

A PARTNERSHIP OF 28 YEARS IN UGANDA

Stories of Transformed Lives & Communities



Published with the support of Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, our funding partner

Published by:

Action For Development

ACFODE House, Plot 623/624 Bukoto

P.O.Box 16729 Kampala - Uganda

Tel: +256 414 531812

Mob: +256 774879229

URL: www.acfode.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ACFODE>

Twitter: @acfode

Compiled by

Helen Twongyeirwe

Edited by

Regina Bafaki and Nassali Sandra

Contributing editor

Julius Ocwinyo

Print by:

Peak Brands Ltd

The text of this publication should not be quoted without the permission of the publisher. No use for commercial purposes is permitted by the Publisher.

Table of contents

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms	5
What we stand for	6
Introduction	7



Pg 9. CHAPTER ONE
EMPOWERING WOMEN TO
REALISE THEIR
ECONOMIC
& POLITICAL ASPIRATIONS



Pg 17. CHAPTER TWO
DRAWING THE YOUTH
INTO THE ACTION



Pg 21 CHAPTER THREE
TRANSFORMED TO
TRANSFORM THE WORLD:
KAS/ACFODE STAFF AND
MEMBERS SPEAK OUT

Table of contents



Pg 29. CHAPTER FOUR
INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT:
THE MUCH-NEEDED SHOT
IN THE ARM



Pg 35. CHAPTER FIVE
BOOSTED BY EDUCATION
SCHOLARSHIPS AND
TRAINING SUPPORT



Pg 39. CHAPTER SIX
THE MOTIVE POWER OF
PARTNERSHIPS



Pg 43. CHAPTER SEVEN
CHALLENGES STILL
ABOUND



Pg 45. CHAPTER EIGHT
HOW TO IMPROVE THE
PARTNERSHIP

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACFODE	-	Action for Development
CEO	-	Chief Executive Officer
EU	-	European Union
GAIN – UGANDA	-	Governance Accountability Inter-District Network - Uganda
GBV	-	Gender-Based Violence
KAS	-	Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung
KIFFI	-	Kiboga Food Farmers' Initiative
LC	-	Local Council
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organisation
PWDs	-	People with Disabilities
SMCs	-	School Management Committees

What we stand for

VISION

A just society where there is gender equality of opportunities in all spheres

MISSION

To promote women's empowerment, gender equality and equity through advocacy, networking and capacity-building of both women and men

CORE PURPOSE

Advocacy for gender equality and equity

VALUES

- Learning
- Openness
- Voluntarism
- Self-determination
- Commitment
- Caring
- Respect
- Integrity
- Participation
- Teamwork

Introduction

ACFODE has had a partnership with Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS), a German political foundation engaged in the worldwide promotion of democracy, human rights, and rule of law, since 1989.

Together the partners have for the last 28 years executed interventions to elevate the status of women and youth in Uganda. Using a combination of strategies, including capacity-building, mentoring and coaching, training, documentation, networking, retreats, organisational development/strengthening and inter-institutional debating competitions for the youth, the partnership has indeed yielded results, creating the desired change for both the individuals and ACFODE as an organisation.

More specifically, the partnership objectives have aimed at two things: promoting the appreciation of women's rights and gender equality as well as working towards a society that guarantees equal opportunity for women and girls; and supporting women and youth to participate more effectively in politics and decision-making processes at local and national levels.

This publication is a compilation of the stories of change that were gathered through an in-depth follow-up of the individuals who have benefited from the partnership as well as studying the difference registered in the life of ACFODE over the 28 years. The compilation captures clear factors of success and

the actions undertaken to achieve the results as well as provides a description of the impact of the different interventions on the lives of the citizens of Uganda. It does this through a combination of human stories and voices of beneficiaries integrated with information from official reports and accounts of technical staff and community leaders.

Key promising practices are shared by the councillors who participated in the leadership programme, the university debate alumni, including judges, KAS and ACFODE staff, as well as ACFODE members who have benefited from the different interventions. These stories contain a wealth of experiences and life-changing testimonies that are intrinsic and could only be revealed through such an in-depth process. Documentation of these stories can hopefully demonstrate to KAS and ACFODE practices that can be maintained, replicated or scaled up in future as the journey to change more lives goes on.

In all the districts where the interviews were done, there is an abundance of success for KAS and ACFODE to celebrate. In Dokolo, Gulu, Lira, Apac, Pallisa, Rukungiri, Kabale, Kiboga, Kisoro and Kampala, the stories reverberated with such enthusiasm and promise.



CHAPTER ONE

EMPOWERING WOMEN TO REALISE THEIR ECONOMIC & POLITICAL ASPIRATIONS

The ACFODE Micro-credit Scheme

ACFODE held a national seminar/conference in 1986 that brought together rural and urban women to discuss strategies for enhancing women's status. The conference revealed to ACFODE the urgent need to uplift women's low economic status in order to fight poverty, disease and malnutrition. One of the resolutions of that seminar was to encourage women to organise themselves into associations that could start income-generating activities.

