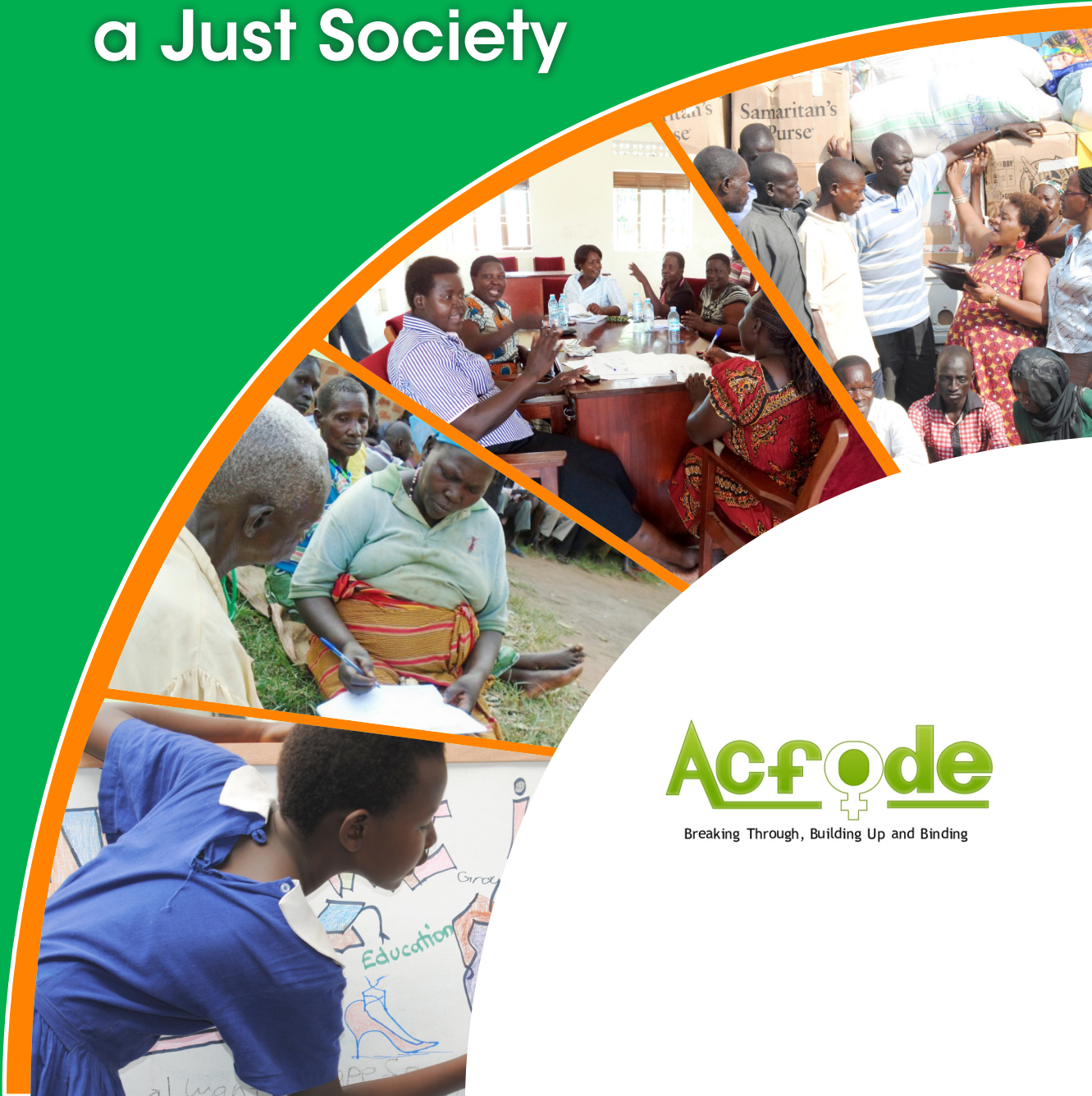


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ANNUAL REPORT

Celebrating **30 Years** of A Journey of Passion for a Just Society



Acfode

Breaking Through, Building Up and Binding

FOREWORD

2 015 was a significant and successful year for ACFODE: we celebrated our 30th Anniversary under the theme ***“A Journey of Passion for a Just Society,”*** organized a very successful East African Regional Conference on ***“Inclusive Finance Opportunities for Youth and Women in Agribusiness as a way of Enhancing Economic Justice”*** and launched **2 new projects** namely: **Rapid Response to Epidemic Outbreaks** that was implemented in Kisoro and Ntoroko Districts; and **Strengthening Local Communities to Advocate for Effective Response to Domestic Violence**, in Apac District.

All these achievements were comprehensively celebrated, as elaborated in the report.

In preparation for the 2016 Elections, ACFODE conducted capacity building sessions for prospective women leaders that equipped them with the necessary skills and knowledge required to win an election.

The Women’s Manifesto was also finally launched at the regional and national level, following the successful conclusion of consultations with Ugandan women on pertinent issues affecting their advancement.

ACFODE further invested a number of resources in enhancing the capacity of key stakeholders at district and community level for improved service provision, democratic governance and gender equity. Among the activities implemented were: capacity enhancement sessions for civil society and private sector actors, grass root civic education sessions, and human rights and gender equality forums.

Time was also devoted in empowering young female and male leaders as champions of gender equality and social justice through capacity enhancement sessions such as mentoring camps and retreats.

My great appreciation goes out to ACFODE members, staff, development partners and all those that contributed to this success.

This Annual Report gives details of these and other facets of the ACFODE’s life in 2015. We look forward to equal success in the next 30 years.

Florence TayebwaMuhwezi
Chairperson
ACFODE Board of Directors

ACRONYMS

DP	Democratic Party
WDG	Women Democracy Group
ACFODE	Action For Development
DP	Democratic Party
NRM	National Resistance Movement
FDC	Forum for Democratic Change
UPC	Uganda People's Congress
LPAC	Legal Parliamentary Affairs Committee
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
REDD +	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation +Conservation of forest carbon stocks for sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
UPE	Universal Primary Education
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
VAW	Violence Against Women
VHFs	Viral Hemorrhagic Fevers
EPR	Epidemic Preparedness and Response
VHT	Village Health Team
VSJA	Village Savings and Loan Association
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
LC-	Local Council,
DCDO-	District Community Development Officer
CDO-	Community Development Officers
UIRI-	Uganda and Uganda Industrial Research Institute
CSO –	Civil Society Organisation
RDC –	Resident District Commissioner
DHO –	District Health Officer
DHE –	District Health Educator
DSFP –	District Surveillance Focal Person
DMFP-	District Malaria Focal Person

CONTENTS

Foreword.....	3
Acronyms	4
About Us	6
Introduction	8
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: Influencing the Formulation/Review of Policy and Legislation that Effectively Promotes Gender Equality	8
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: Contributing to Effective Implementation of Gender-Responsive Laws and Policies.....	10
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: Contributing to the Reduction of Socio-Cultural Practices that Cause Gender Inequalities	21
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: Enhancing the Capacity of Acfode for Efficient and Effective Implementation of its Mandate.....	28
Engagements in Collaborative Solutions to Create Positive Change	30
Knowledge Management And Information Sharing.....	41
Emerging Issues and Key Learnings for Future Advocacy Efforts.....	42
Income for the Year 2015	43
ACFODE Board of Directors	44
ACFODE Management and Staff	45

About Us

ACFODE is an indigenous, voluntary, non-governmental women's organization founded on November 19th 1985. Its formulation was sparked off by the United Nations third world conference on women in Nairobi in July 1985. With a few women realizing the need for an organized forum that would provide a platform for effective debate and action on issues related to women's rights, empowerment and gender equality.



Areas Of Focus

Governance



Gender Based and Sexualized Violence



Gender Policy and Legislation



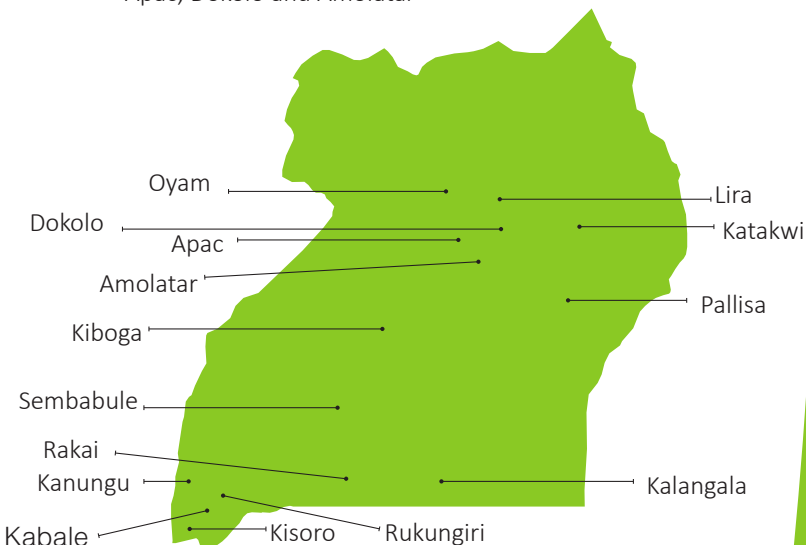
Women's Rights



Areas Of Operation

ACFODE is a national organization, whose interventions are implemented by the secretariat based at the head offices in Kampala and her members. , ACFODE has a number of interventions different districts of Uganda namely: Rukungiri, Kisoro, Dokolo, Oyam, Apac, Kanungu, Katakwi, Kiboga, Kabale, Pallisa, Sembabule, Rakai, Kalangala, Lira, and Amolatar.

