicit behavior such as corruption. Participants at the session noted that strategies to improve the presence and active participation of women in managerial position should include deliberate efforts to enhance human capital in particular education and training of women, mentoring and networking. Provision of information was also pointed out as critical to managerial advancement, in addition to the provision of supportive measures to address women's multiple social roles e.g. childcare facilities in the workplaces. The adoption of institutional/organizational policies and practice that deter sexual exploitation and harassment in workplaces was recommendation. Drawing on the experiences of



Miriam Katunze making a presentation

several participants during the session, it was noted that women need to be assertive and stand up for their rights in the workplace. The research presented opportunities for future studies that could delve deeper into the impact of having more female managers on development.

Rethinking feminist Activism around Women Political Leadership in Uganda: the Unfinished Business. Convened by Amon Ashaba Mwiine, School of Women and Gender Studies-Makerere University and Women's Democracy Group (WDG).



Amon Mwiine making a presentation

The session delved into the debate on increased numbers of women in politics and decision making which has taken different strands. The research presented arguments on the attribution of the increased numbers of women's leadership to the NRM leadership that introduced the women's seat on the Resistance Council (RC) system as had been practiced during the bush struggle. However other arguments described the NRM leadership as more opportunistic in an effort to legitimize a regime that had gotten to power through the power of the gun. Additional arguments point out that transitional processes often provide opportunities for change and the women's movement in Uganda took advantage of the transition provided by the NRM take over in 1986 to lobby the NRM regime and leadership for inclusion of women in politics and decision making.

While the numbers of women in Parliament have continued to increase with creation of new districts, the dilemma is that the women's movement has not reaped dividends in terms of the delivery on the women's manifesto from these numbers. The research emphasizes that the question of having or not having influence needs to be asked to women and men beyond politics noting that gendered political leadership should not be shouldered by only women because they are not homogeneous. The discussions among participants suggested a revision of electoral systems to have one man one woman per constituency. The research recommended the demystification of the mainstream seat as a male bastion. Many women should contest for this seat with a view to win or lose in order to change the norm. Men in strategic positions should be identified to promote gender equality in various areas including legislative processes. However, the narrative of male champions should be crafted on 'Our' (women's) own terms.

Impact of local activism: the role of change agents and male involvement in achieving women's rights and gender equality. Convened by Kitgum Women Peace Initiative (KIWEPI) and Uganda Women's Network (UWONET).



Ottom Valentino sharing his experience working with Kitgum Women Peace Initiative (KIWEPI)

Engagement of men as active allies and partners in the struggle against gender inequality is one of the crucial approaches today. Through her partnership with Kitgum Women Peace Initiative (KIWEPI), UWONET has promoted and integrated the adoption of male community agents of change as a move to garner male appreciation and support of gender equality. Male community members are selected, trained, mentored and commissioned champion women and girls' rights in their communities. The male community change agents have served as role models and lead an exemplary lifestyle in their resident communities. By virtue of their positions in society, they later transfer the knowledge, information and skills gained

to other community members using existing opportunities such as clan meetings, public gatherings, and village meetings. At the session, one of the change agents gave his personal testimony: “When I was chosen to participate in UWONET’s trainings, my attitude about women’s rights changed. I was later commissioned as a change agent in charge of advocating for violence free homes and families. Accordingly I have carried out a lot of sensitization among fellow clansmen and community members regarding the rights of women to own customary land and household property, their right to health and education among others, in Labong Akwang S/C in Kitgum District”. Discussions among participants at the session made recommendations on improving advocacy such as use of gender sensitive language/messaging; development of gender aware/ gender sensitive IEC materials; and the promotion of gender sensitive socialization by parents and guardians. On male engagement the participants recommended: capacity building efforts tailor made for men; use of powerful male figures as role models and champions of gender equality and women’s rights in their respective spheres of influence; and robust advocacy and sensitization to draw the attention of men towards the fact that their own development and that of their communities is dependent on how well they treat the women in their lives/care.

Engagement Of Development Partners In The Women’s Movement In Uganda. Convened by UN Women and Uganda Women’s Network (UWONET)



A participant makes a submission

To set the stage at this session a synopsis on the women’s movement in Uganda was presented. The presentation provided a herstory of the movement dating to 1905 with the establishment of the first girls’ school Gayaza High School through the efforts of institutions such as the Mothers’ Union articulating the issues of concern to the advancement of women at various critical points in our history. The presentation showcased women’s participation in the pre-independence legislative council that served as a benchmark for women’s active engagement in politics. In recent years some of the actions include strategic litigation and advocacy as evidenced by various actions including the women’s manifesto, described as a political tool to advance the women’s rights agenda. The significance of distinguishing between being political and being partisan was emphasized. In relation to development processes, it was stressed

that women should participate in development processes and not be ‘participated’. Institutional development of women’s rights organizations and groups was fronted as a critical approach towards enhancing women’s participation alongside mobilization of women using a bottom up approach. This is the essence of the women’s movement that the development partners need to engage with—a vibrant movement with a collective history of activism and struggles for women’s rights. Development Partners in the session represented by: UN Women, DGF, DANIDA, GiZ, ADB, the German Embassy, French Embassy and others spoke about the initiatives they support for the advancement of women’s rights in Uganda; stressing that gender is a priority for all Development Partners in Uganda. It was noted that there is need for international–regional–national–grassroots’ linkages in the struggle for women’s rights in Uganda and recommended that: development partners should work with women’s networks to support them to reach the grassroots; the women’s movement needs to be strengthened through bringing more women and girls on board. Education is important in recruiting more girls and women into the Women’s Movement; and both income-generating activities and empowerment programs are necessary to address long term sustainability of women’s rights actions.