When ACFODE got money to start a revolving fund to make small loans available to selected women groups, KAS came in to support the trainings through which key skills were imparted, namely book-keeping, project identification, planning, management, evaluation and leadership, to increase their management ability as well as to appreciate the dynamics and qualities of good leaders.

This life-changing intervention started at a time when perceptions about women's abilities were still very negative. Many women lacked self-belief and the confidence that they could accomplish anything. However, their stories reveal how their potential was unleashed, and to date, they still relish the impact. Ms Angella Etochu, a retired grade IV teacher, started engaging in ACFODE activities as early as 1985 and later became the ACFODE contact person for all the activities in Pallisa district. She was able to serve in various leadership positions, from chairperson, Women's Council I up to Local Council (LC) 5. She told of how the training under ACFODE's micro-credit scheme transformed her and many other women in Pallisa district. The change experienced by this woman is evident to date. "This training did not only teach me and other women how to manage money but also how to continue making more money. As a result, we started contributing to the education of our children, catering for the needs of our families, which in the end resulted in a reduction of GBV and more harmony in the homes." Angella still looks after herself because she runs small income-generating projects, thanks to the training by ACFODE.

Mildred Nalubega is another beneficiary of the micro-credit scheme. The change in her life was by default because of the role she played in the implementation of the micro-credit activities. Her experience of working as a micro-credit supervisor in Kiboga while managing 20 groups taught her the importance of saving and to date the saving culture is deeply rooted in her life. Mildred learnt a lot from her assignments in Kiboga, and when the project was phased out, she chose to start a similar venture in her Gaba community. She started her own business – first hiring tents and chairs and later, in 2007, set up Kawuku Village Savings and Credit Association. The group's savings have grown to enable members borrow up to USh. 4,000,000. She is secretary to the group which meets in her home every two weeks. Mildred proudly narrates that on 29 August 2017, Centenary Bank, in conjunction with Bank of Uganda, called to inform her that the group had been identified as a potential agency to disburse loans to other saving schemes. She recently won an election to be treasurer of the Justice and Peace Department in Kampala Catholic Archdiocese.

Getting involved in ACFODE activities as far back as 1998 was a real turning point for Makka Sulait Turyamureeba. She can always be found at her mobile money shop in Rukungiri



Ms. Etochu at her piggery farm which she runs to date, courtesy of ACFODE KAS trainings



Ms. Turyamureeba attending to a customer at her mobile money business

town – a venture that she would never have started if ACFODE had not included her in the leadership training package for councillors: Aspects of financial management for self-reliance. At the time of her interaction with ACFODE, she was a parish councillor at Nyakajjeme sub-county.

Her business is now valued at USh. 20 million, from the USh. 2 million which she started out with.

Getting Women Political Leaders to Make their Presence Felt

Article 33 of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda provides for affirmative action for different categories of people who have been marginalised. The article provides for a third representation for women in elective positions. As a result, women were expected to fill up positions of political leadership at different levels, as stipulated in the constitution. Unfortunately, they were faced with many socio-cultural and patriarchal perceptions that hindered them to the extent that, in some instances, there were not enough women to fill up the positions. Armed with these facts, ACFODE deliberately planned for capacity-building for women leaders with the aim of increasing their representation in political and decision-making positions. . In KAS, the organisation had a true partner that has made this a reality. Implementation of this programme is guided by ACFODE's focus on good governance and democracy and the objective is to increase and enhance the effective participation of women in politics and decision-making.

Molly Abang first interacted with ACFODE in 1999 when she was living with her cousin in Namasale, Kyoga county. She was a young girl, having dropped out of school in Senior Three, with no hope of continuing with education. However, she became the Secretary for Health at her LC I level. Molly recounted how in 1999, ACFODE had a programme in Kyoga to train women in economic empowerment, issues of decentralisation, understanding how local government works and public speaking. Later, as the community struggled to identify a woman to send to the district council to represent Namasale and Awelo sub-counties, she became the obvious choice since she had at least gone up to Senior Three.



Getting Women Political Leaders to Make their Presence Felt



Adong, with one of the children with disabilities that she is nurturing using the knowledge and skills she acquired

Ms Florence Adong, a post-polio survivor, is an LCV councillor for women with disability and the chairperson of Lira District Disabled Association. She has only praises for the KAS-ACFODE partnership. “I have gained a lot from the trainings and so have my people,” she said, then continued, “Without the training from ACFODE, I and other women with disabilities would have been totally left behind in political participation, leadership and decision making.” ACFODE’s training equipped her with advocacy skills and with these she has made sure more women with disabilities find their space. She has been mentored and in turn mentored others to take up positions of responsibility.

