



Gender Transformation & Empowerment

A WOMEN'S ISSUE

HARNESSING WOMEN'S RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT INITIATIVES ACROSS UGANDA

ISSUE 2, 2011

In this issue

- Networking and Capacity Building
- Policy Advocacy
- Climate Change
- Technology
- Feminism
- Transformative leadership
- Sexual and Gender Based Violence
- Amagezi Gabula Atudde (Profile)
- Peace and security

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Dear Reader,

Greetings from Uganda Women's Network (UWONET)!

Welcome to the 'Women's Issue' July - December 2011 - Issue 2. This issue covers interventions by women's organizations contributing to Human Rights, Women's empowerment and development. Look out for articles on Climate change, the Feminist Movement, Sexual and Gender Based Violence, transformative leadership building, technology, Peace

and Security and a profile of a grassroots women's group.

We are grateful to all the members who have contributed articles for this edition. We value information sharing and we say, **'Don't be left out in the next issue!'**

We remain grateful to our development partners and stakeholders for the support.

Enjoy your reading.

Komuhiimbo Sandra
Editor

Networking and Capacity Building

Annual Networking Week

Women in Leadership, Redefining Leadership.

“The training sessions showed me that even our village groups can be considered and showed me the importance of formalizing my group”. Melda Agwang ,Kaperbyong-Amuria District

“Enhancing Women’s Participation and Representation in Leadership and Decision Making for Gender Equality in Uganda” is a three year programme being implemented by UWONET in the four districts of Amuria, Abim, Katakwi and Moroto with support from Dan Church Aid. UWONET works with Community Based organizations like Abim Together in Development (AWOTID) in Abim, Karamoja Women Umbrella Organization (KAWUO) in Moroto, and Teso Women Peace Association (TEWPA) in Soroti who help in networking, coordination and mobilization of participants.

A networking week was therefore held from the 13th - 16th November 2011 at Paxland Hotel in Soroti and brought

together participants from five districts Soroti, Amuria, Katakwi, Abim and Moroto. During this meeting, members were able to share experiences based on their districts of origin such as; formalization of all groups in Amuria and cultural practices that have led to the continued violation of women’s rights in Karamoja. As part of the meeting all the representatives from the districts were able to suggest interventions for the next project and contribute to the continuation of the project.

The annual networking week was an opportunity for all of the beneficiaries of the project to be able to plan and strategize for future engagements with the Network. There has been increased awareness, appreciation and understanding of the rights of women among the grassroots women in the districts of operation and other districts. This is attributed to the simple hand book developed and disseminated on women rights and the translations made into the different local languages i.e. Akaramanjong, Ateso and Luo.

Written by
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Communications and Information
Officer-Uganda Women’s Network



Policy Advocacy

CEDAW;

Legal Instrument to eliminate Discrimination against Women



Since the mere “extension” of general human rights to women has been fraught with difficulties, there was a need to formulate a special law to specifically promote and protect women’s human rights.

According to UNIFEM, Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) departs from the general human rights instruments that address “sex based discrimination” in neutral terms by naming the group disadvantaged from sex based discrimination. Instead it foregrounds the social and cultural underpinnings of such discrimination thereby extending the application of human rights to the private sphere for women, and more importantly, highlighting the connection of the public sphere with the private sphere. The inequality of women within the family, the workplace and in public life derives its ideological basis from the social construction of women's capabilities and roles. (<http://www.unifem.or.in/CEDAW.pdf>)

Since the mere “extension” of general human rights to women has been fraught with difficulties, there was a need to formulate a special law to specifically promote and protect women’s human rights. A special law helps to exemplify and contextualise general standards to a specific situation or group. The Convention

on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, CEDAW contextualises the neutral human rights standards to the situation of women. The significant difference that CEDAW has introduced is that it has not been limited to securing women's human rights but is also expanding the understanding of human rights itself. In doing so, it underscores the need to consciously and consistently expand and extend rights to special contexts and identities.

Much as the law is in place, several women, men, duty bearers and all stakeholders are not yet well informed about these existing laws and majority of the rural women are not yet aware of the laws that protect their rights and for the few that are aware, that the law exist; they are not sure whether it is meant to promote women’s rights. It is on this basis that Uganda Women’s Network organized several training of duty bearers (JLOs), CSOs and women councilor in the districts of Kitgum, Pader, Lamwo, Agago, Amuru and Gulu districts in November 2011 to disseminate information about CEDAW.

These trainings had great impact not only on duty bearers and women councilors who could hardly mention this instruments that promote women’s rights and gender equality. As a result, several working groups were formed to assess Uganda’s progress in implementing CEDAW provisions which has been so vibrant in enhancing improved gender equality.

In a nut shell, CEDAW as a human right instrument is not yet widely understood by several individuals and institutions despite efforts being made to reduce the knowledge gap. Uganda Women’s Network as a national women’s organization has deliberately put in place initiatives to continuously disseminate information on CEDAW and other international, regional and national instruments to empower women and inform other stakeholders on women’s rights through information sharing.

Written by,
Koli Angela Christine
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Uganda Women’s Network

Climate Change

Climate Change and Disaster Management Alliance launched



Overnight at a time of year when downpours like the one which sparked the landslides in Bududa, Eastern Uganda, would normally have been expected during the month of August, three villages and a big number of their population were buried underground. A still unknown number of people were killed, thousands displaced and property and infrastructure worth millions of shillings was destroyed, because of its dramatic nature, the Bududa disaster galvanized country wide attention. Out pouring of sympathy, concern and expressions of solidarity with the affected communities were received from every corner of Uganda and from people and groups of all walks of life.

However, few national women's organizations have been involved in climate change and disaster preparedness issues and processes. As a result, these organizations have, on one hand, not brought their gender expertise and perspectives to bear on these processes, while, on the other hand, they too have not factored issues of climate change and disaster preparedness in their work with resource dependent communities generally, and women in these communities, specifically.

There is a great need of increased involvement of women's rights organizations in the climate change and disaster preparedness processes due to the critical need to pay specific attention to the gender dimension of climate change disasters. Women have more limited control over natural and other productive resources yet they carry greater burdens of sustaining rural livelihoods. A severe disruption in livelihoods as a result of disaster does not only undermine the resource base on which they depend, but also makes it even harder for women to sustain the livelihoods of their families and communities. Disasters of increased intensity, frequency and variability are, therefore, going to leave women in resource dependent communities even more vulnerable and marginalized than they already are.

