

OXFAM IN UGANDA NEWSLETTER

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OXFAM LAUNCHES THE STAND-UP PROJECT



Mr. Walakira Moses, the UNFPA Representative (black tie), and Mr. Francis Odokorach, country director Oxfam in Uganda (in blue shirt sitting) pose for a photo with partner organizations after the launch of the Stand-Up project.

Oxfam in Uganda unveiled a six year-project dubbed “Stand Up” funded by Global Affairs Canada. This will be implemented in the rural districts of Mayuge and Namayingo in eastern Uganda and refugee host districts of Terego, Nebbi and Arua in West Nile. It was launched on 25th Feb 2022 in the presence of health experts, partners and CSOs.

The project aims to promote the realization and enjoyment of Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) by young women and girls to achieve body autonomy. The Country Director, Oxfam in Uganda, Mr. Francis Shanty Odokorach, said that this project would go a long way in addressing vices including early marriages, female genital mutilation and improving access to sexual and reproductive health information and services.

He further added that it will greatly reduce the vulnerability of young women and girls to unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, maternal deaths, school dropout, disabilities related to sexual abuse, and infections including HIV/AIDs, among others.

"For sustainable development and positive change to happen, we must work together to tackle the underlying dynamics of inequalities that disadvantage the other gender," he concluded. The project will be delivered in partnership with Centre for Human Rights and Development (CEHURD), Femme Forte and Reproductive Health Uganda.

The focus will be on community sensitization and awareness creation on sexual and reproductive health service delivery and research that will inform decision making.

The family planning program specialist at UNFPA, Dr Moses Walakira, said that since it takes two people to get pregnant, it is important to focus on both parties to address challenges like unwanted pregnancies, teenage pregnancies, and sexual abuse. "Prior to the pandemic, about 216,000 births that were conducted annually were of teenage mothers and of these, 46 percent were unwanted pregnancies according to UNFPA," He added.

Health experts in attendance voiced their concerns about male involvement, the inclusion of HIV/AIDS patients, family planning among households and sustainability of the project after its closure. These were responded to by Oxfam Staff Winnie Munduru who elaborated the project partnerships and engagements which will include men and boys, the inclusion of family planning and other related issues.

Assistant Commissioner, Primary Education in the Ministry of Education and Sports, Mr. Robert Ikwarp said Oxfam's project is timely because Uganda is struggling to tackle sexual and reproductive health issues especially among learners who got pregnant during the lockdown brought about by the Covid-19.

CSOs CALL FOR BETTER POLICIES IN PUBLIC EXPENDITURE, TAXATION AND WORKERS' RIGHTS



Mr. Ainebyona Mitchell, Policy Analyst at CSBAG, Ms. Nalunga Jane, ED SEATINI, Ms. Nivatiti Nandujja, Women's rights Coordinator Oxfam, and Ms. Susan from UWONET during the press conference of the launch of the CRI Report.

Civil Society Organizations including SEATINI, CSBAG and UWONET, DFI (Development Finance International) alongside Oxfam appealed to government to tackle the root causes of inequality which were exacerbated by the COVID 19 pandemic. Globally Uganda ranked 143rd out of 158 countries in its commitment to reducing inequality. This is according to the Commitment to Reducing Inequality 2020 Index report (CRII) by Oxfam and partners titled "The Inequality Crisis in East Africa."

The CRI tool measures government policies and actions in three areas of public services, taxation and worker's rights that are proven to be highly efficient in reducing inequality. The CRI report analysed Government responses during COVID-19 (2020-2021) to assess the impact on growth, poverty, and inequality. It further examined Uganda Government's preparedness to push for inclusive recovery and the role of good governance in influencing this commitment.

According to the report, Uganda's tax regime is relatively progressive, having the highest threshold to capture the high-income earners at 40% on Personal Income Tax (PIT), the highest within the region. However, the report's assessment on the three key pillars that are effective in reducing inequality,

showed that the pandemic exposed Uganda's unpreparedness to alarms such as COVID-19. On the public spending, which includes health, education and social protection, Uganda ranked 144th, 86th on the tax pillar and was 156th on the labour pillar.

In his remarks, Mr. Ainebyona Mitchell, a policy analyst at CSBAG Uganda, implored the government to scale up investment in health, education, and social protection to protect the vulnerable and enhance resilience to future shock. "Government can create decent jobs, reduce the wage gap & increase the minimum wage," said Ms. Nivatiti Nandujja, the women's rights and gender justice Coordinator at Oxfam.