ACFODE has field offices in the districts of; Kisoro, Oyam, Apac, Dokolo and Amolatar



The Strategies: How We Do It

- Stakeholder Engagements both at Local and National Level
- Capacity Building and Trainings
- Mentoring and Coaching
- Partnerships and Linkages
- Male and Boys Engagement
- Experience and Knowledge Sharing
- Cooperate Social Responsibility
- Research and Documentation
- Lobbying and Advocacy
- Mobilisation and Awareness Creation

INTRODUCTION

This report covers 2015 as the 30th year of activity for Action For Development (ACFODE), as an indigenous, voluntary, non governmental and non partisan women's organization, tasked with empowering women and influencing legislation and policy for gender equality in Uganda. It also covers the mid year of implementation of our strategic plan, which is guided by four (4) objectives namely:

- Influencing the formulation/review of policy and legislation that effectively promotes gender equality
- Contributing to the effective implementation of gender responsive laws and policies
- Contributing to the reduction of socio-cultural practices that cause gender inequalities, and:
- Enhancing the capacity of ACFODE for efficient and effective implementation of its mandate.

These were a source of valuable guidance, articulating the vision and methodology required to improve our capacity to work effectively in a climate of austerity.

Thus, the following highlights reflect ACFODE's top line achievements in 2015. Overall, ACFODE achieved nearly all milestones scheduled to be completed during the course of the year, with other milestones 'on track' and a very limited set of delays. These factors are discussed in detail throughout the report.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1:

INFLUENCING THE FORMULATION/ REVIEW OF POLICY AND LEGISLATION THAT EFFECTIVELY PROMOTES GENDER EQUALITY

ACFODE is committed to promoting a just society devoid of gender discrimination, guaranteeing equal access to political, social and economic wealth creation opportunities for women and men; and developing a culture that places premium on the protection of all including women and girls. In furtherance of this goal, ACFODE successfully implemented a number of activities that promoted inclusive development, with a special focus on advocacy for gender sensitive legislation reform and formulation.

Advocacy and Policy Reform

In partnership with the Women Democracy Group (WDG), ACFODE met with representatives of Ugandan political party representatives such as the Democratic Party (DP), National Resistance Movement (NRM), and Forum for Democratic Change (FDC), and Uganda People's Congress (UPC) to engage them on issues of public interest as contained in the Women's Manifesto 2016-2021 a document that sets out the concerns of women in Uganda and the demands for accountability by political parties and candidates.

The manifesto builds on similar processes undertaken by women and women's rights organizations in previous elections since 2000 that need prioritization to advance women's rights and gender equality. The five major issues raised in the manifesto are aggregated from several issues raised by women across the country. They include; women's health, women and girl's education,



WDN members, including representatives from ACFODE at the FDC Headquarters in Kampala on September 29, 2015

women's economic empowerment, women's land and property rights, political representation and decision making.

All this was in preparation for the 2016 Election general elections.

As a result of engaging the political parties, particularly the women's leagues, parties such as UPC, DP and FDC integrated 70 percent of the issues in the national women's manifesto into their party manifesto. The meetings also improved functioning of interparty dialogue mechanisms.

In addition, ACFODE organised and participated in consultative meetings with the Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Committee (LPAC) to build efforts with other women leaders and influence adaptation of submitted proposals for a gender sensitive Constitution amendment that takes cognizance of women's voices. Some of the proposals presented included: i) alternative of gender parity to Affirmative Action, ii) need to set minimum education level for lower councilors, iii) term limits for all political leaders and not only women, iv) review of women and girls' land and

property rights, property rights and emoluments for political leaders and civil servants.

ACFODE further engaged with officials from the Electoral Commission, including the Chairperson Mr. Badru Kiggundu to bring to their attention the issues related the update of the Voter's Register from a gender perspective and to seek clarity about the relationship between the national

**4 stakeholder meetings
organised, 41 Policy Makers,
43% of them women engaged.**

identification registration and the voters' register.

And in regards to mainstreaming gender in Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation +Conservation of forest carbon stocks for sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks (REDD +) strategy prior to its adoption; ACFODE together with other stakeholders amongst whom included women interest organizations and environment focused organizations and line

ministries, departments and agencies such as Ministry of Gender, Labor, and Social Development (MGLSD) Ministry of Water and Environment among others held series of advocacy meetings.

Potential risks identified during the REDD+ implementation were; women rights and livelihoods (with particular attention to land and natural resource use). Full and effective consultation and participation of women, fair access to information, education to enable decision-making and consent; and equitable distribution of benefits to all.

Other critical issues included: increased understanding of REDD and gender issues, clarification and protection of natural resource rights of women, equal access of men and women to multiple benefits associated with forest and tree management guaranteed and reduced gender discrimination in collaborative forest management arrangements. The meetings were held under the guidance of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Negotiated under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), REDD+ is a strategy aimed to create a financial value for carbon stored in forests. The overarching objective is to provide positive incentives for developing countries to reduce emissions from forested lands. The key idea is for results-based payments to be derived from verified carbon emission reductions or removals.

As a result, a gender sensitive and pro-poor REDD+ strategy and a corresponding monitoring and evaluation framework were passed.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: CONTRIBUTING TO EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF GENDER-RESPONSIVE LAWS AND POLICIES

To promote the implementation of women human rights in accordance with Uganda's obligations under the 1995 Constitution, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and its general recommendations, and all other national conventions and international laws relevant to women, ACFODE took action to promote gender equality and women's rights by consistently advocating for their observance. This was achieved through capacity building activities targeted at government officials (political and technical), legislators, local leaders, civil society actors and community members.

Influencing Gender Accountability towards 2016 General Elections and Beyond

*I am delightful for the work being done by ACFODE & WDG especially in promoting women's rights. I pledge to share the issues and demands in the manifesto with fellow party members for inclusion during the development of the party manifesto. **Hon Acio Sarah - NRM Representative Lira District.***

Following the successful conclusion of consultations with women in 50 districts of Uganda on pertinent issues affecting their advancement, the Women's Manifesto, a political document that sets out the concerns of women in Uganda and demands for accountability by political parties and their candidates for the 2016 general Election and beyond was developed. The five significant concerns of women spelt out in the



Participants during the launch of the Manifesto in the Western region pause for a group photo with copies of the publication.

manifesto include; women's land and property rights, women's economic empowerment, women and girls' education, women's health, as well as women's representation in decision-making.

ACFODE, in partnership with other WDG members such as Uganda Women's Network (UWONET), Women's Democracy Network (WDN) Uganda, Centre for Women in Governance (CEWIGO) and Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE) launched the report at national level and in 16 regions of Uganda.

This popularised the manifesto amongst the general population particularly women, men, aspiring candidates (both men and women) and other segments of the population including Civil Society Organizations, women leaders, representatives from the Health, Education and Agriculture sectors, social actors, women groups and the Business fraternity as well as media.

3141

The number of people reached through the launches at national and local level with women accounting for **66%** of the beneficiaries. Participants in all regions made commitments in support of the women's manifesto and promised to use the issues therein to inform the development agenda in their communities.



Florence Katunguka a Senior Nursing Officer discussing the Women's Manifesto during one of ACFODE's activities in Rukungiri District

Citizens Views on the Women's Manifesto

*With this informative engagement with ACFODE about the Women's Manifesto, I will make sure the concerns and issues in the document inform the development of our party manifesto. **Asibo Veronica. Youth Representative- UPC***

*This document will inform our work at MIFUMI, we intend to utilize it in building the capacities of women at the grassroot level who in turn will use it as a bargaining tool for aspiring leaders in the coming general elections especially on issues of women property and Land rights. **Nakamyia Gloria-Cordinator MIFUMI- Masaka***

*Given the nature of my work as a nursing officer, it is indeed timely to integrate the women's manifesto in Day to Day Health care provisions to improve women's health- **Nakyanzi Prossy Senior Nursing Officer- Masaka District***

*I must say the women's manifesto is timely, and believe that the political parties will draw from it the women's concerns and priorities as documented. I thank ACFODE for the efforts of putting the document together. **Florence Katunguka-Senior Nursing officer Rukungiri***

Enhancing Women's Participation in Political Leadership & Decision Making Processes

As Uganda prepared for the 2016 elections, there was need for women to be active, knowledgeable and capable players as a critical constituency that actively engaged in all processes as voters, political aspirants and as a critical mass that could demand for gender accountability. Women's engagement in the process was critical since it served as means of influencing the democratic processes aimed at bridging the gender disparities.