The Bududa disaster also confirmed predictions that within poor countries such as Uganda, the communities likely to be most severely affected by climate change related disasters are the rural, poor and marginalized resource dependent communities. Vulnerability to severe climate variability is closely associated with inability of individuals to cope with the shocks resulting from extreme weather changes. The Bududa landslides graphically demonstrated this fact. A combination of human, political, physical, natural as well as social factors did not leave the affected community particularly vulnerable to landslide disasters but also almost inevitable for the disaster to happen.

In many parts of the country, women and girls have more limited control and decision making power over productive resources and have a much weaker asset base than their male counterparts. To sustain livelihoods women rely more than their male counterparts on the exploitation of natural resources including water sources, fuel, herbs and medicinal plants, wild fruits etc. which they have free access to. This accessibility to 'free' common property resources to poor women is particularly important they don't need permission in order to access them. The vulnerability of women and girls to disasters when they occur, therefore, is made worse largely because of the unequal power relationships within communities which are already marginalized from the benefits of development. Women's vulnerability is also compounded by gender biases which result in their being excluded from decision making processes on issues which directly affects them.

The fact that women bear the brunt of disasters has been recognized and is even more acknowledged in policy documents and situational analysis. Experience shows, however, that policy acknowledgement of women's vulnerability and more marginalized position in society rarely translates into meaningful action to lessen their vulnerability and enhance their livelihood options. Climate change adaptability and disaster risk reduction are new policy challenges of Uganda.

The policy vacuum has made it difficult for the country to have a coherent and effective response to climate change related disasters, particularly of the scale and magnitude of the Bududa disaster.

Optimism that this situation is changing for the better stems from the fact that the Ministry of Water and Environment Houses the climate change coordination unit (CCU) which is tasked to mainstream climate change into national development processes and to formulate a national climate change policy. A parliamentary forum on climate change has also been set up to address climate changes in Uganda and to make policy makers understand climate change scenarios in Uganda, involving them in raising awareness about climate change among the populace and oversee budgets for proper allocation to climate change initiatives.

The Bududa landslides was in many ways a wakeup call and showed the lack of awareness and preparedness was the norm not just in Bududa where the disaster happened, but in regions known to be particularly prone to such disasters. Climate change variability is not a new reality. What makes climate change related disasters a problem now is the inability of communities, households to cope with and recover from their severe impacts, or find alternative livelihood options.

Experience shows that getting the systems to appreciate and address gender specific needs, interests and concerns under such conditions is especially difficult. It is for this reason that it is essential that national and

local level CSOs, most especially those engaged in policy advocacy and programmes to promote human equality, should actively get involved in these processes. This involvement should specifically seek to not only ensure that communities are actively engaged in these processes, but also that the rights of vulnerable groups, including women and children, the elderly and disabled are protected and their needs and concerns addressed in the course of disaster preparedness and management processes.

An inaugural meeting convened by the Centre of Land, Economy and Rights of Women (CLEAR-Uganda) to reflect on the Bududa landslides and its gender implications undertook an initial brainstorming on the issues raised above. This forum brought together national, regional CSOs and CBOs and representatives of Local Government institutions in the Mt. Elgon region. The meeting concluded with a resolution to establish a Climate

Change and Disaster Management Alliance (CCDMA). The main objectives of this alliance are to increase the perspectives and voice of CSO in disaster response and management processes, generally, and to address some of the weaknesses which were evident in the responses to the Bududa disaster, especially the lack of voice of victims of disaster, and women's voice, specifically.

The formal launch of the CCDMA on the 29th September 2011 reflected on the Bududa disaster with presentations and discussions on disaster management and responses during and after the Bududa disaster. The case studies shared took the conversation beyond the numbers and reflected on the fact that when disaster strikes, while the majority of people will receive information loaded with statistical data, the responses go well beyond the surface and involve psycho-social traumas that too need to be looked into.

Source: Gender, Climate Change and disaster preparedness in Uganda. Reflections of the Bududa landslide disaster. A background paper for the inaugural meeting of the CCDMA by Elizabeth Kharono, CLEAR – Uganda

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Climate Change

Could **REDD+** be the color for gender equality?

Tropical forests cover about 15% of the world's land surface (FAO 2006) and contain about 25% of the carbon in the terrestrial biosphere (Bonan 2008). Forest are home to 300 million people around the world and they contribute to the livelihoods of many of the 1.3 billion people living in extreme poverty (women constitute 70% of the poor worldwide – UNDP 1995). Forests provide global food security and resources, food and fodder, fuel and medicine. However, the way people use and manage forests depends on the socio-economic and socio-cultural environment, age and gender.

Forests represent a massive carbon reservoir. The world should give top

priority to the conservation of this immense reservoir. REDD+ is based on the assumption that healthy standing and growing forests conserve and augment carbon stocks, while their over exploitation leads to release of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Forest related mitigation strategies have the capacity to not only reduce greenhouse gas emissions but also reduce the vulnerability of people and ecosystems to climate change.

REDD+ refers to 'reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries; and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries'. (Paragraph 1(b)

(iii) of the Bali Action Plan, adopted at the Conference of the Parties (COP13) in December 2007). The development of REDD+ as a climate mitigation strategy is creating an opportunity to reduce tropical deforestation while protecting and promoting forests' crucial social and ecosystem functions.

In order to achieve the full mitigation potential of forests, a future REDD+ mechanism should include the elements are listed in the Bali Action plan. These elements are reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries. By strengthening the



capacity of forests to conserve and enhance carbon stocks, REDD+ offers cost effective and immediate carbon dioxide emissions reduction while generating strong co-benefits for forest dependent communities and biodiversity conservation.