"Taxation is an important issue because taxes should be fair and equitable to all. Let us use direct taxes to ensure that we fight inequality in taxes. Taxation policies matter, and they should protect the vulnerable," said Ms. Jane Nalunga, the Executive director of SEATINI Uganda. Ms. Rita Aciro noted that people experience inequality differently, and we should aim to address all inequalities. These were some of the recommendations raised during the various media engagements, including a press conference radio and tv talk shows on the CRI.

CSOs SPEAK OUT ON KIRYANDONGO LAND EVICTIONS



Mr. Ejoyi Xavier, Country Director Action Aid, Dr. Doreen Kobusingye, Coordinator, National Land Coalition, Mr. Francis Odokorach, Country Director of Oxfam in Uganda and Mr. Kizza Eron chairing the Press conference on Land rights at Serena Hotel Kampala.

Over 30,000 families were evicted from their homes to pave the way for the sugarcane factory in Kiryandongo district. According to the unnamed victims (names withheld), they indicated human rights abuses including assaults, rape and denying them access to police. These were carried out allegedly by security forces during the eviction. However, no action was taken against the perpetrators.

Through a press conference, Civil Society Organizations implored the government to abate the perpetrators and support the land evictions victims who had lost their homes and properties in the process of being evicted illegally. This is because the government had stopped evictions during the pandemic, a time in which the evictions happened. Most affected were women, children, the elderly, and youth who had nowhere to go.

“Legal remedies or procedures should be provided to those affected by land eviction orders. All the affected individuals

have a right to adequate compensation for any affected property, both personal and real,” said Mr. Francis Odokorach, the Country Director of Oxfam in Uganda, during the press conference conducted jointly by CSOs.

The CSOs also cautioned the government that prior to carrying out any land evictions, especially those involving large groups, all feasible alternatives must be explored in consultation with the affected persons to avoid or minimise the damages of the evictions.

The press conference was conducted and supported by Civil society organizations including Oxfam, Action Aid, Transparency International, UCOBAC, Food Rights Alliance, PELUM Uganda, LandNet Uganda, Action Aid, FIDA, Land Justice Network, UWOPA, NAWOU, SaferWorld, Women Land Rights Movement, Land Equity Movement, Uganda Land Alliance, National Land Coalition, International Land Coalition, Environmental Shield Uganda and Land Rights Now.

OXFAM AND PARTNERS CONDUCT A MONITORING VISIT IN NAKIVALE SETTLEMENT



Oxfam staff and representatives from OPM, Local government, CSBAG, JESE, and Community leaders pose for a group photo after the monitoring visits in Nakivale Settlement.

On 10th and 11th Feb 2022, Oxfam, together with partners, conducted a monitoring visit to Nakivale Settlement and traversed the different interventions that were taking place among the beneficiaries. These included the established woodlot where the team interacted with the management committee, institutional energy-saving cookstove, biogas system, and the community nursery.

The purpose of the joint monitoring was to enable Oxfam and its implementing partners to identify challenges, gaps and propose recommendations for improvement to the various

committees that managed the interventions being done in the settlement for the beneficiaries.

The Isingiro district natural resources officer encouraged the beneficiaries to take good care of the projects they were involved in to ensure that they earn a living while protecting the environment. The main participants of the EUTF funded project monitoring visit included the Resident District Officer, Isingiro District, Office of the Prime Minister, JESE, CSBAG, community leaders and selected beneficiaries.



The district resident officer addressing the nursery bed committee in Nakivale Settlement

GENDER IS MY AGENDA CAMPAIGN (GIMAC) CONDUCTS A PRE-SUMMIT CSOs CONSULTATIVE MEETING



Ms. Nivatiti Nandujja, Women's rights Coordinator, Oxfam (centre) taking a group photo with some of the participants at the GIMAC Consultative meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Gender is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) Network is a platform of over 55 civil society organizations promoting gender equality and accountability for women's rights. It was established during the transformation of the African Union to ensure women are part of, and benefit from the transformation process.

The network holds bi-annual CSOs meetings at the margins of the AU Summit of Head of States and Governments to engage the AU Member States on African women's rights, issues, and concerns. The network further monitors Member States commitments as outlined in relevant legal instruments concerning the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) by closely working with the AU.