Accordingly, ACFODE organized a number of activities against the backdrop that while the numbers of women participating in politics

in Uganda is steadily increasing, the numbers have not exceeded much the affirmative seats. Secondly, the general lack of appreciation of women's involvement in politics among the citizenry still exists, therefore warranting more energies and efforts by female aspirants to justify their participation in politics. Thirdly is the issue of limited skills, knowledge and lack of preparedness among female aspirants.

Some of the challenges highlighted by the women candidates during the trainings included: negative cultural norms and practices that hinder their advancement in leadership, the pull her down

syndrome within the political parties, where women deliberately refuse to support fellow women, commercialisation and monetisation of politics, lack of support from their spouses among others. Attending leadership trainings organised by organisations such as ACFODE, continuous sensitisation of communities on the importance of women's participation in political leadership and contesting under the direct seat were some of the strategies identified to overcome the above aforementioned challenges.

Actiticty Highlights

Mapping Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,755 women candidates were mapped from 50 districts vying for LC V and Members of Parliament. The activity was conducted between September and October 2015 in collaboration with other WDG member organisations. • It was established that there was an increase in the number of women who expressed interest and picked nomination forms for direct seats mainly for LC IV & V compared to 2011. This was attributed to capacity enhancement conducted by a number of CSOs including Action for Development. • It was also founded that the average education level for the women candidates was Ordinary Level Certificate which stood at 40%, while 25-30% attained A level certificates and Diplomas, with the 15% having degrees and 1 aspirant holding a PHD. • While 70% (1,929) vied for affirmative seats, 30% (826) contested for directly elective positions at both Parliamentary and L.C.V level.
Breakthrough Skills Trainings for Aspiring Women Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The trainings sought to equip female aspirants across different political parties with knowledge and skills on how to effectively campaign, manage elections and emerge victorious in the 2016 general elections. • 16 districts namely: Rukungiri, Kanungu, Kisoro, Kalangala, Amolatar, Dokolo, Oyam, Lira, Rakai, Ssembabule, Apac, Oyam, Nebbi, Pader, Kiboga, and Pallisa were targeted. • 760 women leader aspirants had their knowledge and skills enhanced in areas such as: running a successful campaign, advocacy and lobbying, public speaking and presentation skills, research and message development, fundraising and resource mobilization, managing the polling day, media relations among others.



Strengthening Local Capacity in Promoting Sustainable Accountability Mechanisms at the Grassroot Level

ACFODE invested a number of resources in enhancing the capacity of key stakeholders at district and community level for improved service provision, democratic governance and gender equity. Among the activities implemented were: capacity enhancement sessions for civil society and private sector actors, grass root civic education sessions, and human rights and gender equality forums. These interventions were implemented in the 6 districts of Kampala, Kiboga, Oyam, Apac, Pader and Nebbi.

men, boys and girls. I will share with my fellow staff the knowledge and skills I have acquired from this training as they are important for our interventions at the community level. **Herbert C.S, Lwamata Sub County.**

I used to think that gender is about women and girls' issues only, but from this training I have learnt that it takes into consideration the different roles and responsibilities of women,

Human Rights & Gender
Accountability Forums

- 5 forums that served as a platform to create awareness among the decision makers and local authorities on gender and development, and women and girls’ rights issues were conducted.
- 16 ACFODE CEDAW Committees, consisting of 252 members (150 female, 102 males) from the districts of Apac, Oyam, Pader and Nebbi were commissioned to promote women and girls’ rights within their local communities. We need numbers and disaggregated by sex.
- Action plans on how to integrate the issues that emerged in district plans and budgets were developed.



Civil Society & Private
Sector Actors Enhancement
Sessions

- 6 capacity enhancement sessions were held during which participants were equipped with skills and knowledge vis-à-vis their mandate as social actors to empower communities to be able to effectively engage with the local government processes.
- The trainings further enhanced their understanding of gender, governance and accountability, alongside lobbying, Networking and Advocacy skills and the use of Public Expenditure Tracking Tools (PETS).

Grassroot Civic Education
Sessions

- The trained CSO and private sector actors in turn conducted grassroots civic engagement sessions that focused on providing local community members with vital information regarding their rights, entitlements and responsibilities in local governance issues, gender and the importance of demanding accountability from their leaders (elected and appointed). District and sub county leaders such as Community Development Officers and Gender Focal Persons, Local Council (LC) representatives District, Village Health Teams (VHTs), representatives of school and health centers management committees, as well as religious and cultural leaders were in attendance.

Number of Civil Society and Private Sector Actors

District	Males	Females	Total
Kiboga	17	13	30
Oyam	12	18	30

- Selected community members had their capacities built in monitoring social services particularly the health and education sectors.
- Some of the mechanisms put in place to promote quality service delivery included: Accountability Days that were used as platforms for interface between local leaders and citizens. The community members also conducted monitoring activities in selected health centers and schools. This is because the education and health sectors in Kiboga and Oyam districts have a number of challenges including inadequate funding, staffing, remuneration, outdated staffing policies, and a poor attitude by community members towards education and accessing health services.





Okeng Brian, a Civil Society Actor from Ngai S/C in Oyam District contributes to ongoing discussions during one of the capacity enhancement sessions.



A community member directs questions to local leaders during one of the Accountability Days in Oyam District



A participant taking notes during one of the Civic Education Sessions in Aleka Sub County in Oyam district



Selected Project beneficiaries from Pader, Oyam, Apac and Nebbi with ACFODE's Regina Bafaki (2nd row, on the left), British Council's Emily Ikiriza (front row on the left) and European Union's Sayson Meyer (2nd row, on the left) during the Project Exit Meeting in Lira District



Hon. Stella Anyango- CEDAW Committee Member from Oyam District receives a Certificate of Recognition for her advocacy and awareness creation efforts on women and girls' rights.

As a result of these interventions, a lot has changed in these districts. For instance in Nebbi district three (3) Staff members were posted in 3 health centers of Pakia, Pacego and Pokwero as a result of continuous follow ups and community sensitization by CEDAW Committees; while in Oyam District, the Local Government Authority has considered the provision of sanitary pads to all the primary schools to improve girls sanitation and ultimately girl child education. Sensitization campaigns by the CEDAW Committees on the importance of girl child education has also resulted into increased retention of girls in schools.



Kwesiga Pricilla, a beneficiary of these initiatives shares her experience in the narrative below.

My name is Kwesiga Pricilla and I work with Gogonya Rural Development Association. I am also the Coordinator of the Civil Society and Private Sector Actors in Kibiga Sub County under one of ACFODE's programmes. As a teacher, I have always been passionate about the quality of education in my sub county.

I first interacted with ACFODE during a capacity building workshop for civil society representatives. After the workshop we were challenged to use the knowledge and skills gained to help improve service delivery in our communities. Consequently, we facilitated a grassroots civic education sessions at the sub county to educate community members about their rights and responsibilities. It was at that session that the parents of Bukasa Primary School "whistle blew" about the misuse of Universal Primary Education (UPE) funds by the Head Teacher.

Together with another ACFODE community monitor, Ms. Nakiyima we organized a meeting with the school management committee during which the Head teacher was asked to account for the funds received under UPE. When he failed, the committee and the village council took the matter to the District Education Officer and in May, 2015 Mr. Kirigoma Benon the corrupt Head teacher was relieved of his duties and replaced with Mr. Bwambale Henry the new Head Teacher from Bukasa Primary School. Both parents and teachers are optimistic that the performance and general running of Bukasa Primary School will improve.

During another grass root session that I facilitated, community members expressed their displeasure about poor patient care at Kikwatambogo Health center. One particular Nurse was described as rude, uncaring and indifferent especially towards expectant mothers. The issue was raised with the District Health Officer. I think she was either transferred or relieved of her duties because I no longer see her there. The customer care of health workers at the centre has also improved considerably.

Developing Local Capacity for Implementation of Gender Sensitive Legislation

ACFODE identified and trained community leaders such as Community Development Officers (CDOs), health officials, police officers, media representatives, cultural and religious leaders and LC1 chairpersons in districts of Kisoro, Apac and Dokolo. These were equipped with skills in relevant legislations such as the Domestic Violence Act, data collection, case documentation and reporting, community mobilization and sensitization, as well as advocacy. The trainings also enabled the participants to get acquainted on the definition, types, causes and consequences of domestic violence, the duty bearers involved and their roles in handling cases of domestic violence. Other topics included the relationship between Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV), the role of duty bearers in addressing SGBV, Police Forms and the SGBV Referral Pathway.