Men and women often have different roles with regard to forest resource management. They play different parts in planting, protecting or caring for seedlings and small trees, as well as in planting and maintain homestead woodlots and plantations on public lands. Men are more likely to be involved in extracting timber and non-timber forest products for commercial purposes. Women typically gather forest products for fuel, fencing, food for the family, fodder for livestock and raw materials to produce natural medicine, all of which help to increase family income (Aguilar et al., 2007). The approach aims to bolster livelihoods, protect people's rights and assure that the ecological and social functions of forests are strengthened. Women's participation is not just

essential for making visible women's needs and interest with in the REDD+ framework, but it also causes additional benefits; such as, women's increased self-esteem, public engagement, respect of their communities, and opportunities for women to assume leadership roles, as well as to have access to additional income which are all essential for the advancement of women. Meaningful participation of actors at the grassroots can ensure that their interests are taken into account. Their participation in decision making processes can build the ownership needed for the implementation of REDD+.

It is today widely recognized that gender is a key component of human rights and social justice. Moreover, gender equality is a real driver of development, significantly enhancing the effectiveness of programmes, projects and initiatives. For more than 20 years, the International Union on Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has recognized the key role played by gender in biodiversity conservation

and environmental sustainability. At a global level, IUCN's Gender policy seeks to ensure that all the Union's work involving people also addresses gender in a constructive and positive manner. IUCN uses its knowledge and expertise to promote women as a force for positive change in the world and raise awareness of the value added of efforts to realize the full creative and productive potential of women for achieving biodiversity conservation and sustainability.

It is against this background that IUCN is implementing a global pro-poor REDD+ project aimed at supporting the Government of Uganda access and benefit from the global carbon financing available for developing countries to mitigate climate change. As Uganda prepares for the implementation of its REDD+ strategy, there is critical need to ensure that a comprehensive framework is in place to facilitate the awareness and participation of all stakeholders especially the poor and marginalized to understand the opportunities and challenges to effectively engage in REDD+.

In line with the above, IUCN organized a national level gender and REDD+ capacity building workshop which aimed at enhancing the understanding about REDD, facilitating a process of developing a roadmap on how gender aspects will be integrated in the mentioned strategy as well as identification of the best platforms for effective participation of all stakeholders in this process.

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Technology

Women in Technology Uganda (WITU) to bridge the gender digital divide.



There is a huge gender technological gap in the Africa, Women though more than men, hold very high technical positions and very few have the desire to join the profession. As a result, few women are registered in the field of technology in Uganda and East Africa at large. Women in Technology Uganda (WITU), is a forum focused on finding real solutions to the long-standing problems of how to attract, retain and advance more women in the IT industry. Inspiring, leading and influencing the action to increase the number of women in IT.

The uneven distribution of Information and communication Technologies (ICTs) within societies and across the globe is resulting in a 'DIGITAL DIVIDE' between those who have access to information resources and those who do not. Women' low levels of literacy and education relative to

men as well as the negative attitude towards girls achievement in science related fields contributes to the gender dimension of the digital divide.

Women still have a low degree of economic security than men and face gender related constraints on their time and mobility. They are therefore less likely to access, use and participate in shaping the course of ICTs compared to their male counterparts.

The Status of Women and ICTs in Uganda.

In Uganda, Women's awareness and usage of ICTs is nearly three times less than that of men (2006 Research ICT Africa). An assessment of the Rural communication and Development Fund(RCDF) from a gender perspective undertaken by women of Uganda Network in 2007 revealed that the fact that women are key consumers in the privately owned computer training centres had nothing to do with gender targeting. Many of these females went for secretarial training or to learn elementary computer skills like Microsoft office applications to enhance their gender stereotyped roles of secretary.

Women who were employed as trainers or lab attendants were the minority. As far as ownership management and control of private ICT business centres, Women were generally few. The study also revealed that although

RCDF support to various ICT projects had facilitated further spread of ICT facilities and services to the less privileged areas and its communities, women have benefited less from the projects as compared to their male counterparts.

Without access to information technology, an understanding of its significance and ability to use it for social and economic gain, Women are likely to be further marginalized from the mainstream of their communities, their country and the world (Nancy Hafkin and Nancy Taggart 2003).

Efforts to improve this status by WITU

Through collaborative partnerships and alliances women in Technology Uganda forum intends to ;

- Promote and realize the benefits of diversity in the industry to improve the recruitment and retention of women in the IT industry and IT related jobs.
- Work in an open and collaborative manner to inspire, lead and influence action being taken to increase the number of women in IT.
- Promote dialogue in the workplace, through the engagement of employers and employees, to fully utilize the IT and management skills of women in the industry.

Feminism

“Whose power? Whose politics?” - 'New vision, a new definition of power and leadership'

This will include technical and professional knowledge sharing and support.

- Undertake research and disseminate conclusions regarding the impact of the IT working environment on the careers of women.
- Raise the profile of women in the industry in partnership with telecommunications industry employers, suppliers, and the Government

We strongly believe that women's participation in the creation of technology will strengthen the workforce, raise the standard of living for many women, and help to assure that technology addresses women's needs and expands the possibilities for their lives. For more details about WITU please visit our website <http://witug.wordpress.com/> ; Follow us on twitter @witugandaFacebook :<http://www.facebook.com/pages/WITU-Women-In-Technology-Uganda-Forum/148662568562905>

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UFF Mural

The Uganda Feminist Forum (UFF) is an autonomous space launched in 2008 to revitalize and contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of the feminist movement in Uganda through greater mobilization of local and national actors as well as the development of national priorities for women. The Uganda Feminist Forum is the national process that is part of the African Feminist Forum Framework (AFF). The UFF is space that brings together Ugandan Feminists and activists to deliberate on issues of key concern to the movement. The forum provides a space for Ugandan feminists to collectively reflect and develop feminist strategies for political accountability to women's issues.

We are in a global village and what affects one will affect another; the UFF aims at strengthening the

women's movement; have strong cadre that will advocate for women's rights; aggressively deal with the 'monster' called patriachism; work as a platform that can change systems that deny women's rights; support our own struggles (importance of sisterhood, fund our own revolution). Every year, the UFF hosts annual forums and in-between implements activities aimed at strengthening feminism; mobilizing and organizing; feminist leadership support; collective learning and sharpening of skills as well as individual support to feminist. The 4th UFF was held on 8th – 11th November 2011 in Entebbe.