Prior to the African Union Summit of 2022, GIMAC conducted a pre-summit consultative meeting with CSOs in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, under the theme: "Advancing Women's Access to Economic Resources to Build Our Continent's Resilience in

Nutrition." The meeting aimed to consolidate CSOs' review of the AU legal and strategic framework on food security and nutrition. Also, to strengthen intergenerational and gender transformative approach.

The meeting further highlighted the immense contribution women and girls have made to ending hunger and malnutrition and their huge contribution to the advancement of social economic development. The deliberations included identifying gaps, providing recommendations, and offered a space for strategic engagement with organs of the AU, Regional Economic Communities, and key stakeholders.

The GIMAC was attended by CSOs including Oxfam, African Union, She Leads, Spotlight Initiative, Plan International, Action Aid, UN Women, IPPF, United Nations, Economic Commission for Africa, and United Nations Human Rights initiated by the European Union and United Nations.

OXFAM'S VOICE PROJECT CONDUCTS INCEPTION MEETING FOR NEW GRANTEEES



Representatives of the new Voice influencing grantees pose for a group photo after the two day inception meeting

Oxfam's Voice project awarded influencing grants to 10 new grantee organizations who will be implementing influencing activities to fight for the rights of all rightsholders and inclusiveness of all groups of people in society.

Upon this background, the partner organizations were called upon to attend a two-day inception meeting on 14th and 15th Feb 2022. The meeting aimed to orient the Voice influencing grantees and rights holders, explore their needs, and set linking and learning priorities for efficient and effective implementation of their respective Voice-funded projects.

In her remarks, Ms. Christine Namatovu, the Voice Program Manager, noted that the Voice program is promoting meaningful engagement with all stakeholders. She further said that Voice would like to see that as grantees undertake their activities, they are able to reach out to the leaders and show them what they have to do respectfully and to see to it that advocacy is taken into consideration and that the right stakeholders take charge of the processes and grantees being facilitators of the processes.

Mr. Edward Mwebaze, the Oxfam Head of Program stated that he believes the grantees will contribute to the delivery of Oxfam's vision of "a just world without poverty, where people are valued and treated equally, enjoy their rights as full

citizens and influence policies". He also added that he was convinced that with more individuals and partner organizations joining in the fight against inequality, there is hope to overcome the inequalities and injustices despite the challenges faced.

During the meeting, the grantees understood key Oxfam/Voice procedures and linking and learning(L&L). They were also engaged in group discussions and made presentations regarding their projects as well as their L&L needs. Feedback was provided to the participants by both the L&L Facilitators and fellow grantees after each presentation, and there was learning and sharing of ideas among grantees. Grantees also received information about Communities of Practice.

The new grantees included Action for Community Development (ACODEV), Centre for Constitutional Governance (CCG), Community Volunteer Initiative for Development (COVID), Gulu Women Economic Development and Globalization (GWED-G), Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum (HRAPF), Hoima District Union of Persons with Disabilities (HUDIP), Joy Initiatives Uganda (JOYI), SORAK Development Agency (SORAK), Uganda National Action on Physical Disability (UNAPD) and Legal Aid Service Providers' Network (LASPNET)

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND ENGAGEMENT PROJECT ANNUAL REVIEW



Ms. Charity Chelangat (left) the YEEP Coordinator Oxfam and other Staff pose for a group photo with the partner organizations representatives after the review meeting

Youth Empowerment and Engagement Project (YEEP) is a three-year project (2020- 2022) funded by the EU and implemented by Oxfam in partnership with International Foundation for Recovery and Development (IFRAD) and African Youth Development Link (AYDL). These partners come in with unique expertise and value add to the project, with each leading in implementing specific components while ensuring integration and complementarity.

This Project is being implemented in the districts of Oyam, Gulu, Arua and Nebbi to improve youth livelihoods and their participation in development processes. During the meeting,

participants discussed and reflected on last year's project implementation progress. They also discussed and understood reporting and compliance to Oxfam and donor guidelines.

They further created and presented their communication and visibility plans, including concrete actions and budgets for 3rd-year implementation. The meeting was done through a participatory approach where each partner, including Oxfam, shared their achievements, challenges and learnings encountered during the previous year. Participants presented their work plans for the third-year implementation.

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