The assertiveness and awareness created about the direct councilor seats during ACFODE trainings has also yielded results. For Esther Amulen, a councillor in Pallisa district local government, ACFODE made an immense contribution to the success story that is her life. “I was mentored from the position of a woman councillor up until I won the direct seat which many people mistake to be for men,” she said. Given the training, she was sure to win the election for a fourth term. Esther is also the chairperson of the Pallisa District Council Women’s Caucus. She also shared the impact of the CEDAW training by ACFODE on her constituents. “In this community, women lacked inheritance rights. After attending the training, we sensitised the community members on the negative effects of gender-based discrimination in all spheres, including gender-based violence. Right now there is an increase in cases of girl child inheritance of property and there is a big positive difference between families with girl child heirs compared to families with boy child heirs.”

The Hon. Beatrice Pande, an LC V councillor from Pallisa district, shared how she successfully tabled a motion on improving infrastructure in primary schools to address the challenge of boys and girls sharing pit latrines and on providing furniture in order to reduce the school dropout rate for girls. Two primary schools benefited from this motion – Kagwese and Kalaki primary schools.

Sarah Acheng, a PWD female representative in Apac district council, has had a double portion. She is not only a formidable and able representative for her constituents, but also an astute businesswoman who deals in large scale agriculture where she plants and sells simsim, maize, and groundnuts. She believes her business is now worth Ug Shs. 10,000,000/=. Sarah attributes all this to the leadership training supported by KAS that enabled her get into this political leadership where she earned her initial capital.



Beatrice Pande



Sarah Acheng

In Kyanamira sub-county, in the new Rukiga district, Florence Tusiimomwe served as a sub-county councillor representing Katookye parish in the sub-county council in 2011 -2016. She attended ACFODE training for the first time in 2011 and since that time, her life has never been the same. “The training taught us about rights of women, to be leaders, attain education, and track local government funds,” she recalled. Like other councillors, the leadership skills gained from the training entailed being a people person, a role model, and being exemplary so that people may learn something from the person in leadership.

In 2006, Kamusiime Maclean Batwale contested as woman MP for Kabale district on the opposition ticket. That was when she got in contact with ACFODE in a training that was meant to prepare women aspirants for elections. She attended other trainings in Kabale and Kampala. Her confidence shot up after the trainings and she easily got involved in church activities. “Much as I am a trained teacher, it was only after the training that I was able to speak with confidence, in public,” she narrated. In 2016, she contested for the LC III chairperson position and won.

Makka Sulait Turyamureeba, who served as a councillor at Nyakagyeme sub-county Rukungiri district in 1998, observed that one skill she benefited from the leadership training was lobbying and advocacy. During her term of office, she ably lobbied for a Health Centre II at Kitimba, and 16 small bridges for community roads.

In Rukungiri district, 49-year-old Betty Muzanira is a household name. She is the proprietor of Little Angels Infant Primary School which she started in 2005 because she felt it was the most appropriate way to help girl children who were living in slums around Rukungiri town, and categories of vulnerable children like the orphans or those living with HIV/AIDS. She had got this inspiration from a training that ACFODE organised in 2000 where issues of the girl child were emphasised as those that women in political leadership needed to deal with and about which to lobby councils to support them.

Betty acquired skills from the trainings which made her a successful councillor. The advocacy skills helped her to successfully lobby for a position on the Board of Trustees of Kabale University where she represented Rukungiri district for two terms. She also served as speaker at the municipal council using her experience as a district councillor where she had worked with efficiency. Even now, despite her being out of political office, she continues to support women whom she has trained by keeping in touch by telephone. “My transformation has helped me perform in other spheres very well and taught me to be balanced emotionally. I am now a renowned trainer in



Kamusiime Maclean Batwale



Betty Muzanira

leadership for various organisations, including the church.”

The female youth councillor for Kiboga district, Nakimuli Aisha, holds a Bachelor of Science in Information Technology. She first interacted with ACFODE in 2015 when she was preparing for campaigns. She has so far attended two trainings – the first improved her communication skills and the second taught her to be accountable. She was able to get a vote of US\$ 4 million in the 2017/18 budget through lobbying. Aisha uses her skills to impact on other youth. She has trained sub-county youth representatives to understand their responsibilities. Aisha’s story is not any different from that of a fellow councillor, Kayesu Allen, who represents Rwamata sub-county.



Robinah Nakalema Tumuhairwe

The story of Robinah Nakalema Tumuhairwe only came into focus after she had shown interest in standing as the District Woman MP for Kiboga district in 2016. However, her story dates back to early 1991 when KAS funded ACFODE to conduct a research study on girl child education in Kiboga. At the time, she was in her Senior One holidays. Later, as she struggled with school fees, she got support from the Executive Secretary, as well as a home. Through perseverance, she completed a degree course at Ndejje University where she studied Agribusiness and Cooperatives. She used this knowledge to start Kira Multipurpose Cooperative and Savings Association. She told the team, “My interaction with ACFODE gave me inspiration because as a young person, I interacted with women from different professions, and saw how they were keen on the causes they believed in. The ACFODE women had laid a foundation for me to study.”