Following the 2011 elections, the 2011 UFF theme **“Whose power? Whose politics?”** allowed for deeper collective, analyzing of the strategies used and enabled collective visioning and strategizing on how to position for

the future. The theme also challenged the narrow view of politics in line with the feminist slogan 'the person is political' so participants at the UFF were reminded that everything we do and the choices we make are all political choices. The 2011 theme also enabled participants to deeply analyze on power in its various forms; the strategies used by the feminist movement as well as politics of money and sexuality

The 2011 UFF aimed at developing feminist strategies for political accountability to women's issues in Uganda. The three day convening provided a space for collective reflection, collective visioning and strategizing on how to position and strengthen the feminist and women's movement for greater political impact in Uganda. The UFF enabled Ugandan feminists to address current challenges in Uganda's political climate, as well as revitalizing the feminist movement in Uganda at an individual and organizational level.

At the 4th UFF, conversations were held on issues such as; 'Women, Money, Power and Politics' which covered how money underpins and is a critical engine in politics, also how women can make money to enable them fulfill their political ambitions or use the money to support other women in politics. 'Political Consciousness and Thinking: I am a Politician' since everything about us is politics, we need to look at the broad agency and politics, enabling us to think about the political questions our body presents. 'African sexualities and how it connects with



all that we do,' aimed at breaking the whole notion of sexualities and power. One of the things that give us the power is our bodies. The challenge is how we use that power in a way that is advantageous. 'Auntie Jangu Wanno' –



the market place of politics; during this session the participants visited two markets that is, Kitooro market and Nakiwogo landing site market. The participants then reflected on lessons

from the market and how they can inform how we do things and also how we as feminists can package out product to achieve our vision.

In a nutshell, the forum went very well and was a reviving space. It was innovative, engaging and it was simply a nice space to be in. Special thanks to the UFF Hosting Secretariat Team (FOWODE) and the UFF Working Group Members for shaping the forum and sustaining the energies for the last 4 years. Many thanks to all of us UFF Members for keeping the fire burning and pulling together the 4th Forum hence making Herstory!

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Transformative leadership

Transformative leadership building trainings unlock young women's leadership potential Brenda Nabulya's Story

To build a cadre of young activists that support gender equality, FOWODE annually trains young women selected from all parts of the country on issues of Gender, Democracy, Good Governance, Sexuality, Conflict resolution, Communication skills and Gender Budgeting among others. Over 600 youths have participated in this camp since 2006. Many are engaged in leadership activities back in their communities and others occupy leadership positions in political and private spheres.



Brenda Nabulya facilitating a community meeting in Kasaala Subcounty © FOWODE 2011

The leadership building camp organized to mentor young women and men in alternative and transformative leadership has proved particularly empowering for Brenda Nabulya both for her personal and public life. After attending a three-week leadership building camp by Forum for women in Democracy (FOWODE) in 2009, Brenda explains why she valued the training so much: “since the training in 2009, my leadership abilities were awakened and my life has progressed since then. I have conducted several out reaches in communities and schools, talking to young people and helping them to explore their leadership potentials. I am happy to inform you that I am currently the General Secretary in Ekitangaala Old Students Association at Cornerstone Leadership Academy and am also employed as Secretary to the Luwero Diocese Education Department.

For Brenda the sky is the limit, what she has achieved gives her hope for achieving more. She engages in voluntary work and also fundraises for some of her activities. “In 2010 I submitted a proposal to FOWODE, which was funded. I conducted outreaches in Luwero Secondary School, Shammah High School, Victoria Model Secondary School, Buscisa Grammar Secondary School, St. Daniel Comboni Secondary School and Light of Life Secondary School. For each school, a club was formed as a platform where students network and discuss gender issues”, narrates Brenda. In 2011 she submitted another proposal to the Luwero Diocese focusing on Leadership and life skills training for schools in the districts of Luwero, Nakeseke and Nakasongola and if approved, it will greatly impact on the lives of the youth in these schools. She also volunteers with

many organizations including FOWODE where she trains communities on issues of gender and budgeting. She is at times requested by school leaders to go and talk to students on issues of leadership, as she states, “the headmistress of Josephs’ primary school Nakikoota village in 2010 requested me to talk to the students in her school.

While the FOWODE leadership building camp focuses on providing space and opportunity for young women to learn issues related to gender, leadership and governance concerns, the youth who attend the camp are encouraged to put into practice this new knowledge once they return to their communities. Brenda’s achievements after the camp demonstrate not only the success of the camp, but also the ability of young women to lead once they have been equipped with the appropriate skills. The impact of FOWODE’s Leadership Building Camp extends from the individual youth to the national and the community as each youth is tasked to impact on another’s life as they work to transform their communities. For Brenda, working to help other youth gives her fulfillment, although she acknowledges that realizing change in the lives of the youth is slow, she’s happy she has managed to positively influence the lives of some youth in her community and many have taken on the big vision of helping other youths.

Written By
Carol Namagembe
Communications Officer
FOWODE

Some leaders are born women

Equality in leadership We should get there 2016



With no ado, women have superseded the norm of getting into employment (engineers, doctors), sports (baseball, basketball, Boxing), Leadership (ministers and presidents) and other occupations normally associated with the male folk, however, this has not been translated in the leadership of these sectors. Therefore women's leadership skills, experience and opinions have not been taken full advantage of, consequently not reflecting women's needs.

In most societies in Uganda, women are conditioned to accept the male sex as the superior sex but to a few educated, and those that have faced life's struggles that have led women to shed off their inhibitions. I will agree with Elizabeth Cady Stanton who said man and woman are the complement of one another; therefore we need women's thought in all affairs to make safe and stable governance. Yet still some women have breached the norm and two particular leaders draw my attention; Justice Julia Sebutinde and Hon. Rebecca Alitwala Kadaga. For a woman who has chaired three high-level commissions investigating allegations of corruption in the Uganda Police Force, Ministry of Defense and the Uganda Revenue Authority, the sky is the limit for Justice Julia

'Do women in Your country face similar problems while trying to join leadership and decision making?' Florence Akello Kale enquires from a group of Danish visitors in Abim district. You must be thinking the answer is an obvious No, without evenhanded doubt, 'Women all over the world still experience similar problems. In Denmark women are still struggling with issues of equality and representation just like a women struggles to get in the local Council of Uganda'. One of the parish members replied.

Sebutinde. Elected to be judge on the International Court of Justice (ICJ) by the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council on the 13th of December 2011, Justice Julia Sebutinde became the first African woman to hold this position. In the entire history of ICJ there has been only one other female judge, this is therefore a milestone for women in the law fraternity and the women's movement as a whole.