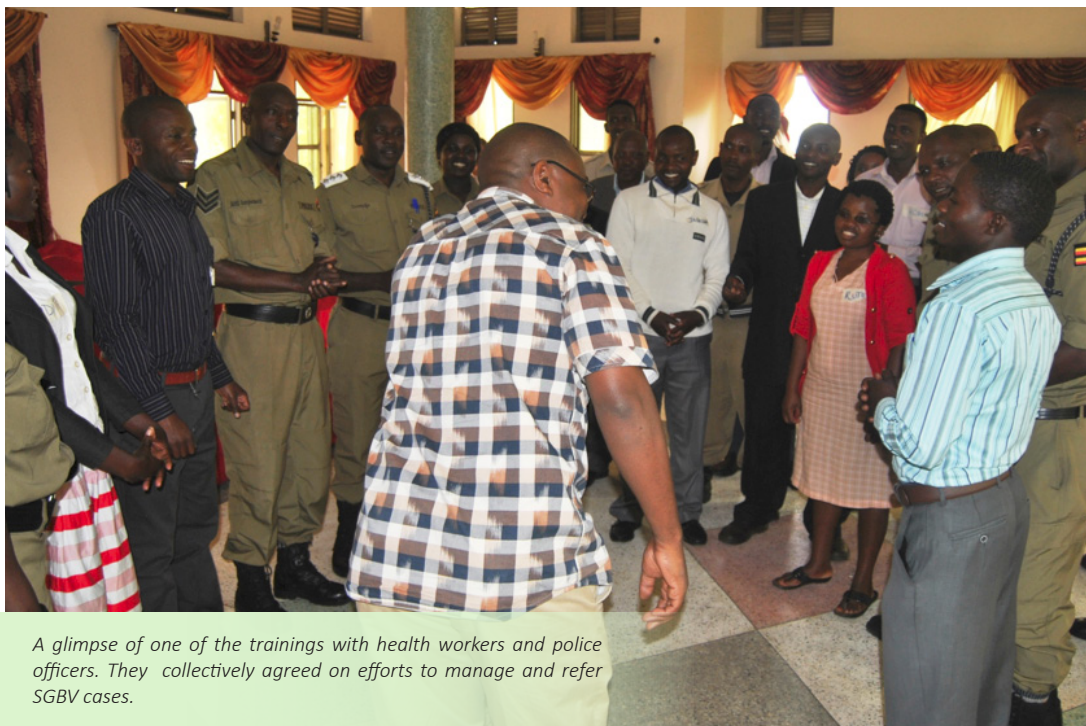
In turn, the trainees were engaged in spearheading initiatives designed to address infringements on women and girls' rights at community level, and in identifying and documenting cases of domestic violence for advocacy purposes.

Accordingly, they have been appreciated by community members as key resource persons on issues concerning domestic violence prevention. The Gender Based Violence (GBV) Referral pathways have also been streamlined in the aforementioned districts.

Through the different community awareness activities conducted, they were able to directly reach 1853 community members with messages and information on women and girls' rights. 131 cases of domestic and sexual violence were reported, referred and supported to access quality care and other legal support services.

202

The number of community leaders trained. These were later commissioned as Combating Defilement, Rape and Sexual Harassment (CODERASH Committee members) and Community Agents of Change (CACs) in charge of advocating for violence free homes and communities using gender sensitive legislation.



A glimpse of one of the trainings with health workers and police officers. They collectively agreed on efforts to manage and refer SGBV cases.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3:

CONTRIBUTING TO THE REDUCTION OF SOCIO-CULTURAL PRACTICES THAT CAUSE GENDER INEQUALITIES

In 2015, ACFODE engaged in successful strategies aimed at eliminating harmful traditional and cultural practices related to VAW and SGBV that included:

Promoting Women and Girls' Rights in Schools through Mentoring & Coaching

We have been able to teach children about their gender roles, their rights and how they can report cases of sexual violence. This is done through drama and health education that we incorporate in our Friday school assemblies. As a result cases of sexual violence in the school have reduced. Before ACFODE interventions, girls used to get pregnant in school. I actually remember one girl that gave birth in class. But since ACFODE started sensitizing us about SGBV, we have not had any cases of pregnancy in school. The rate of drop-outs, especially for girls, has also greatly reduced ever since. **Barugahare Richard, Deputy Head Teacher, Gitovu Primary School, -Busanza Sub County, Kisoro District.**

Committees (PTAs) and School Management Committees (SMCs) aimed at promoting gender responsive socio-cultural practices in selected primary and secondary schools in 10 districts of Kanungu, Mubende, Oyam, YumbeKatakwi, Moroto, KotidoApac, Dokolo, and Kisoro.

During the trainings, the participants also had their skills and knowledge on effective response to Gender Based Violence (GBV) enhanced. Talent development among the young people in areas such as music, dance and drama, and sports was additionally encouraged as a way of making the learning process more enjoyable and engaging.

Consequently, this has fortified the development of safe living and learning environments for both boys and girls in schools, homes and local communities. It also increased understanding of stakeholder roles and responsibilities in handling GBV cases. GBV school clubs that spearheaded the '**End Sexual Violence**' campaign in schools have been established. The clubs have since exerted influence on their communities through several ways such as the introduction of intra-school debates with emphasis on GBV-related motions; the inculcation of GBV messages into school activities such as assemblies, thematic music, dance and drama competitions; the establishment of 'talking compounds, learning corners and pioneering of gender awareness dialogues between parents and students and at the community level in partnership with local leaders such as LC 1.

Addressing gender inequality is a crucial aspect of any development work. This is particularly the case with regards to education. In recognition of this, ACFODE conducted capacity building sessions for pupil leaders, teachers, Parents and Teacher



Rhoda Akello, a pupil leader from Angai Primary School in Oyam District sharing her passion and talent, during one of the mentoring sessions.

A total of **68** schools, **18,000** pupils (**7,714** boys and **10,286** girls) as well as **592** parents were reached; while **408** teachers (**44%** female) were empowered and later commissioned as gender equality and women and girls' rights champions within their respective schools and communities in the year **2015**

My name is Acuma Jacquelyn. I am an English teacher at one of the Primary Schools in Apac District. Before attending ACFODE trainings and mentoring sessions, I didn't understand the significance of edutainment in a school setting. After the trainings however, I learnt that it's important as it makes the learning process pleasurable for the students. It is also an effective way of getting the students' attention because as educators, we compete with all sorts of distractions for students' time and attention. Hence, I introduced the "Spelling Bee," a multiplayer spelling game that allows students to compete against each other while practicing spelling. This game has not only provided a valuable educational experience for my students, but also allowed them to engage in healthy competitions. Most importantly, the competition has helped the students

to improve their spelling skills, increase vocabulary and develop correct English usage. It is also creating good reading habits that will lead to better academic performance.

Challenging Negative Cultural Practices as a Strategy for Effective Epidemic Management, Containment and Control

In partnership with the Ministry of Health, ACFODE implemented a project entitled: Rapid Response to Epidemics Outbreak (RARE); whose overall goal was to raise awareness and promote behavior change through public information, health education and social mobilization on Viral Hemorrhagic Fevers (VHFs) such as Ebola and Marburg in Uganda, and build the capacity of duty bearers and community members on how to respond to, and mitigate epidemic outbreaks.

The underlying factors that led to the implementation of this project were: limited health infrastructure, poor hygiene practices and the inability to control and screen population movements across borders in Uganda; as well as fear, rumors and lack of understanding about the VHFs within local communities, lack of experience among health-care workers and limited capacities for rapid response of other outbreaks such as cholera.

For instance, Uganda has had epidemic outbreaks of Cholera different parts of the country, Marburg in 2012 and 2014 and Ebola outbreak, which was first, reported in 1979. It was during the late 90s and early 2000s that the epidemic outbreak became a common norm in Uganda.

Following such outbreaks of VHFs, the need to raise awareness on them and to build the capacity of duty bearers and community members on how to respond to, and mitigate epidemic outbreaks arose. You need to summarise this information and put it in the first paragraph. This will be in conformity with what you have been doing with other interventions.

Measuring Project Success:



My name is Richard Makumbi and I am a Board Member at Action for Development. Our engagement in this project opened our eyes since we are now able to appreciate why actually sometimes epidemics take a toll on women's lives. As an organization, we came to the realization that the epidemics most times bare a feminine face in the sense that when they break out, it is the women who are mostly affected as the caretakers and as victims. Even then, men are most times the careers because they are always out of the house working, engaging in businesses and other things; thereafter bringing whatever happens to them to the women back home. Therefore, I must say that this intervention though short, was a great encounter since it helped us to bring Epidemic Preparedness and Response (EPR) services closer to women who are often left out during community interventions such as information sharing that address VHFs.

374 key stakeholders that include Village Health Team (VHT) members, Health Workers, and local government officials such as District Health Officers (DHOs), District Health Education Officers (DHEs), District Surveillance Focal Persons (DSFPs), District Community Development Officers (DCDOs) and Sub County Chiefs. They were actively involved in creating awareness about VHFs in their communities, with some integrating Epidemic Preparedness and Response (EPR) mechanisms in their day to day activities.