Quality Gender Based Violence Service Delivery: How can Uganda be able to deliver for the communities. Convened by Uganda Women's Network (UWONET) and Justice Centres Uganda



Ms. Christine Birabwa making a presentation

The session started off with the basics noting that Gender Based Violence (GBV) refers to all acts perpetrated against women, girls, boys and men on the basis of their sex. The main causes of GBV are customs, beliefs, power relations, culture, religion, socialization and law enforcement processes. GBV manifests in different ways including physical, psychological, sexual, and socio-economic abuse among others. The most prevalent forms of GBV against women and girls include wife battering, defilement, rape and sexual exploitation. The discussions at the session explored the linkage between GBV and health. The discussion sighted GBV as a health issue referring to its contribution to the increased rates of GBV and the need for medical personnel to provide assistance to survivors and testimony in court. It was also noted that there is often a challenge with the medical personnel's unwillingness to participate in the court processed due to the long procedures and sometimes the witnesses

turned into the accused. The discussions at the session explored existing gaps in mechanisms that address GBV in Uganda including: an inadequate coordinated approach to deal with the problem; inadequate facilitation of structures mandated to handle GBV cases with some being inexistent; high costs to access justice; delays in administration of justice; limited existence of GBV shelter across the country. It was concluded that for elimination of GBV the above gaps need to be addressed for quality, effective and efficient GBV service delivery.

Cooperative Society as a model for economic empowerment. Convened by Uhuru Institute and Uganda Women's Network (UWONET)



A participant makes a submission

Economic empowerment can take place in a context of social organization. This session delved into this issue recognizing that: "Full individual development can take place only in association with others. As an individual, one is limited in what one can try to do, what one can achieve. Through joint action and mutual responsibility, one can achieve more, especially by increasing one's collective influence in the market and before governments." A co-operative Society is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their economic, social, cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise. Cooperatives share some aspects with companies but the biggest difference is in the principle of equality. Types of cooperatives range from agricultural to savings and credit, housing and multi-purpose. They are driven by a value base that is pivoted around self-help and autonomy as well as solidarity and integrity among other factors. It is this value base that distinguishes co-operatives from other business models and defines their contribution to the social economy. Participants

noted that co-operatives are not as vibrant as they used to be however what many people do not understand is that the current savings and credits groups for example, are in fact co-operatives. It was suggested that training of individuals and groups on co-operatives as an economic model will build public awareness on their benefits. Concern was however raised about the value base with

several co-operatives driven by personal aggrandizement rather than self-help motivations. To this end, it was noted that there is need for conflict resolution skills in the management of co-operatives; and further that informal groups should be encouraged to register as co-operatives to enable them acquire the legality to seek redress as the need arises. At the policy level, there is lack of integration in management/ co-ordination of co-operatives noting that this falls in the ambit of several government institutions. This must be addressed through a clear mechanism for engagement of co-operatives.

Role of women leaders in realizing the achievement of NDP II using the women's manifesto. Convened by Women's Democracy Group (WDG)



Ms. Regina Bafaki stirs up the attendees' participation

The Government of the Republic of Uganda (GoU) has a national vision of a transformed Ugandan society from a peasant to a modern and prosperous county within 30 years. This Vision is to be implemented through six 5-year National Development Plans (NDPs). Uganda is currently implementing the 2nd NDP. The session focused on the GoU commitments towards the advancement of women's rights through various international, regional and national instruments. In linking governance to national development processes it is important to situate the Women's Manifesto in the policy processes of the NDP II. While reflecting on the sector objectives, priorities and proposed interventions in NDP II, there is an improvement in the level of gender responsiveness in the NDP II compared to NDPI. Although there is lack of consistency in the articulation of critical gender and

women rights issues in the situational analysis across all sectors, there are deliberate efforts taken to define appropriate interventions towards gender equality and women's empowerment in agriculture, health, education and social protection taking into account the International commitments especially the Sustainable Development Goals. For these sectors, women should engage the implementation of the plans to ensure accountability on the delivery of gender equality and women's empowerment.

Flagging out the key issues on access to justice in the five priority areas of the women's manifesto 2016 – 2021. Convened by Uganda Women's Network (UWONET)



A participant makes a submission

The session unpacked and highlighted the key access to justice issues in the priority areas of the Women's Manifesto with particular reference to education. The education sector is a key sector for development but one in which inequality is glaring. Discussions at the session defined education inequality as the difference in the learning results, or efficacy, experienced by students/pupils coming from different groups and attributed to: imbalances in early/preprimary education; food and health care access; absenteeism; lack of menstrual hygiene for girls, alongside a lack of adequate toilet facilities; long distances to school from home; and disparities in education between rural and urban environments. It was noted that it is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Sports to

deliver equitable education for all, regardless of age, sex, gender, tribe/race and any other affiliations. Such an education is important because it addresses the strategic needs of girls and boys, as well as women and men engaged in adult education. The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) was also pointed out to have a role to play to push for gender equality and equity in the country. To address

the education inequality it was recommended that it is important to strive for equality in education and keep teenage mothers in school. In addition, parents should be involved in UPE and USE to support the learning process.

How corruption affects the delivery of the Women's Manifesto. Convened by Uganda Women's Network (UWONET)



A participant makes a submission

How corruption affects women's participation in leadership and decision making was the subject of this session aimed at understanding the gendered impact of corruption across sectors. Participants at the session defined corruption as misuse of power, resources and public office or position for private gain. It was noted that corruption borders on morality, it's a result of moral decadence sighting incidences where sexual favors have been acquire jobs, soliciting money for jobs and taking advantage of vulnerable groups in the society. Discussions noted that the impact of corruption is felt in all sectors including: health; education; women's ownership of land; and politics and decision-making, key priorities of the women's manifesto. It was emphasized that corruption is an impediment to the realization of women's rights in the named sectors. The discussions

suggested that sensitization of women about their rights and responsibilities would create awareness about existing policies. To create a shift in the perceptions about corruption socialization of children about its detrimental nature is required for a corruption free generation.