Lady Justice Julia Sebutinde graduated in 1977 from Makerere University in Uganda and joined the Ministry of Justice, where she rose to the level of Principal State Attorney/Principal Legislative Counsel. She also worked at the Commonwealth Secretariat in London and at the Ministry of Justice of Namibia. In 1996 she was appointed Judge of the High Court of Uganda.

Rt. Hon. Rebecca Alitwala Kadaga is another seasoned woman politician in Uganda. Born in 1956 in Kamuli district, she has faced her share of resistance to her leadership and influence in her role as Speaker of the Parliament of Uganda which has been male-dominated position since its inception. Nevertheless the graduate of Laws has steered the 9th Parliament of Uganda to be one of the most influential and nonpartisan Parliaments in the history of Uganda. Not only has she emanated a lot of independence and impartiality, she has ruptured the barriers to such positions,

exceeding and not accommodating gender stereotypes. Her pledge to bridge the gap between Parliament and the public is being fulfilled and her fight against corruption is astounding.

The women's movement is proud of the Rt. Honorable Lady Justice and the Rt. Honorable speaker, as inspiration to all women both at national and at grassroots level. Women are also leaders and they too can reach the heights if they set their hearts to, and these are rewards of emancipation, a sense of competence and positive impact as well as an opportunity to empower others.

As 2016 is a stone throw away, amassing women's numbers in all leadership sectors is the optimal bulls eye for social accountability and better service delivery. Just like Margaret Thatcher a British Politician's said. "If you want anything said, ask a man. If you want anything done, ask a woman."

Written by,
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Sexual and Gender Based Violence

Child marriages leave Kasese on sidelines of development



Sarah Biira is a 19 year old secondary school student. She goes to Maliba Secondary School in Kasese district. However beyond the self-assured and joyous smile is a story that not many girls in Kasese are able to overcome. Like many girls in the district, Sarah was married at 13 years after she got pregnant.

“I was in senior two when I became pregnant, the man was 25 years old,” Biira narrates her story with smile, “My

parents decided since I was pregnant they would not care for me. When I asked them where they expected me to go, they said “go look for that man who is responsible”.

A primary school teacher accepted responsibility. She went on to live with him and her in-laws in one house where she experienced violence.

“He wanted to go pay my father a fine but my parents refused his money saying it was not right.”

In many cases in Kasese when a girl is defiled, the man responsible pays a fine that is supposed to repay the money ‘wasted’ on the impregnated teenager. Most often after the fine, the girls are married off no matter what age.

Biira’s parents gave her husband one condition; he had to take her back to



school. Biira’s husband agreed to pay her school fees on condition that she had give birth to a second child because “he said he wasn’t sure I would return to him after going through school.” Biira was determined to go back to school, “I told him if it meant having another child with him I would but I needed to go to school.” So at 16, Biira had her second child and after that went back to school.

She has two sons who stay with their father and the 6 years old is now going to school too. However Biira struggles and many times her parents pay the bigger part of the fees.

MbambuAnnet another teenage mother 17 became pregnant at 15. “When I told the boy he said he didn’t have time for me. I went to my mother and she refused to take me in,” says Mbambu.

Mbambu has lost her father. She had a complicated delivery and her child died. She’s lucky she survived. She stays with her mother and although she went back to school, finding school fees is very difficult.



"I came here for the expo to tell people my experience; I need help with school fees. I am sent away from school all the time," Mbambu narrated her story at the Isis-WICCE peace exposition held in Kasese from November 28-December 1st 2011.

According to new study by Isis-Women's International Cross Cultural Exchange (Isis-WICCE), many girls in Kasese are married between the age of 12-17. The study was carried out in two Bukonzo East and Busongora North and researchers interviewed 304 respondents (291 girls and 13 boys). The children included those were still in marriages, those that have divorced and others have fled the marriages and gone back to school. The age of most of the men/boys whom the girls were married off to range from the age of 15 to 80 years.

The leading causes of the child marriages were early unwanted pregnancy with Bukonzo East at 38 percent and 22.4 of children in Busongora North cited that factor. Many other girls stated that they had been forced to marry because their parents were unable to pay school fees. Most of these weddings were traditional and in more than 40 percent of the marriages dowry had been paid. However the fine is most common way of dealing away with a daughter in these areas.

Many of the girls interviewed had no access to family planning or information.

Juliet Were, Isis-WICCE lead researcher said, "In Kasese, defilement has been normalized with the help of the police. The police share the fines from offenders with parents and in one case we found the LC1 of the area

had married a 14 year old girl and yet these are institutions that should be protecting rights of girls."

Ms. Were said these early marriages coupled with marginalization of the region have led to high levels of poverty.

"Girl child is being used as a form of currency in these areas where 4 decades of war have left many impoverished, many girls in these marriages reported high rate of intimate partner violence and forced sex was leading," she said, "this has a big impact of how Kasese can recover from effects war."

Kasese has faced various conflicts and most recent being the Allied Democratic Forces rebellion from 1986 to 2003. Despite the loss of lives, property and livelihoods, Kasese has seen no proper recovery program either from government or development agencies.

It was just last year that government came up with the Luwero-Rwenzori Development Plan that aims to spend £120m over five years to support households and ensure social service delivery.

Bwambale who is now the first premier in the Obusingabwa Rwenzururu Kingdom told the gathering at the expo that lack of funds to implement various policies has kept the region undeveloped and thus making practices like child marriages difficult to stamp out.

The King of Rwenzururu Charles Wesely Mumbere said he would work with cultural leaders to ensure girl-children stay in school. He called on his Kingdom to deal with domestic violence which in some cases drives children out of homes.

The Omusinga emphasised the need to engage the police to ensure policies and laws are implemented. He said he would appoint his chiefs to work with clan leaders to address problems of domestic violence. He appealed to government to re-settle people displaced by conflict most of whom are women who vulnerable to gender-based violence

Isis-WICCE Executive Director Ruth Ojambo Ochieng highlighted the organisation's work in training women. She said it was important that Isis-WICCE holds a peace expo as well as the cancer screening to care for women who cannot afford dues to address their reproductive health problems.