753,215 rights holders were reached through community sensitization drives such as market day camps, local council and village meetings, continuous medical education (CME) by the VHTs and the health workers; as well as radio programmes and network collaborations.

Issue tackled during the sensitization meetings were negative cultural norms and practices that bring about certain VHFs. For example, community members were taught that VHFs can be transferred through local customs and practices such as funeral preparations, including washing the dead and eating bush meat that carry the virus.

8 Epidemic Preparedness and Response teams were formed in all the project sub counties of Busanza, Chahi, Muramba and Murora sub counties in Kisoro District; and Bweramule, Rwebisengo, Butungama, and Kanara sub counties in Ntoroko District. The teams comprise of LC executive council members, VHT coordinators at sub county level, community development officers, and are headed by the Sub Chiefs.



In the pictures: Market Day camps. The VHTs not only used these avenues to sensitize market vendors on VHFs and EPR but also used them as an opportunity to distribute IEC materials on the same.

*As a follow up on the action plans that were developed during the ACFODE VHT training, I conducted 2 community sensitization meetings in my Parish. During the meetings, I enlightened participants on how to use basic Ebola/Marburg prevention materials such as using clean water mixed with a hand sanitizer, or hand soap, and chorine while washing hands, and maintenance of hygiene at a personal, household and community level. Other issues that were tackled during these sessions were: how to deal with stigmatization of Ebola/Marburg patients, survivors and families, and how to break the chain of transmission if anybody ever got infected in the community. In addition, I addressed issues related to negative cultural norms and practices that bring about certain VHF's such as eating of dead/wild meat, and funeral preparations, including washing the dead. As a result, preventative awareness on VHF's was raised immensely in my community. **Kabona Yosia, VHT Butungama Sub County Ntoroko District.***

Capacity Enhancement Sessions to Eliminate Harmful Social Cultural Practices that translate into Violence against Women (VAW)

In Bunyoro kingdom, women had no right to say anything or make any decision, in the past. They were the most affected by acts of SGBV, in addition to being denied to eat certain foods such as grasshoppers and chicken. In its current state however, the Kingdom is now a gender sensitive, thanks to organisations like ACFODE that have challenged us to adopt

*gender mainstreaming in all our approaches. Out of the 7 kingdom cabinet ministers, 5 are female. The positions they hold include Finance Minister, Youth, Gender, Health and Investment Ministers. The Area Lord Mayor for the municipality is also a woman. **Philip Katahwire, Bunyoro Kingdom.***

In view of her unrelenting campaign to promote violence free homes and communities, ACFODE organized a number of activities during which local leaders were engaged to 1) gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between gender and culture; 2) appreciate the role played by cultural institutions in promoting gender equality, 3) create a platform for experience sharing and networking in order to recognize the importance of gender equality within culture and 4) broaden participants' knowledge on the current laws and policies on gender and culture in respect to promoting women's rights. Local leaders from different kingdoms/ sub regions such as Buganda, Busoga, Lango, Bunyoro and Tooro were targeted through capacity enhancement sessions, and networking events such as the National Cultural Symposium that was organized under the theme **"Cultural Institutions as a Vehicle to Achieving Gender Equality."**

The engaged leaders were urged to sensitize community members through existing structures such as churches, mosques, village meetings, clan meetings, group/club meetings among others about the effects of negative cultural practices like wife beating and swapping, widow inheritance, property grabbing, forced and early marriages, and denying the girl child the right to education.

Consequently, this has created an empowered citizenry who are in support of safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments and has also increased positive cultural norm acceptance within local communities, thus helping to combat VAW and other negative cultural practices that belittle and demean

women and girls. For instance, in Akokoro, Ibuije and Apac sub counties in Apac District, youth groups comprised of mostly males who are the biggest perpetrators of VAW have been formed. Through these groups, members are encouraged to develop positive behaviors and are provided with opportunities for mentoring and engaging in meaningful works such as brick making, bakery, and edutainment (music, dance and drama). This has reduced the crime rate among the youth.

652

The number of community leaders engaged (40% women). They included cultural and, religious leaders, local politicians, youth leaders and teachers as well as representatives from the academia, media and key line government ministries and departments.

Economic Empowerment of Marginalized Groups

Gender equality is a cornerstone of development. When women and men are accorded equal opportunities in society poverty is reduced, economies flourish, and the health of children and mothers improve. Yet despite progress made in Uganda in the last three decades, women remain marginalised. This is true in the world of work, where they are often restricted from fully taking part in the economy with their contributions not being fully recognized and monetized, in addition to other challenges related to economic

empowerment such as unfavourable policies, lack of land, lack of information and markets among others.

In light of this, ACFODE organized a series of trainings in Apac, Dokolo, Pader, Oyam, and Nebbi districts with the objective of improving the quality of life of women through providing basic technical training and economic trading so that they become proactive in the business sector. Some of the topics covered included; entrepreneurship and financial education; social entrepreneurship community research and social enterprise profiling. The trainings targeted women leaders (political and technical) as well as women groups who were facilitated to identify their individual skills, knowledge, passions and talents in their possession to start social enterprise projects.

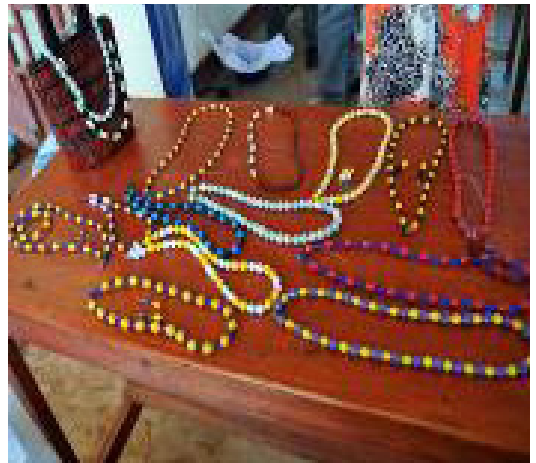
Additionally, the participants discovered the vast opportunities within their communities that can be tapped to make money in consideration of the community needs whilst protecting the environment from degradation.

As a result, their entrepreneur skills were enhanced by hands on training in the different fields such as baking liquid soap making, candle making, hand crafts among others. They were further supported to form Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) as a means to establish sustainable means of supporting each other and to conduct community sensitization meetings on women's economic empowerment and social enterprise within their groups and localities.

354 participants benefited (95% women) from these trainings. They later formed 24 VSLAs and 12 Social Enterprise groups.



Participants from Pader district attending a practical session on cake and doughnut making



Participants from Oyam district display the necklaces and bags made as a result of the trainings.

During follow up visits conducted after the trainings, findings revealed that the trainees had put the acquired skills and knowledge to good use. In Nebbi District for example, the Town Council Social Enterprise Group purchased the ingredients for making liquid soap, and had produced sixty jerricans (5 litres) jerry cans of liquid soap, each sold at 10,000 Ugandan Shillings only. "This propelled us to invest more in this venture because we realized that the market was there and the demand was high" said Apio Agnes- a member of the group.

In Oyam district, some of the individual social enterprise members started making and packing crunchy snacks that are being sold mostly in the surrounding primary and secondary schools.



One of the training beneficiaries displays crunchy snacks locally known as “bagia” ready for sale.

counted so much in day today work. This I learnt during the session on non-verbal communication. In my emails, I had always been interested in the subject I would be passing on, rather than the language or the packaging of the message. I would also take my time to reply. Now I understand the importance of prompt responses and also know that the recipient can tell whether I am shouting, screaming, or simply stating something in an email. In addition I understand more clearly the significance of results based reporting which requires the reporter to talk about the change a particular project/initiative has been able to bring about rather than just communicating about as opposed to process reporting. I left this training a better photographer too.

Happy Ainomugisha- Programme Assistant, ACFODE

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4:

ENHANCING THE CAPACITY OF ACFODE FOR EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS MANDATE

Investments aimed at developing and strengthening the skills, abilities, processes and resources that ACFODE needs to survive, adapt, and thrive in a fast-changing world were made as highlighted below:

Skills Building for the ACFODE Team

I used to take communication for granted up to until we had a communications training. For instance, I did not know how important one's physical appearance

ACFODE staff and members participated in a number of trainings meant to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization in fulfilling its mandate of advocating for gender equality and equity. These covered a wide range of topics such as: results based reporting, fundraising and resource mobilization, social enterprise, quick communication, equal opportunities and diversity, as well as trainings in online data management systems (reporting and budgeting).

Like wise, the ACFODE team participated in other team building activities such as general membership meetings, retreats and staff/project team meetings. These boosted organizational performance and staff moral.



ACFODE staff review the “Evidence File” during the Results Based Reporting training. The file is important because it captures the before and after situation during project implementation. It can also be used for accountability purposes.