Women In The Private And Public Institutions: Rights Of Workers, Industrial Actions, Role In The Women's Movement. Convened by Action For Development (ACFODE)



Dr. Maggie Kigozi making a presentation

The issue of women's labour in formal employment was then addressed in the session. An overview of the legal framework in regard to labour rights was provided. It was observed that there are good labour laws in place but implementation issues remain a concern. The understanding of the private sector which includes SMEs, investors and entrepreneurs was also broadened to all who have domestic help as well as individuals selling goods and services. Some of these sectors were noted to have low negotiation power; particularly the informal sector and farmers with no trade unions in place. It was noted that there are efforts to address gender differentials in labour standards notably, the Private sector initiative, the Gender Seal, a yearly assessment of standards. The aim is that by 2030 there should be 50% women in the workplace, CEOs and Boards. Progressive laws such as maternity leave in place to support women in the workplace. It was however recognized that areas for further improvement exist. Notably, protection of migrant workers - there is need for oversight in recruitment processes

through provision of company licences. Further stranded women should be supported. On the issue of access to justice, it was noted that information is crucial. Women don't know their rights or where to go if these rights have been infringed on. There must also be better equipped labour offices in each district. Currently there are labour offices in only 38 out of 112 districts. While lodging of problems is

required before a case can go to court; availability of officers would ease the burden on complainants to seek redress. Wage discrimination remains persistent and the minimum wage is too low to meet the basic needs and affects all. Safety and health standards in the workplace are a concern – with only 5% of employers providing protective gear to their employees. Economic sectors need to have mid to long term plans linked to education. That is, Industry/sectors need 10-15 years plans to be included in surveys to plan/guide youth on what to study. On the issue of domestic workers it was noted that we as women and the women's movement need to look into this - often women are the perpetrators of abuse of the rights of domestic workers.

Gender and Decision Making in Local Governments: Towards Enhanced Ownership and Action. Convened by The Council for Economic Empowerment for Women of Africa-Uganda (CEEWA-Uganda)



Florence Kuteesa setting the scene
for discussion

Local governments have a role to play in promoting gender responsive development. The session focused on a study which recognized that while there has been progress in responsiveness of local governments towards the role of gender mainstreaming in specific areas such as HIV prevalence, gender equality and maternal health. It was found to be not uniform across different genders and either slow or stagnant. Further, while there is a sufficient legal framework for mainstreaming gender across different sectors/programs; the major challenge is that these instruments have not been used effectively to address gender inequalities. An example of local governments that do understand issues to do with gender mainstreaming very well, but have failed to integrate them in local economic development issues was given. The challenges local governments face in mainstreaming gender include: socio-cultural constraints; limited awareness of gender issues; low capacity for gender mainstreaming; and limited social and political

responsibility and accountability. The concept of gender mainstreaming is not new, but its adoption in public service delivery and local economic development remains a challenge. In order to push for gender mainstreaming, women leaders need to look beyond the monetary aspect but rather into human resource development so that technical staff at the district level understand issues to do with gender mainstreaming very well. For instance, if gender and community development officers are empowered with networking and negotiation skills, they can easily influence other heads of departments that have the money to prioritize women and girls' needs during planning and allocation of funds. Further actions to address gender in local governance should include: sustained capacity building for gender mainstreaming targeting the policy makers, and technocrats at all levels of local government; enhanced accountability for gender responsive action and impact; and gender mainstreaming as a collective responsibility beyond gender focal points.

Making Political Parties in Uganda work for women: Celebrating progress made and overcoming the challenges. Convened by Women Democracy Network – Uganda Chapter (WDN-U) and International Republican Institute (IRI)



Session presenter setting the scene for discussion

The effective engagement of women in political party processes was the core theme of the session. The discussions were grounded in the legal provisions namely: Article 32 (1) of the constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995 that provides for affirmative action in favour of marginalized groups on the basis of gender, age disability or any other reason created by history, tradition or custom. Specifically, article 33 (5) of the constitution states that women shall have affirmative action for the purpose of redressing imbalances that exist against them. Following the transition to multiparty system, political parties have also made provisions to purposefully create spaces for women in the party structures. Despite the party constitutional provisions,

women remain thinly represented within the operations of political parties. Whereas party manifestos seemed to embrace women, there is a total contrast with the reality as evidenced by the 2011 election experience and other subsequent party and national elections. The following examples highlight this: Out of 31 cabinet ministers, only 9 are women and all the main opposition political parties have fielded few women to seek electoral office. The reasons for this thin representation of women are: gaps in the legal framework; finances; risk aversion for women; the demand side pool i.e. not enough demand from women; the cultural constraints; commitments or lack of it from political parties and inadequate sensitization about operation of Affirmative Action (AA) seat. Experts and participants at the session from the broad spectrum of Uganda's political parties noted that monetized politics keeps many women out of the fray of standing for elective office; as well as the sometimes violent and divisive nature of politics. The discussions proposed Several factors that can strengthen women's participation in politics, including: capacity-building of women; community sensitization to vote for women and consider capacity instead of money; solidarity among women; legislation - engage in more discussions on the Marriage and Divorce Bill so that people are better informed about it; and ensure more engagement and research on the women's agenda.

The NGO Act 2016: Implications and Opportunities for the NGO Sector. Convened by Uganda National NGO Forum



Session presenter setting the scene for discussion

The legal framework governing the operations of NGOs was the key focus of the session. The facilitators provided a background to the formation of a legal framework noting that the NGO Registration Act Cap 113 was enacted in 1989 and operationalized by the NGO Registration Regulations of 1990. The Act established the National NGO Board and mandated it to register and regulate NGOs in the country. The Act was amended in 2006 by the NGO Registration (Amendment) Act of 2006 and operationalized by the NGO Registration Regulations of 2009. In October 2010, Cabinet approved the National NGO policy that had been widely consulted on. In order to harmonize the Policy and the Act, the process to review the Act started in January 2011. It involved consultations with key stakeholders (state and non-state actors), research and benchmarking. On the 26th day of November 2015, Parliament passed the NGO Bill and it was assented to by the

President on the 30th day of January 2016. It was gazetted and commenced on the 14th day of March 2016. The draft regulations were then developed. The NGO Act and draft regulations have several implications for the operation of both NGOs and CBOs. It is therefore important that they understand the NGO Act and engage in the process of development of the regulations.