Isis-WICCE Board President Thelma Awori launched the PEAR campaign with the Omusinga Charles Wesley Mumbere. She highlighted Isis-WICCE research in Kasese that has shown that almost 90 percent of homes in Kasese have a girl who has been defiled and left with no care.

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Sexual and Gender Based Violence

“United to Prevent, End Impunity and Provide Support to the Victims of SGBV in the Great Lakes Region.”

The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) is an inter-governmental organization of the countries in the African Great Lakes Region. The organization is composed of eleven member states, namely: Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania and Zambia.

Its establishment was based on the recognition that political instability and conflicts in these countries have a considerable regional dimension and thus require a concerted effort in order to promote sustainable peace and development. Most notable among the conflicts that have had cross-border impacts or origins are the

1994 Rwandan genocide that led to the loss of more than 800,000 lives, and the political instability in DRC. These conflicts constituted a major threat to international peace and security.

Its responsibility is to coordinate, facilitate, monitor and thereby ensure the implementation of the Pact in order to attain peace, security, political stability and development in the Great Lakes Region. The main divisions of ICGLR are: Peace and Security, Democracy and Good Governance, Economic Development and Regional Integration and Humanitarian and Social Issues. In addition, the Conference addresses Cross-cutting Issues such as Gender, Environment, Human Rights, HIV/AIDS and Human Settlements.

In December 2010, at the request of the ICGLR Regional Women's Forum, Heads of State agreed to dedicate a special session on the problem of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) in their next convened summit. Preparations are under way for this summit scheduled to take place in Kampala, Uganda from 11th to 16th December 2011. One day of the Summit will be specifically devoted to a Special Session on SGBV under the theme: “United to Prevent, End Impunity and Provide Support to the Victims of SGBV in the Great Lakes Region.”

In preparation for the Special Session, national, regional and international human rights organizations based in Kenya and Uganda spearheaded



a regional process to mobilize civil society organizations in the Great Lakes region to participate in deliberations leading up to the Summit. The CSO Coordination Committee for the ICGLR Special Session on SGBV constituted: Uganda Women's Network (UWONET), ACORD, ActionAid, Action for Development (ACFODE), African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), Akina Mama WaAfrika (AMWA), CARE, CCPAU, East African Sub-regional Support Initiative for the Advancement of Women (EASSI), International Refugee Rights Initiative (IRRI), Isis-Women's International Cross-Cultural Exchange (Isis-WICCE), National Association of Women's Organisations in Uganda (NAWOU), and Regional Associates for Community Initiatives (RACI).

The CSO Engagement aimed at promoting clear and consistent messaging on SGBV experiences and demands to Heads of State for immediate commitment and tangible action, empowering local and national women's rights groups in the region to speak for themselves and ensuring their voices are heard at high level decision making platforms and ensuring Regional decision making structures take into consideration the human rights of women and children in their agreements which reinforce national commitments to women's and children's rights, in line with international and regional treaties and agreements.

The ICGLR therefore was a good opportunity for our leaders to provide a lasting solution to the problem of SGBV. Consequently, as Women Civil Society in the Region, we strongly urged the Heads of State of ICGLR to be at the front line of the fight against Sexual Gender Based Violence, and to:

1. Declare Zero Tolerance Now on SGBV crimes and impunity
2. Allocate specific and adequate funding for SGBV prevention programmes within a Gender Responsive Budgeting Framework
3. Institutionalize early warning and response to SGBV, in collaboration with the security community policing in the prevention service sector
4. Establish an independent Regional Impunity Monitoring Unit by the next Summit of the Heads of State, to thereafter report on progress annually to the ICGLR Ordinary Summit of Heads of State
5. Establish national Reparation Funds for survivors of SGBV by the next ICGLR Ordinary Summit of Heads of State.
6. Adopt a comprehensive SGBV performance framework (in the form of an Index or Barometer) with clear standards and targets, with opportunity for civil society to present shadow or parallel reports.
3. Put in place national and regional media strategy for sustainable use of electronic and print media especially radios, newspapers, televisions and traditional / community based means to expose the atrocities of sexual and gender based violence, facilitate the sensitization and fight against SGBV;
4. Direct the secretariat to strengthen the inter-linkages between the Regional Initiatives on Natural Resources (R INR) and the Regional Initiative on Sexual and Gender Based Violence (ISGBV) by supporting Member States to mainstream gender aspect into their national policies on the natural resources sector and foster regional exchange and cooperation for sustainable development of the natural resource sector;
5. Direct the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee (RIMCJ) at their next meeting in Bangui, Central African Republic (CAR) to discuss unemployment! more especially among youth, within the context of infrastructure development and investment and present the report to their respective Heads of state for relevant action and later report to the next Summit;
6. Empowerment of Professional and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) such as International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) and all the others in the Great Lakes Region that provide support to victim/survivors of SGBV.

On 15th December 2011, the 11 Heads of State of the Great Lakes Region signed the Kampala Declaration of the Heads of State and Government of the member states of the ICGLR and resolved to;

1. Strengthen the Levy Mwanawasa Regional Centre for Democracy, Good Governance, Human Rights and Civic Education in order to fulfill its Mandate;
2. Take note of Uganda's offer to host the Regional SGBV Training Facility and direct the ICGLR Secretariat to prepare the financial requirements (budget) for the establishment of the Facility and present it to the next meeting of RIMC for decision;

Written by;
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Sexual and Gender Based Violence

Building Capacities of Duty Bearers in GBV Prevention and Response



According to the World Health Organization, Gender Based Violence is defined as any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person and is based on socially ascribed gender differences between males and females. Gender based violence denies women and men security of the person, the right to enjoy fundamental freedoms and forces them into subordinate positions to their counterparts. A district, Sub County, and individuals affected by violence can not reach their full potential as long as Gender Based Violence preventers, actors and managers have inadequate capacities to handle cases (UNFPA/MGLSD report on Gender Based Violence 2008)

Uganda Women's Network conducted a capacity needs assessment for duty bearers and GBV actors in Busoga region. The findings showed the urgent need to enhance their capacities for effective service delivery, Thus UWONET conducted a training on GBV prevention and response in the districts of Kamuli, Buyende, Jinja, Iganga, Kaliro, Namutumba, Bugiri and Mayuge.

Why Busoga region: The Uganda Demographic Health survey (UDHS) provided that the highest prevalence rates of GBV was experienced in Busoga region.