Hon. Ojuka Anthony

The Hon. Ojuka Anthony, formerly the Lira district youth councillor and currently the LCV chairperson of Lira district, is one of the men who have benefited from ACFODE’s leadership trainings. His first engagement was during a capacity-building session of female leaders together with the youth. He was empowered as a male local leader through the skills he acquired in how to bridge the gap with his electorate. He observes: “This helped me a lot in my first term of office because youth are usually ignored due to limited knowledge but having gone through the training I gained more knowledge, presentation skills and was able to clearly articulate issues. This is what must have moved the rest of the council members to approve my appointment as Secretary for Production while I was still a youth leader.” He further observes that there was a gap in the monitoring of services and government projects in the district but the ACFODE training re-energised them as leaders to take their monitoring role more seriously, and this had improved the level of service delivery despite the inadequacy of resources. ■



CHAPTER TWO

DRAWING THE YOUTH INTO THE ACTION

When ACFODE celebrated her Silver Jubilee in 2010, the theme of the celebration was “Embracing the Youth and Looking Ahead”. There was urgent need to bring the youth into the gender equality agenda. Thus university debates were born, and were looked at as an effective way of engaging and mentoring the youth into the gender equality agenda. KAS agreed to support ACFODE in this undertaking, which is in line with KAS’ overall goals and aims – of justice and democracy, and the empowerment of women and youths. The debates normally included a cross section of university communities and were held in various universities in the country. Serious trainings preceded the debates in order to sensitise the students regarding the debate system (in this case the British parliamentary system). These processes did not only equip the students with debating skills but also created political awareness about democratic, human rights and good governance, gender equality and participation in politics and decision-making processes. But most importantly, the youth obtained vital information in the area of gender. The target of the programme was both male and female students. Since their inception in 2010, ACFODE has partnered with over 18 institutions of higher learning in the four regions of Uganda during which over 2,000 students have been trained. Some of these institutions include: the Islamic University in Uganda, Mbale, Kumi University, Gulu University, Kabale University, Mbarara University of Science and Technology, Kyambogo University, Makerere University as well as other tertiary institutions such as the East African Civil Aviation Academy (Soroti Flying School), Uganda College of Commerce Soroti and Soroti Nursing School.

Twenty-nine-year-old Ruth Namara was an undergraduate student at Kabale University when ACFODE introduced the debates in 2011. When she joined university, she realised that girls generally were not as confident as she herself was. This strengthened her resolve to reverse the situation. “I yearned for an opportunity to break this,” she said. “When ACFODE introduced the debates in 2012, I took up the opportunity wholeheartedly. I wanted to show fellow female students that it was possible to speak out and when the internal debate processes ended, I emerged the best female speaker. I felt a deep sense of satisfaction that I had given fellow girls an example.”

For Afrika Kilenga, a former student of Kampala International University that is currently doing his Bar course at the Institute of Legal Practice and Development in Rwanda and working with Gasana and Company Advocates; the debates were a turning point in as far as shaping his perceptions about gender was concerned. “I always thought that gender was about women who wanted to topple men,” he said. He always wanted to be on the opposing side of the motion to ensure that he trashed any reason being advanced in support of gender equality. His dislike for gender was deeply entrenched and the negative bias real. “Through research, I discovered that actually men were better placed to advocate for gender equality and equity and this changed my thinking in a very fundamental way,” he stated.

During his time at the university, he initiated a debate club, which gave him a brand name and ushered him into Guild leadership and his gained understanding about gender, helped him offer leadership based on equality for all.

He has also taken the gender battle at the doorstep of his family home in the context of cultural beliefs that continue to treat women as property and therefore, people who cannot own property.

In 2013, the university debates took place in Gulu district. That was when Andrew Ogwetta, a law student then, got involved with ACFODE. During the sessions and rigorous trainings that prepared them for the competitions, Andrew gained a lot of skills, knowledge and new perceptions. Advocacy sessions taught and empowered him to be a



Ruth Namara



Africa Kilenga



Andrew Ogwetta



“When ACFODE introduced the debates in 2012, I took up the opportunity wholeheartedly. I wanted to show fellow female students that it was possible to speak out and when the internal debate processes ended, I emerged the best female speaker. I felt a deep sense of satisfaction that I had given fellow girls an example.”

resource to his community, he had to research on the motions, and he learnt teamwork since the debates were team activities. Perhaps his most important gain from these debates was the enrichment of his law course because gender issues are cross-cutting. “I am sure I am ten times better than lawyers who did not have such an experience. These activities opened my scope of reasoning and understanding of global issues and most likely I would not be here now,” he told the team.

At a personal level, the debates taught Andrew to recognise that every person deserves respect irrespective of who they are. He is a regular participant in radio talk shows where he confidently discusses issues on gender, especially in the context of land ownership, which is still very challenging for the female folk in Pader district, where he hails from.