Gender– An Auditor’s Perspective. Convened by Office of the Auditor General and Uganda Women’s Network (UWONET)



Caroline Bonabana making a presentation

Gender Auditing was highlighted as an important aspect of governance and decision-making during this session. The Office of the Auditor General (OAG) is the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) of Uganda mandated by the Constitution to audit and report on the public accounts of Uganda and to further conduct financial and Value for Money audits in respect of any project involving public funds. The mandate for gender audit is derived from the National Gender Policy which requires all government institutions and agencies to mainstream gender in their programs and processes. The participants were informed that the OAG has a gender audit strategy and has conducted gender audits across government and local government institutions including gender and equity budgeting at the MFPED - to assess whether gender is mainstreamed in budget formulation and implementation. While the participants acknowledged several achievements that have been registered, they noted some gaps and challenges including: inadequate capacity to undertake gender audits in all government institutions; expectation gap between

what stakeholders expect the Auditor General to report and what is reported; and limited access to information from the respondents - because of poor documentation. It was noted that there should be collective responsibility to identify gaps in service delivery and channel them to the relevant authority and women should begin to take interest in demanding accountability from the duty bearers and monitor government programs. In addition, the Office of the Auditor General was identified as an entry point to raise awareness and understanding of gender audit, making government accountable on their gender and equity commitments.

Women’s Role In An Agricultural Economy And Financing Women’s Full Economic Participation. Convened by iCON Enterprise Foundation and Centenary Bank – Cente SupaWoman Club



Session presenter setting the scene for discussion

In the session it was recognized that women are a major contributor to the agriculture sector but have limited access to capital compounded by land rights and cultural issues. The session therefore focused on identifying areas/ opportunities in the agricultural sector that women could benefit from. Organic farming and setting up agricultural value chain productions was highly recommended due to their high demand at the session. In terms of business management the women were encouraged to seek professional advice from financial institutions but be cautious of their terms and conditions often referred to as the small print. The business women were also encouraged to start up small ventures and then build on successes through networking to improve their business and financial management skills. At the session a

Centenary bank product SupaWoman was showcased as one providing non-monetary support such as skills development for businesswomen.

The State of Media in Uganda: The Women's Perspectives. Convened by Uganda Media Women's Association (UMWA)



Charity Ahimbisibwe making a presentation

The media was recognized as one of the key strategic tools that women can use to enhance implementation of the women's manifesto. Unfortunately, more often the women's portrayal in the media is told to suit the patriarchal society. Women in media are portrayed as victims, or objects for advertisement. Women rarely make it to the front line of newspapers and if they do, it's about a scandal. Women's stories are restricted to domestic life and fashion. If there is a good story for women, then it will be given very little space or hidden inside the pages. As a mode of affirmative action, many media houses have created spaces or specific time for featuring women, the challenge with this is that it goes back to women being treated as 'the other'. This session was held to examine the portrayal of women, identify challenges but most importantly see how these challenges can be addressed so that the women's manifesto is enhanced. It was recognized

that: there is need for more engagement on issues of women and the media; media practitioners should be invited to such fora in the future; women should note and take advantage of the growing social media because it is a young but growing strand that can provide opportune space for the women's agenda; and the media was called upon to always write stories with a more detailed analysis because often the victims as portrayed through media can be the aggressors.

The Language of "Power" for Effective Violence against Women Prevention Programming. Convened by Raising Voices



Natsnet Ghebrehman making a presentation

Violence Against Women (VAW) has increasingly been recognized as a public health, social policy and human rights challenge. In the session it was noted that VAW/G is rooted firmly in gender inequality. Historically and to date girls and women have a subordinate status in society. The power that men have and are given comes from attitudes, behavior and expectations that all women and men learn as members of their community creating social norms that reinforce VAW. This is fueled by factors such as negative cultural practices that belittle and demean women, limited capacity and resources to implement legislature that promotes and protects women's rights; thus making VAW a complex issue that requires creative interventions to inspire sustainable social norm change. Tools and methodologies developed by Raising Voices to prevent VAW were presented at the session. These tools use the power of language to bring change at individual, organization and community levels and have been scientifically tested and proven to create social norm change. Four tools

were presented i.e. SASA! Get Moving! In Her Shoes and Sister-to-Sister Initiative. Discussion among participants suggested further actions including the need for increased sensitization on VAWG and its undesirable effects on society, translation of laws that address VAWG into local languages, popularized and disseminated to the public, and establishment of shelters for survivors with psychological and social support; security; and legal services

Women for Sustainable Development. Convened by Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE)

The Sustainable Development Goals are a global set of goals that governments across the world acceded to in 2015, post-MDG seeking to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all. The MDG targets were not very transformative because of limited involvement of people in the formulation. On the contrary, consultations on the process of development of the SDGs were said to be far reaching with the clarion call that no one should be left behind. From the gender perspective, this resulted in a standalone goal on gender – SDG 5; as well as gender mainstreamed into all the 17 areas of the SDGs. The reality is that the process is ongoing and CSOs need to engage. At the session CSOs were urged to play their role by conducting annual reviews of the progress made on the realization of the SDGs in order to hold government accountable till 2030. For this purpose, it was noted that: Gender –focused CSOs need to engage on the SDGs. Women need to position themselves to understand what is going on around them including understanding areas not part of the usual terrain; there is need for information in terms of data for baselines and more effective engagement on the SDGs as well as on availability of resources for implementation of the SDGs; and finally, the need to look at the bigger picture as a nation.



A participant making a submission

Realizing Women's Land And Property Rights In Uganda: Opportunities And Challenges. Convened by Action Aid International Uganda (AAIU), LANDnet and Food Rights Alliance (FRA).

Land rights for women has a critical area of discussion for women starting with the constitution making process between 1989 and 1995. This session delved into the existing realities with regard to women's land and property rights; opportunities, challenges and proposed interventions. It was noted that the Ministry of Lands is developing a gender strategy on land aimed at translating the National Land Policy and legal proclamations into strategic actions to achieve gender equitable land tenure governance and empowerment. The Gender Strategy recognizes that land is a symbolic resource that influences and determines individual status and identity in the community, in addition to being a productive resource that facilitates survival, livelihoods and agricultural production. Women may have access to land, but they have no control over its utilization and on any other decisions pertaining to it. Several interventions have been put in place to create awareness on women's land rights and protect the rights of women to property including through working with various stakeholders for this purpose. There is however need for more interventions including the need to: translate the laws such as the National Land Policy and the gender strategy on land in local languages and disseminate them using creative and innovation channels to ensure that everybody comprehends and internalizes them; train cultural and traditional leaders as well as members of the land management committees on women's land rights; and develop programs and activities that engage men in understanding women's land and property rights.