Which duty bearers: The purposely selected duty bearers categorized from police officers, health workers, community development officers, district technical personnel and Local Councillors in 32 subcounties.

Why the selected duty bearers: The mentioned duty bearers is the various service points for the survivors of Gender Based Violence as per the referral pathway and the guidelines and laws of Uganda i.e the Domestic Violence Act 2010, the Local Government Act 2006 and IASC guidelines for GBV interventions 2005.

What was covered during the capacity enhancement trainings;

Understanding gender , the session focused; is on unpacking gender as a concept, difference between gender and sex, gender roles, relations and gender manifestation, gender and violence.

Understanding survivors and perpetrators; Duty bearers on a day to day interface with survivors and perpetrators. There is a need to understand the difference between a survivor from the perpetrator, appreciate why most survivors don't seek help and develop strategic actions to foster survivors seeking help.

Fundamental human rights on addressing gender and GBV issues; the session defined , elaborated and simplified the provisions in various legal framework at national, regional, and international level that address GBV. It also re-enforced the duty bearers role to enforce the laws and policies.

Effective Communication ,This sessions explored; effective speaking techniques, what the attributes of an effective communicator, barriers to effective communicator are, the need to know, and tips to enhance effective communication.

The package shared with the duty bearers/ GBV actors; The trainings aimed at enhancing their skills, knowledge levels and gap fill to mitigate service delivery gaps. UWONET hopes the capacity enhancement training will go along way in contributing to the reduction of Gender Based Violence vulnerability in the communities particularly among girls and women in Busoga sub region.

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Sexual and Gender Based Violence

**Drama presentation by Toroma women in struggle alliance group
(Katakwi district)**



John and Mary (not real names) were married with two daughters. As culture prescribed having a boy child was prestigious, John then married another wife – Margaret (not real name) - in the hope that he will have a boy child. Margaret in time influenced him to divorce Mary so that she could be the ‘woman of the household’. A few weeks after she moved she started to mistreat the two girls and encouraged John to wed them off.

When the first born daughter – Monica (not real name) - turned 13 years old she was forced to marry a 30 year old man who worked with Kakira Sugar works limited. Monica did not consent to the marriage but her father and now step mother forced her to get married. The area woman councilor heard of this

incident and paid a visit to her parents to educate them on the rights of a girl child and the effects of defilement. However, the parents did not change their position on marrying her off. The woman councilor then reported the parents to the Local Councilor I but he was of no help and just abused her of interfering in family matters.

A couple of months in the marriage Monica got pregnant, her husband then started to mistreat her and eventually chased her from his house. She went back to her father’s home but her now step mother did not allow her back. Monica wandered on the streets alone while in great labor pain. A traditional birth attendant found her and offered to help her.

Highlights of the play;

- 1) Child Marriages
- 2) Culture
- 3) Dangers of teen pregnancy
- 4) Law enforcement



Written by;

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Humble Beginnings

1. Emerging Challenges, Lessons and Action

1. Justification for Gabula Atudde taking up with zeal Biogas implementation and best practices

- There's too much pressure on trees; more 50% of the forests cover in south central Uganda has been cut down as a main source of fuel in homes/institutions like schools and hospitals.
- Self-Environmental degradation
- A sizable percentage of Gustral lung diseases caused by poor hygiene and sanitation in homes in our community, this is worsened when it comes to homestead's with kraals around the premises. Management of dung becomes a problem leading to poor hygiene.

- In addition to that, daily disposal of dung especially for those farmers zero grazing in peri-urban areas become a very big challenge.
- Women spending too much time on looking for food and fuel and too tired at end of day

2. Sustainability

- We suggested that every biogas beneficiary should be encouraged to plant ten (10) fruit trees e.g. mango, avocado, jack fruit, orange trees just but a few. Increased income and food.
- We suggested that every biogas beneficiary be encouraged to have an extension garden to make proper use of biogas residue.
- Linked farmers to various, including agricultural, community development offices and financial institutions to easily acquire knowledge on best farm



Fig 1: President and Mrs. Clinton meeting Esta, Christina (Gabula Atudde), the children (community) and Bernard (Heifer Project International) at Sheraton Hotel-Kampala, Uganda on 26/4/1998.

Gabula Atudde and Biogas technology implementation



Fig 2: Kabaka launched 1000th biogas plant at Gombe in the home of Gabula Atudde member as one of the primary 18th Coronation activity and Gabula Atudde was rewarded with a royal hand shake as the leading Biogas technology promoters in collaboration with Heifer international/U DBP on 28th July 2011.

practices, marketing service other opportunities for organizing themselves in groups to form SACCOs for acquiring loans.

- Capacity building on biogas technology for our staff and local partners.
- Through the use of ICTs basing on Gabula Atudde's capacity as a Telecentre, administration and implementation of project, timely preparation and release of project reports will be easier and faster. Communication through e-mails, for example web 2.0 technology-pictures of sites, farmers in workshops in various communities where we shall be operating will be sent to UDBP offices if need arises.
- Whenever a model/partnership worked out, it must be replicated to other areas where Gabula Atudde reaching out to a large number of beneficiaries in the shortest time possible using fewer resources.

Gabula Atudde founders and best practices



Creating conducive working relationship partners

1. **Institutions:** St Steven's Fellowship Church Kawuga;
2. **Schools:** Seeta Parents Primary School
3. **Local Councils:** Mukono Municipal Council
4. **International Community:** Food Professional Fellows
5. **National NGOs:** Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET), RCC with Rotary Club of Seeta