Laker Gender Fancy, a fourth-year law student at Gulu University is chairperson MOOT Court Gulu University Law School, General Secretary of Patuda Youth Group and a member of Northern Uganda Debate Society (NUDS). She also served as Vice Guild President for 2016/2017. She participated in the KAS-ACFODE inter-university debate championships in 2016 and her team was able to reach the finals. Fancy says that the wealth of experience she got from the debates is immeasurable. She learnt to debate using the British parliamentary format, her analytical skills were sharpened, her public speaking skills improved, imbuing her with more confidence, and, most importantly, she benefited from the wealth of knowledge that she derived from the broad research she did as she prepared for the debates. “The debates forced me to do research, and as a result, improved my research skills and enriched me with knowledge that I continue to use in debates, and academics. The knowledge I acquired has been very useful in one of the course units – Gender and the Law,” she said.

The ACFODE debates helped rejuvenate NUDS, which they had founded in 2012 to help improve the quality of debate in northern Uganda, among others. Now, as alumni of ACFODE debates, the former members of the society conduct community dialogues at grass-roots level on similar topics of gender equality and have introduced inter-school debates in both primary and secondary schools. NUDS has taken on the mantle of promoting girl child education and the prevention of early marriage through a robust sensitisation campaign in schools, which she is passionate about. The advocacy skills she acquired have made her a regular panellist on Radio Rupiny, where issues affecting citizens are discussed, including GBV and the promotion of gender equality. ■



Laker Gender Fancy

CHAPTER THREE

TRANSFORMED TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD: KAS/ ACFODE STAFF AND MEMBERS SPEAK OUT



Hon. Miria Matembe was quoted as saying, “Many powerful women today owe their nurturing to the ACFODE KAS partnership. For many of them, ACFODE provided the much needed platform for them to realise their dreams. I want to tell you, the moment you joined ACFODE from the first day, you would never be the same again. It was like the old had gone, the new had come” (ACFODE Her Story).

ACFODE members and staff gained equally from the experiences that they had as they worked or participated in the activities. This was echoed by Maude Mugisha, “The minute I joined ACFODE, I knew I was in the right place. Being the first Executive Officer, I realised I had to do a course in Organisational Development; to try and understand how to balance/manage members’ enthusiasm, to see how to build a sustainable organisation. I saw the commitment – they came with no transport refund, but did work at no pay, and this inspired me. ACFODE shaped my career. I do what I do because of the foundation I got as the CEO of ACFODE. I have served on many boards, I love volunteering and feel fulfilled when I am able to make a contribution in someone’s life.”

Ms Regina Bafaki is currently the Executive Director of ACFODE, a position she has held since 2008. She is, therefore, at the forefront of the KAS-ACFODE partnership and oversees a whole range of activities: development of annual plans, implementation, reporting and editing of Arise magazine, among others.

“I have acquired skills in managing and nurturing partnerships, resource mobilisation, networking, branding, in addition to developing a creative and innovative mind that has helped me learn the use of social media platform for advocacy. Through the discussions with KAS about ACFODE work, I have learnt to be more open and accept criticisms which I take as a learning opportunity that helps me to change.” She shared how the university debates had given her insights into the needs of young people, which had triggered in her the desire to initiate a mentoring programme for young people at ACFODE that has become a household name, further elevating the organisation’s profile.

Regina also believes that all the changes ACFODE has undergone from inception – in terms of policies, systems, programme development are as a result of KAS support. “KAS allows ACFODE to be flexible in planning and though there are annual agreements that have to be signed, this is done with a high level of mutuality”. ACFODE has enjoyed the longest partnership with KAS. She asserts that ACFODE has also benefitted from the trust KAS has in the organisation. This has been exhibited through recommendations to other development partners such as EIRENE/BMZ and joint resource mobilisation and implementation of programmes including those supported by the European Union.

Mathias Kamp is the Country Director for Uganda and South Sudan. His story with KAS began in 2009 when he did internship as he was writing his research for a master’s degree thesis. He later returned to work as a Programme Officer up to the end of 2012 and eventually took up office in March 2015 as the Country Director. His involvement in ACFODE work is mainly concerned with overseeing the work done, liaising with the Executive Director and linking ACFODE to the Foundation Office in Berlin.

Whereas one would expect that the partnership between KAS and ACFODE would only benefit ACFODE, this is not the case. Indeed, KAS has also in a way benefited from ACFODE. Mr. Kamp said, “As KAS, we credit ACFODE for the sensitivity in their programming in regard to women



Regina Bafaki



Mathias Kamp, giving remarks during an ACFODE: KAS National Youth Dialogue

rights and gender issues which has helped KAS to keep the red flag on women up. KAS has ventured out to work with women in business, in media, and there is effort to reduce male dominance in other processes.” In fact, when an opportunity came up recently to work with UN Women, KAS decided that ACFODE was best suited to do the work, more independently, further affirming the confidence the foundation has in ACFODE. There is strong appreciation for the work ACFODE does; the grounded leadership makes ACFODE stand out as a reliable partner.

Bernard Mukhone the KAS Programme Officer, Uganda and South Sudan, has been holding this position since 2009 and, as such, manages the ACFODE partnership where he mainly offers technical support in programming – from conceptualisation, and implementation to monitoring, working closely with the ACFODE staff member who is in charge. He first worked very closely with ACFODE during a European Union-funded project.