ACFODE Intern and Volunteer Programme

Volunteerism being one of ACFODE’s **6** core values, it continued to form the basis for additional recruitment of interns and volunteers that were attached to different departments at the organization. These directly participated in a number of on going programmes and projects, thus gaining employability skills such as communication and writing, teamwork, problem solving, initiative and enterprise, planning and organizing, self-management, learning and technology.

“ Having the opportunity to take part in an internship and later a volunteering experience with ACFODE was something that changed my perception towards the work environment and women’s rights in general. Because of this, I have come to appreciate such opportunities as eye-opening, must haves by all university and colleague students. **Rubumburi Ezekiel** ”

14

The number of interns and volunteers that were mentored

ENGAGEMENTS IN COLLABORATIVE SOLUTIONS TO CREATE POSITIVE CHANGE

Networking is a valuable way of expanding organizational knowledge and skill, making relevant connections and developing rapport to grow the organizational influence. To achieve these objectives, ACFODE engaged in the following collaborations and networks:

Project Inception Meetings

ACFODE launched 2 projects namely: Rapid Response to Epidemic Outbreaks that was implemented in Kisoro and Ntoroko Districts; and “Strengthening Local Communities to Advocate for Effective Response to Domestic Violence, in Apac District.

The meetings created awareness about the aims of the two projects among influential group of audiences, user groups and enabled them to come to a common understanding about the project implementation strategies, and how the objectives/outcomes would be attained and sustained even after the projects phases out. The launches were attended by the Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs), Local Council representatives (LCs), District Community Development Officers (DCDOs), Community Development Officers (CDOs), District Speakers, Sub County Chiefs, religious and cultural leaders, selected citizens, and representatives from the police, media, private sector and likeminded CSOs. The launch of the Medica Mondiale funded project provided an opportunity for ACFODE to share her achievements and good practices as a result of her one year intervention to create violence free families in Apac district in 2014. ACFODE also utilized the project launch as an opportunity to strengthen her partnership with Apac district local government and call for their commitment in monitoring implementation of the Domestic Violence Act (2010). During the

launch 60 Community Agents of Change were as well inducted on popularizing and monitoring the implementation of the DVA (2010).

Exchange Visit for Women Politicians and Leaders



This exchange visit has enabled me to clearly understand the different roles and responsibilities of Members of Parliament (MPs). I intend to share this knowledge with my community.
Akumu Pauline, LC V Nebbi District

A total of **115** women leaders from the districts of Pader, Nebbi, Oyam and Apac participated in a learning exposure visit to Kampala. The visit aimed at inspiring and preparing them to aspire for higher political representation in leadership. The participants visited the Parliament of Uganda and Uganda Industrial Research Institute (UIRI).

During the interaction with Hon. Odongo Otto at the Parliament, the women leaders were challenged to pursue their political ambitions at different levels of leadership.

The tour of the Parliament further exposed the women to understand the different roles and responsibilities of their national representatives, and how different bills and policies are debated upon before they are passed into laws.

The women leaders also visited the British Council offices where they interacted with the British High Commissioner to Uganda, the British council country Director; Mr Peter Brown and staff of British council and ACFODE. The interactive meeting provided an opportunity for the women leaders to share their experiences of leadership and testimonies of empowerment attributed to the project.

The visit to the UIRI improved participants' knowledge on business innovation as well as financial management.



Women leaders in the Gallery at the Parliament of Uganda



Participants appreciate necklaces made out of paper while at UIRI

Gender, Media and Election Reporting Training

To enhance balanced reporting on participation of women and men in the electoral process and equal opportunity for women and men candidates, ACFODE under Women in Democracy Group partnered with the Africa Center for Media Excellence (ACME) to train media practitioners on gender stereotypes in the elections, provide tips on gender sensitive reporting and enhance understanding on international, regional and national legal frameworks regarding media and reporting.

The trainings took place in the regions of Uganda namely; West Nile, Western, South Western; Central, Eastern and Northern.

124 media practitioners were reached through the training

Reflection and Review Meetings for Women Caucuses

10 districts of Kalangala, Rakai, Sembabule, Rukungiri, Kisoro, Kanungu, Oyam, Lira, Amolator, and Dokolo participated in reflection meetings for district women caucuses.

The meeting enabled the women leaders to share and discuss progress made in implementation of agreed action plans, identify priority legislative and advocacy gender issues, and share challenges and strategies for the advancement of women and girls' rights.

114 women leaders participated in these knowledge transfer and experience sharing fora.

Some of the achievements/successes documented during the meetings included:

In Dokolo District, one (1) female representative was appointed to sit on the Dokolo district service commission as a result of continuous lobbying and advocacy of the women caucus in the district contrary to the situation before where the commission had no female representative. Currently, out of the 5 members, 1 is a woman. By working with existing structures like SGBV committees at parish levels, the campaigns have resulted in reduced domestic and sexualized violence in addition to having more cases of SGBV being reported to the police unlike in the past.

In Ngai Sub County Oyam District a by-law on regulating alcohol consumption, which is seen as one of the major drivers of domestic violence, was passed. Similarly, through lobbying and advocacy, the Oyam women caucus successfully petitioned for a woman to take up the position of District Health Officer (Ms. Agaro Caroline). They further used her influential position to push for an increase in the maternal Health budget for the financial year 2014/2015 which was approved.

Women councilors no longer push issues as individuals but rather as a team. Hon. Kamuchwa Margaret – District Woman Councillor



Dokolo district women caucus members during the experience sharing and knowledge transfer forum

Orientation on the ACFODE Score Card Assessment

ACFODE participated in a one-day orientation/training on the Local Government Councils Score-Card Initiative (LGCSCI) organized by Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE). The Uganda Local Government Councils Score-Card Initiative (LGCSCI) is a 10 Year initiative with the goal of strengthening citizens' demand for effective public service delivery and accountability. This goal is achieved through undertaking annual assessment of the performance of local government councils; publication and dissemination of annual score-cards; as well as outreach and capacity building to empower citizens and local government leaders. The initiative was launched in 2009 with the assessment of the first 10 districts for the FY 2008/09. This enhanced ACFODE's understanding of Local Government Monitoring as a means of strengthening the capacities of women leaders

in the Local Council for effective representation, oversight and legislation.

East African Regional Conference on "Inclusive Finance Opportunities for Youth and Women in Agribusiness as a way of Enhancing Economic Justice"

ACFODE in partnership with the Association of Microfinance Institutions in Uganda (AMFIU), Uganda National Farmers Federation (UNFFE), Uganda Central Cooperative Financial Services Limited (UCCFS), and with support from We Effect organized an East African Regional Conference under the theme: **"Inclusive Finance Opportunities for Youth and Women in Agribusiness as a way of Enhancing Economic Justice."** It was held in Uganda between 22nd - 25th September 2015 at Speke Resort Munyonyo. Attended by academicians, researchers,

representatives of relevant ministries, government departments and agencies, Civil Society representatives, media, selected youth, women and men beneficiaries of the projects supported by We Effect across the East Africa; the conference brought together **300** participants to: highlight current challenges related to women and youth engagement in the Agribusiness; interrogate the existing policy and legislation landscape in relation to youth and women access to financing and agribusiness opportunities; facilitate sharing of experiences/successful models in financing youth and women for economic empowerment, and offer a platform for the participants to engage and make policy recommendations for increasing youth and women participation in Agribusiness.

By the end of the 3 days, participants were able to: share new knowledge and experiences from cross-country programmes as well as inter-regional/global successes concerning the role of women and youth in agribusiness; develop strategies for addressing gender issues in agribusiness at the local, national, regional, and global level; propose technological and institutional innovations that meet the needs of women and youth in Agribusiness; and develop a framework for action to integrate and empower women and youth for inclusive growth and development through agriculture.

International Women's Day Celebrations

In tribute of the International Women's Day, ACFODE organized celebratory activities such as public discussions, a march, and distribution of Information, Education and Communication materials (IECs) under the theme **"Together We Can End Domestic Violence."**

Held in Kisoro district, the events reached **585** (49% women) participants including: district leaders (technical and political), representatives from like minded CSOs and the private sector, social actors, the media as well as a few selected members from the community.

Networking and Consultation Meetings on VAW and SGBV Prevention

ACFODE held networking and consultations meetings with Kisoro District Local Government officials, social actors and community leaders aimed at discussing processes undertaken to disseminate funds for handling survivors of SGBV and strategising on how to eliminate harmful cultural socio practices that translate into VAW. During the meetings, participants were enlightened on how court procedures and processes in prosecuting SGBV cases are handled. The meeting also created awareness on free medical examination for SGBV survivors

193

The number of people engaged during the networking and consultation meetings, with women accounting for 37%. It was observed that there is still limited collaboration and knowledge on the referral system amongst police officers and health workers.