Mr. Patrick Kamara making a submission

Tackling violence and pregnancy in and around schools: keeping girls, including child-mothers in school. Convened by Forum for African Women Educationalists Uganda Chapter (FAWEU)



A participant making a submission

Girls' education is one of the priority areas in the women's manifesto. This session focused on showcasing strategies that can be applied to keep girls in school. The Pader Girls Academy (PGA) was highlighted as a success in promoting teenage girls and young mothers' re-entry into formal education by providing secondary education and vocational education for the young mothers and care facilities for their children. The causative factors of teenage pregnancy including violence and strategies to address this were discussed at the session. It was noted that a violence free learning environment is one of the fundamental human rights of children. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in several articles requires Governments to ensure that children grow up, learn, complete the education cycle and develop in a violent free environment. Despite the commitments

by Government of Uganda to a violence free learning environment, available research shows that children are exposed to different forms of violence which undermine their retention, learning and performance. Several interventions have been put in place by the education sector on promotion of safer and positive learning environment in Uganda. Some of these include: the establishment of the Inter- Sectorial Committee on Violence against Children in Schools, development of the Reporting Tracking, Referral and Response Guidelines, implementation of the National Strategic Plan on the elimination of Violence Against Children in Schools (2015-2020); and the implementation of the National Strategy on the elimination of Child Marriages and Teenage Pregnancy (2015-2020). It was however suggested by participants that more needs to be done and Government was called upon to adopt a multi-sectoral approach in protecting children against all forms of violence. In addition, women were urged to work closely with government, development partners, religious institutions and cultural institutions to protect children especially girls against violence.

Making Uganda the 'Best Place to Be a Refugee' for Women and Girls. Convened by Isis-Women's International Cross Cultural Exchange (Isis-WICCE)

The cycle of conflicts in the Great Lakes region has resulted into a Refugee crisis in Uganda. At the session it was noted that the number of refugees in Uganda from South Sudan in the last 6 months was 327,729 people. Women refugees often find themselves in challenging circumstances: psychological pressure, lack of basic social services, sexual and gender based violence, economic dependence among others. While Uganda has been applauded globally and by the women refugees from South Sudan and Somalia that participated during the session for providing a favorable environment for refugees from Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan; there are serious consequences to national development and therefore it requires a serious plan to respond to the needs of refugees. In order to address the various challenges, it was noted that is important to: take into account the needs of the Refugees especially women and children in the development of the Third National Action Plan on the UNSCR 1325; improve the provision of basic services to refugee communities: health, education, security; Improve the relationship of



Ms. Helen Kezie-Nwoha making a presentation

local communities and refugees in advancing women refugee's plight; empower women refugees with leadership skills/ knowledge and create avenues for them to engage with the Warring Parties. It was recommended that Ugandan women create space for women refugees from South Sudan to engage with the fighting parties in conflict resolution and peace building in South Sudan; and document and share the experiences of women refugees as a tool for building peace building and conflict resolution.

Implementing the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa: What is the Missing Link to Achieving Women's Right to Health? Convened by Akina Mama wa Afrika (AMwA)



Ms. Lina Zedriga
making a
submission

The session revealed that Uganda ratified the Maputo protocol with reservations on article 3 on sex and article 14 that provides for termination of unsafe pregnancies. The argument given for not fully ratifying the Protocol is that the country is still exploring domestic remedies. However, while there is apathy in the country 19 women continue to die every day due to maternal health complications. Women suffer silently on these issues that many people dismiss based on societal perceptions. The session explored causes of maternal mortality in Uganda including: crude methods for abortion; excessive loss of blood; and understaffing of health personnel. It was suggested that in order to see a significant decline in the Maternal Mortality Rate, there is need to work towards total ratification of the protocol as well as assess the progress of its implementation in Africa.

It was emphasized that there is need for an accountability mechanism for the lives of mothers and infants lost at birth. It was strongly emphasized that Government must be held accountable and put in place all measures to ensure that lives are saved.

The Prevention And Protection Of Women And Young Girls From Exploitative Migrant Labour. Convened by Platform for Labour Action (PLA)

The session drew attention to and focused its discussions on the plight of women and girls who find themselves lured into and trapped in exploitative migrant labour commonly referred to as trafficking. The session aimed at identifying best practices and solutions on elimination, protection and prevention of all forms of violence against women and young girls in the world of work. A survivor of child trafficking shared her testimony of the ordeal she went through. The session provided a safe space for victims to share testimonies, duty bearers to provide accountability and citizens to propose alternative efforts for ending illicit labour migration in Uganda. Presentations at the session focused on the situational analysis with regard to trafficking in persons as well as various legal and policy measures at international level that Uganda is party to and national measures including legislation to address trafficking in persons were made. It was noted that while the external flow of labour cannot be stopped, all efforts must be made to protect the rights of citizens from exploitative labour. The recommended strategies included sensitization of the public so that they are not gullible to traffickers; strengthening monitoring and evaluation; reporting all incidences of trafficking/ attempted trafficking to the MGLSD; adoption of a multi-sectorial response to illicit labour migration; and strengthening legal measures against the culprits as well as assimilation of the returnees.



A participant making a
submission

Breaking Barriers On Women's Economic Dependence. Convened by The Eastern African Sub-regional Support Initiative for the Advancement of Women (EASSI), National Association of Women's Organisations in Uganda (NAWOU) and The Uganda Association of Women Lawyers (FIDA-U)



A beneficiary showcasing her products at the session

Economic injustice in the agricultural sector was a key point of reference in the session sighting unequal power relations and division of labour where women provide over 70% of their labor in agricultural production yet they have less or no control of the agricultural proceeds. At the session a tripartite partnership between NAWOU, EASSI and FIDA-U was showcased as an intervention model to addressing the challenges of women farmers through capacity building, policy advocacy and provision of free legal services. The beneficiaries present at the meeting showcased personal growth and development and espoused high levels of self-confidence, self-worth and esteem despite the social status. Ms. Kironde is a member and chairperson of the Kwegatta Kemanyi Group and a beneficiary of FIDA-U legal aid which enabled her to register her business, and learn

how to protect her property in case her husband dies. 'No one can chase me from my home when my husband dies' Ms Kironde asserted. The partnership was thought to have tested well in the current region of operation and the participants suggested a replication in other parts of the country. Women's land rights weighed in heavily during the discussions. It was advised that the women farmers be educated on the legal and non-statutory policies and practices that govern land rights.