Bernard mentioned that the partnership with ACFODE has increased the confidence of KAS that actually women can be lifted up to positions of responsibility and this fits well in the KAS’ objective of getting women out into the public domain. He commends ACFODE for reaching out to remote areas, thereby taking KAS there too, which has re-energised KAS and shown that this is possible. “ACFODE reaches out to places and people that KAS would not have ordinarily thought about; but KAS is there because of ACFODE.” At programming level, KAS taps into the strengths of ACFODE and, as a demonstration of this, in early 2017, KAS decided to popularise Arise magazine among highly placed media women and organised a meeting where issues that had been raised in the magazine were discussed.

Babirye Annet holds a diploma in Development and Environmental Studies from Makerere University and is currently working with FIDA-Uganda as a social worker/counsellor for people, especially women and children who have faced stigma. As an infant, she lost part of her limbs to a poorly administered measles treatment that left her badly disabled. She joined ACFODE in 2002. Her apprehension about whether she would be accepted soon melted away and she started getting opportunities to be part of the ACFODE field teams, which increased her confidence and self-esteem and facilitation skills. She has trained councillors, CEDAW committees, and women groups. She mentioned that she is a public figure – many people now know her, including media houses. She has facilitated with many organisations as a result of the skills she gained in ACFODE.

Sandra Nassali, is the Public Relations and Communication Specialist at ACFODE. Since 2011, she has been in charge of the Arise Magazine, a women’s development periodical



Sandra Nassali

that highlights and disseminates information regarding the advancement of women and girls.

“My first consciousness of feminist thinking was when my mother showed me a copy of the Arise when I was a teenager in the early 2000s. Now, I find it hard to believe that the Magazine is about seventeen years old, thanks to the ACFODE KAS partnership,” she noted.

From its birth in 1991 the Arise was a conversation among women about changing their lives and the world in which they found themselves. It was more than a magazine because it was part of a movement that was stirring in the hearts of women and girls across the country. Each story in the magazine brimmed with new ways of thinking about women and girls; and once that energy was uncorked, there was no way it was going back in the old bottle.

Sandra summarizes the social and historical impact of this publication: “A world without the Arise Magazine would be a world without feisty, fabulous, trouble-making, truth-telling women. Wherever I go, women have told me how grateful they are to the publication, how reading it has changed their lives for the better, inspired them to demand their rights, broadened their aspirations, made them feel less isolated, and speak truth to power. I’m proud to be apart of these efforts, and glad that the publication is as important and inspiring as ever. It has evolved with the times, yet we have remained true to the core mission. No wonder, its seventeen amazing years later and ACFODE with support from KAS, is still producing beautiful, inspirational, how-to content in every issue: that is truly something to celebrate.”

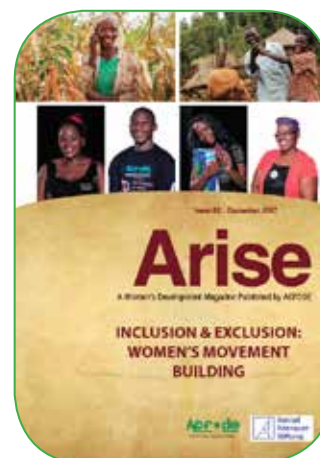
“I parallel KAS-ACFODE’s impact to a family. You are raised and nurtured until you become an adult, you go out and start your own family. You transfer the skills and virtues imparted to others,” narrates Ms Fortunate Paska.

Currently a Gender Expert with Hanns R. Neumann Stiftung and Executive Committee Member of the African Fine Coffees Association Uganda, Fortunate owes her over fifteen years expertise in gender, human rights development, policy, management and programming work within and outside Africa to the KAS-ACFODE partnership that enhanced her career way back in 1995 as volunteer at ACFODE.

During her volunteership, KAS and ACFODE spear headed a research on gender gaps in the 1995 Uganda constitution. The research sought for views of women towards democracy and good governance where she was trained on women’s rights, counselling and life skills.

In 2007, Fortunate joined ACFODE as head of Governance and Human rights department.

“This was a very exciting opportunity. I was so passionate about the KAS-ACFODE program-drawn from the resolves of the convention on elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW),”



“I loved CEDAW because of its strength to address women’s rights issues in communities. Women who went through our CEDAW committees became great leaders. The likes of Joy Ongom, woman MP Lira and Sylvia Akello from Otuke district,” adds Fortunate with a nod of pride.

Additionally, through the partnership, Fortunate participated in advocating for the Equal Opportunity Commission (EOC) Act which was passed in 2007.

Fortunate boasts of other KAS-ACFODE plusses such as an improved knowledge base that enabled her to win a scholarship (from Horizont3000, an Austrian Development Organization) to study a masters in Gender and Human Rights at Makerere University.

In addition to integrating livelihood enhancement for the communities that KAS and ACFODE is working with, Ms Paska would love the latter to develop a plan for financial sustainability that enables other people to benefit from their partnership like she did.