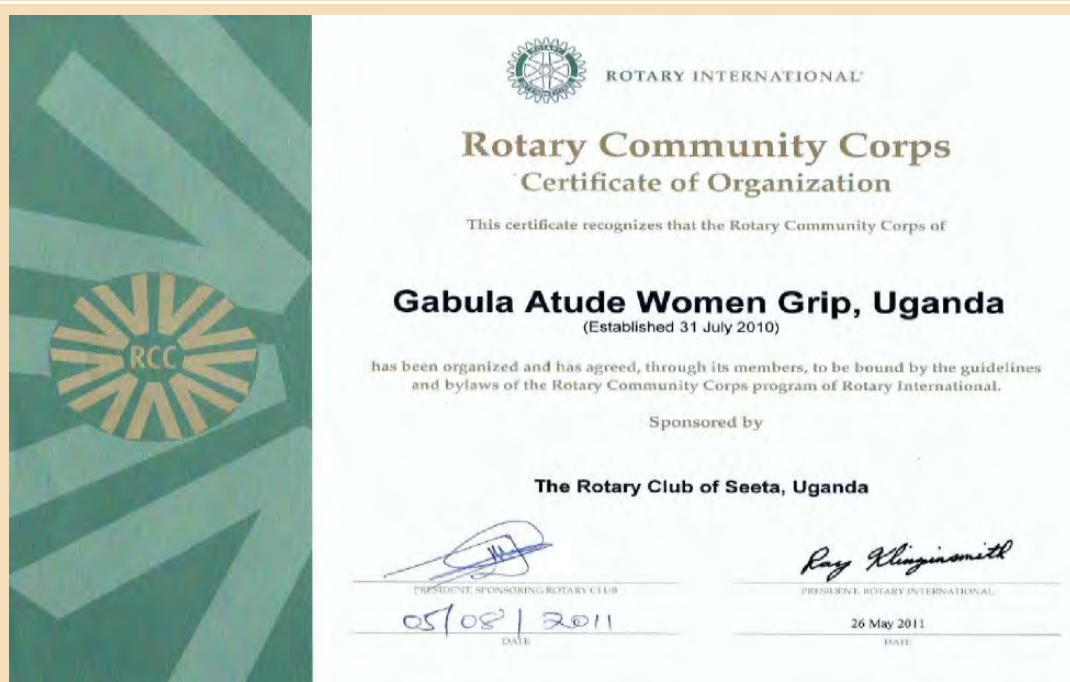


Fig 3: Gabula Atudde meeting with Mukono Town Council Executive and Professional Food Fellows; 21/07/ 201 at Mukono

2. Partnerships

When dealing with partners note that;

- Getting a partner is a lengthy process; it is not accidental as it well thought of before it can happen.
- When dealing with institutions always be very formal write letters or emails, this third defense.
- There are dubious individuals who are not the owners of funds they embezzle there are funding institutions. Those dubious individuals take advantage of situations when they think the people they are dealing with are not well informed, without regard to their credibility in the community.
- Know that Mou is the last stage that cements what have been agreed upon. Mou should not be subject to changes regardless of changes in the staff and not suffer indebted when someone who does not honour the mou.
- Defaulting can be physical or delay either way the value for money is made less.

PROGRAMMES

Amagezi Gabula Atudde

Amagezi Gabula Atudde is a Luganda connotation meaning, “The proactive are part of the solution; the passive remain a problem”. Gabula Atudde Women Grip is women-lead CBO and is a grip not group because of the firmness we grasp our planned activities.

Because of the commendable performance, Gabula Atudde has over the years;

- Interacted with dignitaries, as on 26th April 1998, members met with President Bill and Hillary Clinton. This came as a result of passing the selection process by Heifer project International (HPI); Gabula Atudde as most organized grass root CBO and Christina Luyombya, 84 with the most prized heifer.

Vision

A community with women who had no formal employment, school drop outs, victims of HIV/AIDS. Youth and disadvantaged people of the community that are engaged in profitable activities that contribute to sustainable development starting with the safety of their house hold.

Mission

Improve incomes among micro and small women entrepreneurs in Mukono through exploitation of ICTs in their enterprises.

We run two programmes namely:

1. Information and communication Technology (ICT)
This involves training basically disadvantaged women and girls basic use of ICTs-to professional level in computer skills depending on the need of the community at a time in order to increase ICT education and self-employment opportunity for them.
2. Women, Gender and Development
Through this programme, we aim to improve women’s access to, and control over, material resources



How to make, build and sustain Peace in Post Conflict Recovery Communities



‘Peace is elusive you can build and break it at the same time’. Northern Uganda has suffered immensely from the ravages of a war, which left nearly 2 million people displaced. As the 21 years of massacre, looting, abduction, rape, destruction and all its

associated evil calms, the scent and breeze of peace during this period opened way for the IDPs to return home. This resulted from peace talks between the Ugandan Government and the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), although a final agreement remains unsigned. 90% of population have returned to their original homes. In a bid to rehabilitate northern Uganda through recovery programs, Peace Recovery and Development Programme (PRDP) was launched in 2007 and is implemented by the Government of Uganda, Civil Society Organisation (CSO) and other stakeholders.

As building blocks in the transition from conflict to peace, recovery development programmes must be centered on the affected communities, with a focus on transparency, accountability and gender sensitivity during planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring. This will promote the sustainability of development work, empowering people themselves especially the most marginalized to participate in policy formulation and hold accountable those who have a duty to act. Such development programmes should highly involve duty-bearers, to ensure that the necessary rights are enshrined at local levels; and rights-holders, to inform them of what rights they have, how those rights relate to development and how they could go about claiming those rights? This

approach should be applied to ensure a high degree of participation by communities, civil society, minorities, and women, PWDs, young people, indigenous peoples and other identified community groups, giving them equal attention. The entire framework should be centred on providing ways that will not exacerbate and worsen the situation, taking the community back to conflict but help local people develop systems for engaging with duty bearers for improved service delivery for better livelihood. It must focus on clearly articulating roles of duty bearers and rights holders to reduce on possibilities of conflict.

‘Armed conflict’ destroys national and local economies, because it reduces productive capacities and livelihoods, while encouraging corruption and the diversion of resources into war. The destruction of infrastructure and the services necessary for economic activity and production leads to a scarcity of goods, loss of livelihoods and widespread unemployment, the collapse of markets, and rampant inflation. Investor confidence also declines with time. As the ability of the government to run the country deteriorates. This situation affects peacebuilding pillars and economic stability is an important component in creating a sustainable peace.

Written by
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and benefits leading to an improvement of their position. We carry out sensitization campaigns' and advocacy on reproductive health, violence against women and girls (VAW) women in business, women in leadership, health is wealth, best farm practices, women's rights, environment, food and security.



Gender Transformation & Empowerment

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- UNFPA
- UNOHCHR
- Austrian Development Corporation

To participate in the next issue, please submit articles on email: sandra@uwonet.or.ug