Making Care work visible in national statistics. Convened by Uganda Women's Network (UWONET), OXFAM Uganda and Action Aid International Uganda



Mr. Nickson Ogwal making a presentation

Unpaid care work constitutes a large part of women's contribution to the national economy although it is not recognized in national statistics. The session provide a platform for institutions including the Uganda Bureau of Statistics who are making efforts, through several surveys, to capture information detailing issues associated with care work. The session also demonstrated piloted local community initiatives in Lamwo district where the elements of recognition, reduction, redistribution and representation were used to address the unequal and heavy care work experienced by women in the community and find remedies to address it. Over the period of the pilot it was documented that equal distribution of care work in the household led to: reduction in domestic violence; improved household and personal hygiene; new skills learned (with freed time); improved food security at household level; and increased production and saving for

health, education and other family expenses. An additional pilot study in Pallisa District and Bwaise in Kampala district was shared at the session highlighting that no significant difference in unpaid care work between the rural and urban areas. Reflect methodology was introduced as an empowerment tool, where women developed a time diary that men also filled in. This illustrated the amount of work that women do and further encouraged women to read, write and develop numeracy skills.

Women In The Informal Sector: Experiences In Business And Trade. Convened by Uganda Women's Network (UWONET) and Institute for Social Transformation



Ms. Rita Atukwasa making a presentation

The plight of women in the workplace is similar and spread across the formal and informal sector as was presented in this session. The session was an opportunity for IST to share findings from a study on women in the informal sectors drawing experiences of women in the markets of Arua, Kalerwe and Gulu. Important to note is that historically markets are started by women and that this is what informed IST choice study area. The general findings of the study highlighted the need for accreditation as way of recommendation by LCs to be allocated a stall, generation of capital is through fundraising from one's support system – mostly relatives. While it was reported that the markets have leadership structures providing sanitary facilities, credit schemes and security, it was noted that the facilities are in a poor state. Following the study IST provided capacity building support to the women market vendors and this boosted their negotiation as testified by one of the beneficiaries. "Before the training, we never stood up to what was hurting us but now we can do so. We have been able to negotiate the price of stalls from 20,000UGX to 10,000UGX. We have also demanded for cleaner spaces of work from the market leaders and they have now put in place a system to ensure good hygiene" experience from Gulu. While the above experience demonstrates emancipation, several women from Lamwo and Kotido districts shared experiences of discrimination. "The leaders have taken over everything, the women have no voice, if they hear that I have come here to talk for women, it will be a problem" experience from Lamwo. "Culture is still a hindrance because you have to share the proceeds with your husband in the evening and the money will be shared with his other wives, there is intimidation from men, there is insecurity and there are no toilets in the markets" experience from Kotido.

Gender, Culture and Religion. Convened by Bahai Faith, Inter Religious Council of Uganda (IRC), Nile Platform and Cross Cultural Foundation Uganda (CCFU)



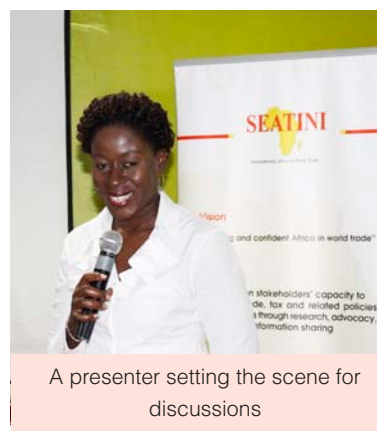
Ms. Elizabeth Kharono making a presentation

The core purpose of the session was exposing the role of religion and culture in the pursuit of gender equality. The presentations showcased how gender, culture and religion crosscut women's economic empowerment, labour, markets, entrepreneurship for inclusive growth. It was emphasized that economic empowerment of women contributes to their broader empowerment, agency and voice, and to better welfare outcomes for them, their households and their wider communities. While an anecdotal survey of Scriptures across the Christian and Muslim religious denominations reveals that both women and men are held in equal regard in the eyes of

the Almighty God, the reality in practice is far from this truth; though if all people were to live according to Scripture, the world would be a better place. It was emphasized that religion is a vital stimulant for political. Faith-based structures are robust and time-tested hence making it easy to mobilize people (including men and women) for politics, governance and other issues. God created all creatures equal in the human and animal kingdoms. However, the female sex in the human kingdom has been marginalized by the male sex. While the two sexes are different externally, it all comes back to the inherent dignity of each sex which must be respected. Men and women were urged to always act in love towards one another - the word LOVE is an acronym for – listen, observe, value and evaluate one another.

Taxation As A Driver To Promote Women's Economic Empowerment. Convened by Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group-Uganda (CSBAG)

A starting point of reflection for the session was the revelation that gender equality is not a concern for fiscal policy makers. However, fiscal policies need to take cognizance of women, given their contribution in terms of paid and unpaid work into the economy. A representative from the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development noted that women are able to influence policy – even tax policy – through being strategic. When discussing taxation, it is important to analyse it broadly in terms of equity, fairness, resource allocation and culture among other factors. While the main objective of taxation is to raise revenue for government, in doing so, there is need to be mindful of other factors such as income redistribution. This implies that citizens should be concerned with what happens after the tax revenue is collected. Countries that have significant tax compliance are those countries where accountability is very high. Participants noted that there is a knowledge gap on how to deal with taxation; information on issues such as tax identification numbers, bookkeeping and access to credit. In conclusion, it was noted that a good tax policy will benefit women through ensuring equity, business growth and resource allocation.



A presenter setting the scene for discussions



Exhibition Pictorial

Official Closing Ceremony

Attended by 200 participants, the official closing ceremony was graced by Hon. Peace Mutuuzo, Minister of State for Gender. Hon. Mutuuzo congratulated UWONET, her membership and all participating organizations and individuals for having successfully completed the 3rd National Women's Week. She asserted that the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development is certain that the work done by women's rights organizations like UWONET and her members compliments government's role. The Minister reiterated that amidst the challenges we have in attaining gender equality she is a strong believer that in unison we can confront the unfinished business. On that note, on behalf of Government, and the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development she officially closed the 3rd National Women's Week.