Ms. Kyomuhendo Belinda a programmes coordinator with ACFODE joined the organisation in 2010 as a volunteer under the Finance and Administration department. She grew through the ranks and since 2014, she has been coordinating the KAS funded projects at ACFODE where she develops yearly proposals, budgets, writes concept notes, activity budgets, engages in mobilization, coordination with service providers, participants and reporting.

From her experience, she notes to have gained a lot of skills as a result of this partnership. These include research and documentation skills. She has gained knowledge on gender, human rights and governance issues, improved her communication skills and also become better at managing projects, monitoring and evaluation.

The Youth component of the KAS programme has left an indelible mark. She acknowledges, “This is one component of KAS-ACFODE partnership that still stands out for me. The debate competitions in higher institutions of learning is a new and innovative way of transferring knowledge on gender and governance, to the younger generation who would probably get bored with the trainings, and other forums. Watching the students read, research and then passionately debate and discuss issues is always inspiring, I can say with certainty that the knowledge and skills they pick from those interactions stay with them throughout their professional and personal lives.” The KAS-ACFODE partnership has made me appreciate gender, governance and human rights issues. The skills I have gained in research and documentation have enabled me contribute to book reviews to the Arise Magazine and to a number of other publications which I am very proud of.”



Belinda Kyomuhendo

Gertrude Ssekabira's first major assignment as a member of ACFODE was a research study on girls' education funded by KAS. Doing this research revealed to her how vulnerable girls were. It was this research that inspired her to initiate a self-help project – Namaato Education Pilot Project – in Namutumba district. The project, comprising a school, provision of clean water and reducing poverty, has taught community members, especially women, the practice of saving as well as improved housing. She learnt advocacy skills in ACFODE that have made her champion a number of advocacy efforts even within the Ugandan Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports where she was able to influence the Skilling Uganda Policy. Her advocacy for girls' education won her two awards – The Sarah Ntiro Girls Education Award and Tumaini Awards funded by UNICEF.

She's currently involved in advocacy for elderly women – a project she started under Namirembe Diocese to enable these vulnerable women access better housing; and so far, two such women have had better houses constructed for them.

Thirty-year-old Daphine Agaba Kabagambe, recently attained her PhD from the University of the Western Cape, South Africa in August 2017 and is currently doing her post-doctoral research at the School of Public Health at the University of the Western Cape. Her PhD thesis focused on the role of human rights accountability in combating preventable maternal mortality and morbidity in Uganda.



Daphine Agaba Kabagambe

Her involvement in ACFODE work started in 2009 where she came in as an intern attached to the Human Rights and Governance Department. She was involved in identifying, developing and conducting training programmes for the advancement of women's concerns at local, national and international levels. She was also the pioneer coordinator of the inter-institutional debate programme. "Being part of ACFODE as a young person and working on KAS projects was my first experience of project and programme work. It equipped me with numerous skills, including documentation skills, research skills, advocacy/lobbying skills, networking skills, all of which have come in handy in the various places I have worked after ACFODE," she shared

Serving in all the departments in ACFODE gave Margaret Ntakalimaze the opportunity to become an all-rounder. She is a researcher and trainer, and has participated in almost all ACFODE's projects. She joined ACFODE in 1995. She has participated in KAS-funded activities like research, training in CEDAW, training women groups under the micro-credit scheme, and writing for Arise magazine, among others. All these have had an impact on her life – her confidence grew and along with it, her stature. She has, therefore, represented ACFODE on a number of boards, on behalf of NGOs and government agencies. She has had opportunities to do consultancy work because of the skills she has accumulated through ACFODE work and the capacity-building that ACFODE does for her members. ■



CHAPTER FOUR

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT: THE MUCH-NEEDED SHOT IN THE ARM

The story of how ACFODE was born out of frustration caused by the refusal of the government to grant Dr Hilda Tadria permission to attend the Nairobi Women's Conference in 1985 is well known. It was not an easy beginning for ACFODE. People and organisations of good will played a major and indispensable role in support of ACFODE's activities as early as 1986. While voluntary contributions by members and additional internal efforts at income generation were a considerable resource, ACFODE has owed much of her sustenance over the years to donors. The donor support ranged from facilitating one-off activities, to covering administrative expenses as well as supporting entire programmes over a number of years. Suffice it to say that ACFODE created and still enjoys a lifetime relationship with donors (ACFODE Her Story). The spirit that drove ACFODE members to sustain the organisation is further captured as "relentless", "bordering on the divine", "inexplicable" and "ACFODE's greatest asset". As time went on, the meetings in Makerere University and the Spear Motors office were not enough to keep the organisation going. The organisation could not continue operating as a mere idea – as Maude Mugisha, who was the first Executive Secretary of ACFODE from 1987 to 1996 described it, "in an ad hoc manner". ACFODE needed basic infrastructure and logistics, among other things, to be able to live up to its name.