Learning Exchange Visits on SGBV Prevention

ACFODE staff together with some of the programme beneficiaries and stakeholders in Kisoro District visited likeminded Civil Society Organisations in Rwanda and were hosted by Rwanda Women's Network. The purpose of the visit was to share experiences and best practices in regard to elimination of SGBV. In addition to the host organisation, they visited Rwanda Men's Resource Centre (RWAMREC), the Gender Monitoring Office, Isange One Stop GBV Centre and the Genocide Memorial Cite in Kigali.

The team learnt new approaches to promote violence free families and communities such as; the importance of providing premarital counseling as a venue for preventing male violence against women, conducting positive parenting fora as a means of promoting violence free families and using art therapy (toys, drawings, cartoons) to enable children open up and recover from abuse.

16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence

In line with the 2015 National theme for the 16 days of activism ***"From peace in the Home to Peace in the Nation"***, ACFODE sought to address the issue of domestic violence as a factor that robs peace in most homes. Accordingly, the organisation held a dialogue with **50** women involved in informal trade in the market place within Kampala and other surrounding areas to discuss issues related to economic empowerment and domestic violence. During the dialogue, the Domestic Violence Act was shared with the women market vendors as a way of encouraging them to speak out against VAW in their homes, workplaces and communities.

World Malaria Day Celebrations

In homage of the World Malaria Day celebrated under the theme ***"Invest in the future, Defeat Malaria,"*** ACFODE supported Health Departments in Ntoroko and Kisoro districts to sensitise local communities on malaria causes and prevention.

This was on Better FM in Fort portal and Voice of Muhavura in Kisoro District. DHEs, DSFPs and District Malaria Forcal Persons (DMFPs) were hosted on the shows. They used the opportunity to educate listeners on Malaria Preventative Measures such as; staying inside when it is dark outside, wearing protective clothing (long pants and long-sleeved shirts) in the night, using insect repellents and bed nets sprayed with or soaked in insecticides, boiling drinking water in addition to using flying-insect spray indoors around sleeping areas. They also used the platforms to further sensitise listeners on VFHs and EPR.

As a result, local communities in both districts were sensitised on how to prevent and treat VFHs and malaria once they occur.

Global Week of Action

As a way of soliciting and strengthening political commitment from government and other stakeholders to support prioritizing investment in youth-friendly health services in the Post 2015 Agenda (Sustainable Development Goals and Uganda's National Development Plan II), ACFODE participated in the Global Week of Action, an event organized by world Vision Uganda and Allied Youth Initiatives (AYI) – Uganda.

During the event, ACFODE partook in a 3 day Exhibition where a number of IECs on VFHs were distributed. Furthermore, ACFODE facilitated a session on *Health Living*, during which her work and success stories in regards to VHF and EPR were shared with participants under the Youth Tent.

Both activities increased the participants' knowledge on VHF and EPR. They also enhanced the capacity of the youth delegates and technocrats engaged from the health sector to promote EPR.

The event also provided ACFODE with an opportunity of creating synergies with other participating organisations such as Action Group for Health, Human Rights and HIV/AIDs (ACHA) Uganda, White Ribbon Alliance, Uganda Youth and Adolescents Health Forum, and key line

government ministry such as the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development, specifically the Department of Youth and Children Affairs.

Over **530** youth delegates drawn from the slums, universities, youth focused CSOs and councils, as well as technocrats from the health sector were engaged.

ACFODE 30TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

‘WDN-U, like many other women organisations in Uganda, owes much to ACFODE. Her experience in advocacy for women’s rights and gender equality over the last 30 years has enhanced our collective advocacy work as women organisations in the country. ACFODE has over the years run various projects but, in my view, capacity- building for women remains a hallmark of her work, and that can be seen through the beneficiaries of her programmes who currently are leaders in various spheres of political, economic and social life all over the country.’ **Perry Aritua, Executive Director Women’s Democracy Network**

‘We are impressed by ACFODE’s multi-faceted approach to overcoming sexual violence that does not only involve counselling, but raising awareness, networking and advocacy. And the fact that ACFODE is based in Kampala, but present and working to improve lives of girls and women in rural areas is also very commendable.’ **Dr Anthea Bethge, Executive Director, EIRENE**

2015 marked ACFODE’s 30 years of existence under the theme: **“A Journey of Passion for a Just Society.”** Specifically, the celebrations sought to a) facilitate discussions and networking for gender equality in Uganda; b) strengthen commitment among stakeholders and partners to gender equality and women’s rights; c) contribute to ACFODE’s visibility and credibility as a pioneer for gender equality in Uganda and d) celebrate the involvement of men in the

promotion of gender equality. Thus, a number of activities were lined up to commemorate this historical journey of promoting women’s rights and Gender equality in Uganda. They included:

Donation of Maternal Health Equipment worth 40 million shillings to Health Centres in Kisoro District

“There is no way we can achieve gender equality when health issues are not okay; we therefore hope that this equipment will improve on the health of expectant mothers in Kisoro District.” **Regina Bafaki**

As part of the activities to mark her 30th anniversary, ACFODE donated maternal health equipment worth 40 million Ugandan shillings to **5** health centres in Kisoro district to promote safe motherhood. This took place on 10th October 2015 at Kisoro district headquarters.

The handover ceremony was presided over by the Kisoro Resident District Commissioner (RDC), the Hon. Pulkeria Muhindo, and other guests, including the Kisoro District Health Officer (DHO) and Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), the ACFODE Executive Director, ACFODE members and staff.

The equipment donated included eight delivery sets, seven delivery beds, five patient beds, five patient mattresses and other assorted equipment used in non-caesarean delivery sections. The benefiting health centres included Buhozi Health Centre III, Busanza Health Centre IV, Muramba Health Centre III, Nyarusiza Health Centre III, and Rubuguri Health Centre IV.



Some of the health equipped that was donated.

National Cultural Symposium

The National Cultural Symposium was organised under the theme ***‘Cultural Institutions as a Vehicle to Achieving Gender Equality’***. It was held on 17 November 2015 and brought together different stakeholders in the fields of law enforcement, academia, religious and cultural institutions, representatives of persons with disability, representatives from different cultural institutions, youth groups, university students, CSOs, development partners and the media.

Speaking at the event, the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development, the Hon. Muruli Mukasa, stated that the government of Uganda attaches great importance to issues of culture and gender. He added that that is why the Ministry of Gender has structures that plan, implement and oversee government’s commitment to the implementation of the international and national instruments the government has ratified that promote women’s rights and prohibit negative cultural practices. He concluded by calling upon the different stakeholders to use the different

spaces, positions, forums and opportunities available for positive steps to provide support to gender equality.

During the event, participants were able to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between gender and culture; their knowledge on the current laws and policies on gender and culture with respect to promoting women’s rights was also enhanced.

Public Expo on Gender Equality

ACFODE organised a Public Exposition under the theme ***‘ACFODE@30: A Journey of Passion for a Just Society’***. This took place on 18 November 2015 at Fairway Hotel, Kampala and was attended by a total number of 250 participants. These included ACFODE members, staff, CSOs, media and the general public. The event was also graced by **31** primary pupils (Peace Ambassadors) whom ACFODE has been working with. A number of activities took place during the ACFODE expo, including the presentation of a



Hon. Mulira Mukasa Wilson, the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development giving the keynote address at the National Cultural Symposium

women's art piece (mural) depicting ACFODE's 30 year milestone in promoting gender equality and women's rights; a children's art project where ACFODE Peace Ambassadors drew expressions of their understanding of gender equality. They also presented poems, plays and songs on gender equality. Their presentations included messages on prioritising education, the prevention of child marriage and child labour and an exhibition during which ACFODE members and partner organisations showcased a variety of social enterprises and business ideas, and how they utilise them to serve the community.

National Youth Democratic Conference

Another event organised to mark ACFODE's 30th Anniversary was the National Youth Democratic Conference.

The forum, which targeted young men and women, provided an opportunity for participants

to deliberate and voice their concerns on matters of governance, democracy and their general participation in the country's development process, and facilitated the sharing of experiences about youth participation in governance and decision-making processes.

100 young people drawn from political parties, CSOs, and higher institutions of learning attended the forum.



ACFODE Chairperson (with microphone) Ms. Tayeebwa Muhwezi Florence interpreting the Mural during the EXPO



A Peace Ambassador draws an expression of her understanding of gender equality



The ACFODE team (right) donating the items to representatives of the refugee camp (left)

Delivering Humanitarian Aid to a Refugee Camp

ACFODE mobilised members, sister organisations, development partners and the general public to donate clothing and household items for the benefit of the refugees in Kiryandongo Refugee Camp that houses about 30,000 refugees.

Among the items donated were clothes, utensils, shoes and children's toys.

Monitoring and Evaluation

To maximise the impact of ACFODE projects among disadvantaged communities and to build the skills and capacity of key stakeholders and partners, ACFODE engaged in a number of monitoring and evaluation visits in its districts of operation that included: project review meetings, follow up visits among others. During the visits, ACFODE was able to: determine the extent to which its interventions were on track and to make any needed corrections accordingly;

make informed decisions regarding operations management and service delivery; ensure the most effective and efficient use of resources; and evaluate the extent to which the programmes/projects were having the desired impact.