Hon. Peace Mutuuzo delivering official closing remarks (top left). Group photo at the closing ceremony (top right). Ms. Rita Aciro Lakor, Hon. Peace Mutuuzo and Hon. Tezira Jamwa at the closing ceremony

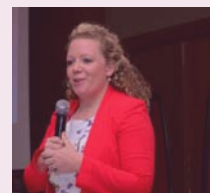
Celebrating Unsung Heroines and Heroes Dinner

A wonderful evening it was, held at the Kampala Sheraton Hotel, celebrating the unsung heroines and heroes in style. The dinner was graced by UWONET members and partners (district and national), development partners, Members of Parliament and young people. The dinner was an opportunity to celebrate the women's week, unwind and network with fellow guests.

At the dinner **Ms. Rita H. Aciro-Lakor, Executive Director, UWONET** expressed UWONET's gratitude for the moral, financial and institutional support by development partners, UWONET membership, participating organizations, the media, service providers, and individual participants who made the 3rd National Women's Week possible.



Representing the UN Women Country Representative **Ms. Claire Hawkins, Gender and Humanitarian Specialist at UN Women**, reiterated that the third National Women's Week was a week of revitalization, discussion and inspiration, to the benefit of all women in Uganda. She noted that it was both vibrant and lively - an opportunity for women from all over the country to share experiences, to learn from one another and to meet their sisters.



H.E Per Lindgärde, Ambassador of Sweden, expressed profound congratulations to UWONET and the entire women's movement in Uganda for organizing the 3rd National women's week and highlighting the issues successfully. H.E Lindgärde encouraged the women's movement to stay committed and energetic since the 3rd national women's week boosted our energies, reinvigorated our commitments to finish the unfinished business and accelerated inclusive and sustainable development.



Cake cutting by the UWONET membership and H.E Per Lindgärde, Ambassador of Sweden

THE 3RD NATIONAL WOMEN'S WEEK

"Women: Confronting the Unfinished Business. United Women Can!"

Unsung Heroines and Heroes Award Ceremony

Six individuals who have made an immense contribution to their communities were then recognized for their efforts and personal struggles in support of women's rights and gender equality.

Alice Acan Pader District	In recognition of her tireless, effortless, priceless service above self to the community in the establishment of Pader Girls Academy that has given girls a second chance to sexually abused girls.
Mariam Odwori Namaingo District	In recognition of her tireless, effortless, priceless service above self to the community through your paralegal initiatives to address gender based violence and human rights violations in Namaingo District.
Evelyne Habasa Rubalema Kanungu District	In recognition of her tireless, effortless, priceless service above self to the community in equipping women with skills and knowledge to preserve the environment around Bwindi Impenetrable Forest in Kanungu District which in turn has economically empowered them.
John Buwooya Kamuli District	In recognition of his tireless, effortless, priceless service above self to the community using your profession to serve your community over and above the call to duty particularly for abused girls and women to access justice in Kamuli District.
Ottom Valentino Kitgum District	In recognition of his tireless, effortless, priceless service above self to the community in enhancing accountability that has transformed gender responsiveness in Kitgum District.
Doreen Chesang Kapchorwa District	In recognition of your tireless, effortless, priceless service above self to the community in promoting sports to raise awareness on FGM and its dangers and the use of sports for economic empowerment in Kapchorwa District



Award giving ceremony

Evelyne Habasa Rubalema receiving award (left) and Mariam Odwori receiving award (right)

Appendix 1–UG Women Rock Lyrics

UG WOMEN ROCK

Women of Uganda are a powerful agent of change.

Women of Uganda are the engine that drives development and shapes communities.

CHORUS

Women of Uganda we celebrate womanhood

Women of Uganda we celebrate sisterhood

We are the rock and firm foundation of our nation

Our compassion is a source for peace and hope

VERSE 1 (English)

Women of Uganda let's speak for ourselves,
participate and influence decisions

Let's drive passion into each other, build self-
esteem and believe in ourselves

We value and respect each other as sisters

The young are our future, in unity we are stronger

CHORUS (English)

Women of Uganda we celebrate womanhood

Women of Uganda we celebrate sisterhood

We are the rock and firm foundation of our nation

Our compassion is a source for peace and hope

VERSE 2 (Luganda)

Abakyala ba Uganda, tuliisizza era tugunjudde
abakulembeze abaamaanyi.

Abakyala tubaddengawo mu mbeera enzibu ennyo
okulwanilira abantu baffe n'eggwanga

Abakyala ffe bakozi abasinga obulunji mu ns'eno

Abakyala tusaana kusiimibwa nakitiibwa.

CHORUS (Luganda and English)

Abakyala ba Uganda, Tujaguz'okuba abakyala.

Abakyala ba Uganda, Tujaguza oluganda lwetulina

We are the rock and firm foundation for our nation

Our compassion is a source of peace and hope

VERSE 3

Men, boys and brothers of Uganda the women's
struggle is your struggle

A better woman's life is a better life for you

Let's join hands as brothers and sisters

In equality we stand

In equality we develop together

CHORUS (Kiswahili)

Kina mama wa Uganda tunashelekea wana wake

Kina mama wa Uganda Tuna shelekea kina dada

CHORUS (English)

Women of Uganda we celebrate womanhood

Women of Uganda we celebrate sisterhood

We are the rock and firm foundation for our nation

Our compassion is a source of peace and hope

Appendix 2–Session Conveners

Organizational Bio



Action Aid is among the leading anti-poverty agencies working directly with over one million poor and excluded people in 50 districts of Uganda.



Action for Development (ACFODE) is an indigenous, voluntary, non-governmental women's organization founded on November 19, 1985 and its mission is to empower women and influence legislation and policy for gender equality in Uganda.



Akina Mama wa Afrika (AMwA) is a pan-African, non-governmental development organization founded in 1985 in United Kingdom and currently based in Kampala, Uganda. Translated from Swahili, the name means 'solidarity among African women' which symbolizes the principle of "sisterhood."



Amon Ashaba Mwiine is a PhD student at the School of Women and Gender Studies (SWGS), College Of Humanities and Social Sciences.



Baha'i faith is the world religion whose teachings revolve around the unity of Man Kind.



Centenary Bank launched a unique program in 2015–The Cente SupaWoman Club that enables women to enjoy a variety of both financial and non-financial services.



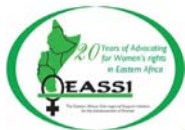
Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG) is a coalition formed in 2004 to bring together CSOs at national and district levels to influence Government decisions on resource mobilization and utilization for equitable and sustainable development. CSBAG was created out of a desire to collectively influence government and effectively participate in setting national budget priorities.



Council for Economic Empowerment for Women of Africa (CEEWA)-Uganda chapter is a non- governmental, non-partisan and not for profit organization working to promote the economic empowerment of women in the development process.



Cross Cultural Foundation Uganda exist to promote the recognition of culture as vital for human development that responds to our national identity and diversity.



Eastern African Sub-regional Support Initiative for the Advancement of Women (EASSI) is a sub-regional civil society organization established in 1996 to facilitate systematic follow up of the implementation of the Beijing Platforms for Action (BPFAs) emanating from the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing China in 1995.



FAWEU's Vision is a country in which all girls and women have access to equitable quality education and Mission is to promote gender equity and equality in education in Uganda by influencing policies and nurturing positive practices and attitudes towards girls' education.



FIDA-Uganda was established to track record of promoting and defending human rights, with a focus on the rights of women with children as beneficiaries of this of this work.



Food Rights Alliance is coalition constituted in 1999 to bring together Civil Social Organizations working in the field of sustainable agriculture and food security in Uganda.



Forum for Women in Democracy is a women's rights national non-partisan organization established in 1995. FOWODE's vision is a just and fair society where women and men equally participate in and benefit from decision-making processes.



iCON Enterprise Foundation (iCON) is a Ugandan social enterprise dedicated to promoting economic justice for women and young people by igniting the institutional capacity of groups or/and organizations that serve women and young people in enterprise, leadership and policy advocacy.



Institute for Social Transformation (IST) is the East African home for Training for Transformation. It is based in Uganda and spreading its services to the seven East African countries; namely Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.



International Republican Institute (IRI) works around the world to help political parties become more issue-based and responsive, help citizens participate in government planning and decision making, and increase the role of marginalized groups in the political process—including women and youth.

Inter-Religious Council of Uganda is “an initiative that brings together different religious institutions to address issues of common interest.



Isis-WICCE is a feminist organization amplifying women’s voice and power in conflict and post-conflict settings. Isis-WICCE works in Africa and Asia to innovatively put women’s rights issues on the political agenda; and catalyze women’s power to transform themselves, their communities and nations in conflict and post-conflict.



Justice Centres Uganda is a project of the Government of Uganda under the Justice Law and Order Sector. JCU is a one stop-shop legal aid clinic that seeks to bridge the gap between the supply and demand sides of justice.



Kitgum Women’s initiative (KIWEPI) was established by the women of Kitgum to foster a peaceful and informed society that engages in sustainable development. KIWEPI was a response to the victimization of escaped children, women and girls who were often rejected by their own communities, labeled, stigmatized and marginalized.



LANDnet Uganda was founded in 2012 as a network engaged in research, capacity development and policy advocacy on land, gender, agriculture and natural resources management.



Miriam Katunze is a Research Analyst at the **Economic Policy Research Center**. She has interest in gender glass ceiling; agricultural value chains and finance; agricultural commodity trade finance; climate resilient agriculture; trade and regional integration.

Nakere Rural Women Activists

Nakere Rural Women Activists is a community based organisation that engages in peace education and human rights in Kotido district, Karamoja sub region.



National Association of Women’s Organizations in Uganda (NAWOU) is an Umbrella of women organizations in Uganda, formed in 1993, initially as the National Council for Women.



Nile Dialogue Platform established in Uganda in 2011 with the aim of advancing social cohesion by connecting communities through dialogue. It does this by bringing people together through discussion forums, courses, capacity building, publications and outreach.



Office of the Auditor General (OAG) is the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) of Uganda.



Oxfam in Uganda, started work in the 1960s and since then it has continued working implementing both development and humanitarian program to support practical and innovative ways for people to lift themselves out of poverty.



Platform for Labour Action is a Non-Government Organization founded in 2000 by a group of women activists. This was in response to the absence of an appropriate voice to address the rights of vulnerable and marginalized workers.



Prof. Josephine Ahikire is the dean at the **School of Women and Gender Studies (SWGS)**, College Of Humanities and Social Sciences.



Raising Voices strives to influence the power dynamics shaping relationships between women and men, girls and boys by catalyzing social change in communities, rigorously studying and learning from the work done, and sharing experiences to shape the field.



School of Women and Gender Studies (SWGS), College Of Humanities and Social Sciences is a multidisciplinary academic unit that is at the forefront of academic and community initiatives to address gender and development issues from an African perspective.



Uganda Media Women's Association (UMWA) exists to see that Ugandan women can make informed decisions by having access to the right information on rights, and to fight for the rights of women working in the media but also not excluding bad portrayal of women in the media.



Uganda National NGO Forum (UNNGOF) is an all-inclusive membership organization of NGOs and their networks. UNNGOF's mission is to provide a sharing and reflection platform for NGOs to influence governance and development processes in Uganda and enhance their operating environment.



Uganda Women's Network (UWONET) is an advocacy and lobby coalition of national women's organizations. UWONET envisions a Uganda society free of all forms of gender based discrimination.



Uhuru Institute for Social Development (TUI) is a social business that is founded to contribute to transforming the socio-economic status of citizens through the cooperative business model.



UN Women, grounded in the vision of equality enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, works for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls; the empowerment of women; and the achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security.



WOMEN'S DEMOCRACY NETWORK
Uganda Chapter



Women Democracy Group is a consortium of 5 National Women Based– Organizations focused on advancing women's participation in political leadership and decision making processes. It comprises of ACFODE, WDN– Uganda Chapter, CEWIGO, FOWODE and coordinated by UWONET.



Women's Democracy Network-Uganda Chapter seeks to empower women to pursue activism and leadership in the public sphere to enhance gender equality through capacity building, mentoring, citizen empowerment, influencing legislation and policies and advocacy.



Contact

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