96 monitoring and evaluation visits, including project/ programme review meetings and follow up visits were conducted in the year 2015.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION SHARING

Knowledge management and information sharing are one of the most valuable resources of any organization, if it is to endure relevance and competitiveness. As a consequence, ACFODE remained intentional in developing and disseminating information/knowledge that was generated from her interventions.

Flyers, T shirts, PVC and pull up banners, stickers, branded note books, book covers, and posters in English and translated versions containing simplified messages about the basis of democracy and good governance, VAW, VHF, EPR and SGBV were produced.

Arise Magazines - ISSUE 58 on Women, Land and Property Rights that substantiate the need for interventions that reach beyond the provision of legal access to land and property rights; and ISSUE 59 that highlighted **ACFODE's 30 Anniversary**. It revealed how ACFODE has successfully moved with the times and implemented an array of quality services that have promoted gender equality and women's empowerment in Uganda.

The 2014 Newspaper Analysis Report of Cases of Sexual Violence reported in major print media in Uganda. The report was disseminated among stakeholders nationwide, sparking off discussions on ending sexual violence against women and girls.

End of Project Documentation Report for ACFODE's 3 year project on **"Prevention and Handling Cases of Sexual Violence against Women and Girls in Rural Areas of Kisoro District and Enforcement of Women's Rights on the National Level in Uganda."** The project achievements, lessons learnt, emerging issues and recommendations were highlighted in the document.

Evaluation Report for ACFODE and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) programmes in Uganda; which presented the results of an assessment of a 14 year ACFODE and KAS partnership in 10 districts of Uganda namely Kampala, Apac, Lira, Dokolo, Pallisa, Soroti (including Serere), Rukungiri, Kiboga (including Kyankwanzi), Tororo and Kisiro.

Project newsletters that documented stories of change resulting from ACFODE's project interventions.

Media Advocacy

ACFODE facilitated the airing of radio and television talk shows as well as spot adverts on national and local radio and television stations that raised awareness on pertinent issues such as social entrepreneurship, VAW, VHF, EPR, SGBV, good governance, and gender accountability among others.

Press conferences were equally utilized to convey information along the same lines, in addition to calling government and other key stakeholders to review and/or adopt legislation that promotes and protects women and girls' rights in Uganda.

Online Advocacy

E newsletter that is interactive with user features like photo, print, web links, and videos was electronically mailed out to stakeholders on a monthly basis. It contained an update of ACFODE project and programme activities and was shared both internally and externally with key stakeholders.

The Website and list serve, hosted on URL www.acfode.org were utilized as the main channels for issuing out information about ACFODE and its activities. It registered web traffic of close to **54,500** visitors. Subscription to the electronic mailing list increased from **1483** users in 2014 to **1683**.

Social media – by the end 2015, the ACFODE Facebook and Twitter pages had a following of **1031** and **1893** respectively. These were utilized to initiate and sustain discussions on the women's agenda.

EMERGING ISSUES AND KEY LEARNINGS FOR FUTURE ADVOCACY EFFORTS

Assessing training needs: Before conducting training, it is always vital to assess participants' knowledge about certain topics such that the training materials and methods are tailored to fill the identified knowledge gaps. This will ultimately enable the trainers to identify what areas of knowledge or behaviors that training needs to accomplish with learners.

Negative mindsets and attitudes about gender roles among local leaders and the citizenry have continued to perpetuate patriarchal norms and practices including: wife beating, forced and early marriages, food taboos for women among others mostly in rural communities.

Limited legal awareness among police officers, health workers, community members and social actors on issues regarding the legal framework in Uganda limits their capacity to effectively respond to human rights violations, most especially those concerning women and girls.

Exchange visits are practical and effective tools that foster learning between organizations and individuals as they provide relevant technical assistance through sharing on-the-ground experiences and skills.

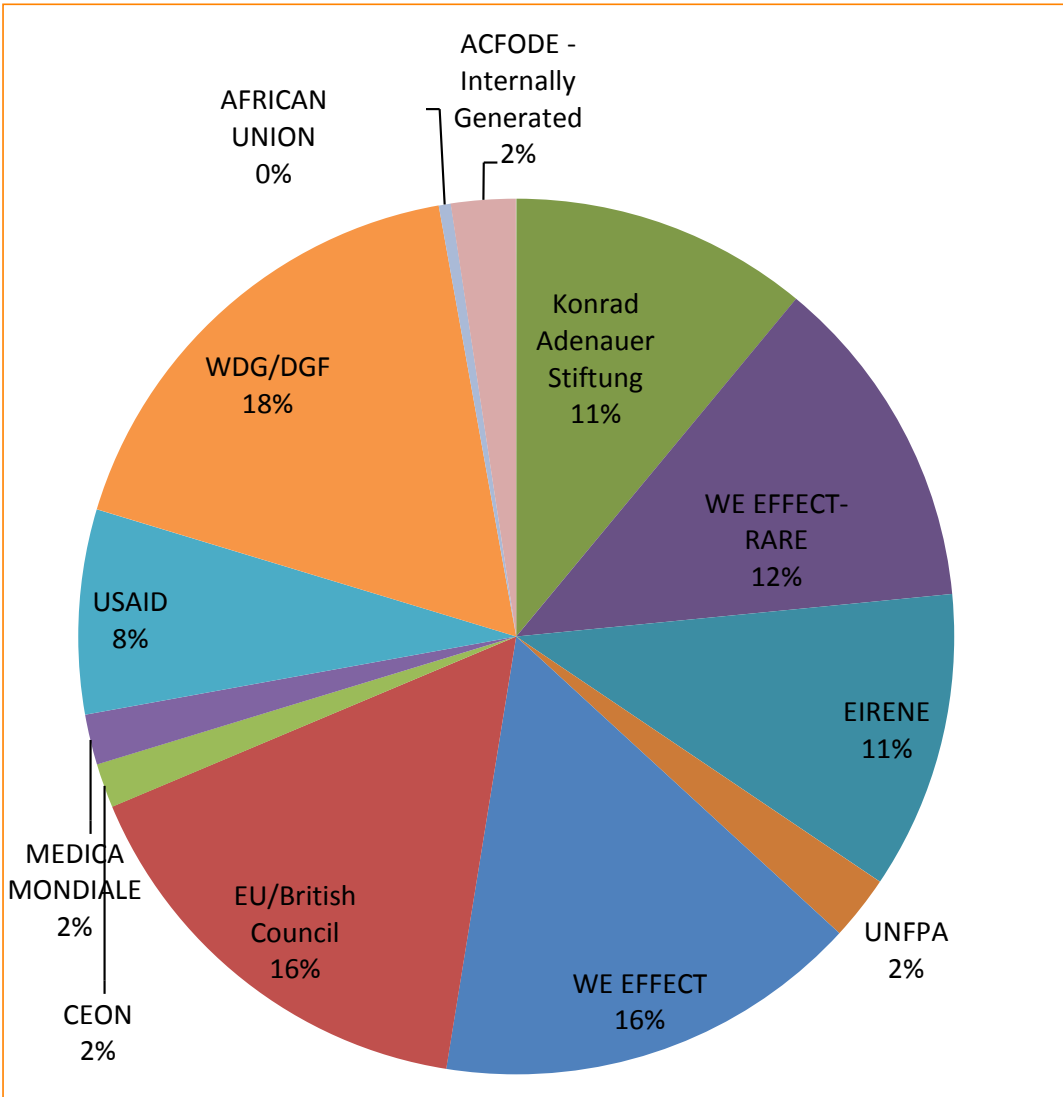
Cultural and religious leaders play a key role contributing to elimination of negative social cultural practices given that they are very influential and thus wield a lot of power over their constituents.

The "pull her down syndrome" is very rampant especially when it comes to women's participation in politics and other decision-making processes. Women who speak up and challenge the status quo are frowned upon by their communities and fellow women, and ostracized as "defiant" women who do not know their place. Not wanting to be associated with this condemned behavior, many women shun away from leadership. Hence, there is need to conduct massive voter education across the country, aimed at addressing this issue.

Politics is an expensive venture for most women aspiring leader. Even within political parties, women are still faced with challenges like the high nomination fees, ring fencing and lawyer's fees required while certifying their documents. This, coupled with the commercialization of campaigns makes it hard for women to fully participate as compared to their male counterparts. Thus, this calls for trainings on entrepreneurship, and business and financial management for aspirant women leaders.

Improving access to information for women leaders: there is need to explore possibilities of establishing resource centers at the district level, fully stocked with relevant materials that women leaders can utilize to boost their performance.

INCOME FOR THE YEAR 2015



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Nakato Helvin	Chef
Rukundo Rebecca	Volunteer
Daniel Amanyire	Volunteer
Rachael Natukunda	Volunteer



present a skit on SGBV during a sensitization session in Kisoro District



For more information contact

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