Maude recalls that KAS started supporting ACFODE in 1987 when it was still housed in the Spear Motors building. “Our relationship with KAS started in 1988. They gave us 50,000 Deutschmarks to buy furniture. ACFODE had a posh facility but with no furniture except that borrowed from members. The grant from KAS helped ACFODE furnish her office – the standards rose overnight. Executive furniture was imported from the United Kingdom. Even the items that were made in Uganda locally were of very high quality – mahogany timber.”

The first programme support grant came into the organisation in 1989 through a recommendation by someone who worked with the African Development Foundation (ADF). When KAS came to visit ACFODE and make an assessment, they found that the founders were women who were focused and well educated. They kept their promise to get back to ACFODE within a week after their visit and that was how the KAS-ACFODE journey began.

The journey that started 28 years ago has kept ACFODE as an institutional partner of KAS. As Matthias Kamp explained, “ACFODE enjoys the status of an institutional partner to KAS whose work does not necessarily fall directly under KAS projects, with their own three-year plans, which are implemented independently.”

Maude attested that KAS’ commitment to support staff salaries helped the organisation to recruit high-calibre staff that drove ACFODE’s agenda and realised results. To date, KAS still supports ACFODE staff salaries, as affirmed by the Executive Director, Regina Bafaki, but has to balance this with programme support (Arise magazine: ACFODE’s mouthpiece).

In 1991, ACFODE launched the maiden issue of Arise magazine to highlight and disseminate information regarding the advancement of women and also serve to enhance organisational documentation. The magazine was part of a wider programme of information dissemination and publication. The objectives were to build confidence in women and enhance their positive image in society; to facilitate a change of attitudes that hinder women’s advancement and emancipation; and to publicise ACFODE’s activities. The magazine also promoted the free flow of information internally and externally and was a tool for ACFODE’s advocacy and lobbying efforts. To date 63 issues, covering the entire range of the gender equality and equity subject, have been published.

KAS has singularly supported ACFODE in the production and publication of this magazine. Diverse women’s concerns are discussed in this magazine, making it possible to bring to the discussion table even those that would ordinarily be relegated to



Dr. Hilda Mary Tadria, one of ACFODE's founder members

the shelf. Issues are themed on the basis of areas of concern, ranging from Education, Politics, and Agriculture to Media and Family, among others, and with the underlying message of gender equality and equity.

There is evidently an increase in the number of male contributors of articles to Arise magazine and who express strong gender-sensitive opinions on issues of gender in the context of education, religion, property inheritance, professions that are deemed a male domain etc. There are male voices that are championing the gender equality agenda, especially in areas like property ownership. People like Deo Tumusiime-Kabwendo have written passionately about the importance of having girls as heirs and women as rightful co-owners of land and family property.

The ACFODE Change Process

Professor Joy Kwesiga, one of the founders, said, “In the first ten years ACFODE focused on service delivery in the areas of Research, Legal and Human Rights, Information and Publications, Economic Empowerment and Training, using a holistic approach to address the many hindrances and the attainment of gender equality. ACFODE hoped interventions targeting immediate, underlying and structural causes of the factors that disadvantage women would have a greater impact. In the course of the implementation of programmes, ACFODE always integrated new learning, condensing this into new programmes/projects. Consequently, it was overstretched. This resulted in an unlimited and very wide scope and mandate.”

This was what necessitated the changeover to advocacy work. Though the change process was not initially supported under the KAS-ACFODE partnership, through institutional support, KAS extended funding for the key activities of finalising and operationalising the recommendations of the change process.

It Was Time for Attitude Change

As early as 1987, ACFODE launched her Legal Education Programme with the aim of creating awareness about human rights among men and women. The programme also aimed at addressing issues of land and property ownership by women, inheritance, child marriages, domestic violence, rape and defilement, as well as doing research to generate information about the provisions in the Constitution of Uganda and archaic laws, customs and religious practices that needed changing. It was also planned to help women gain access to and control over economic resources which would enable them to contribute to and benefit from development.

ACFODE chose to hinge her work in the advocacy for women and girls' rights on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which Uganda ratified in 1985. There has been a lot of awareness creation through sensitisation, trainings and follow-ups, resulting in attitude change towards the rights of women and girls among youth leaders, technical staff, religious leaders, teachers,

traditional birth attendants (TBAs), opinion leaders and clan leaders in the districts of Pallisa, Kiboga, Rukungiri, Soroti, Kisoro and Lira. There are stories of change in all the six districts that reveal the awareness created in understanding the different ways in which discrimination against women is perpetuated. The CEDAW trainings have evidently helped the stakeholders to recognise the ways through which injustice is meted out to especially women and girls, which they had come to take for granted, such as the socially assigned identities, the buying and selling of women and girls as well as the exploitation of prostitutes, equal treatment with men before the law, marriage, the family and inheritance of property, health and education rights, among others (ACFODE Annual Report, 2007).



Justine Namuyiga

One of the beneficiaries, Ms Justine Namuyiga, a grade III teacher in a primary school in Kiboga district, participated in a CEDAW training in 2009. The information package on women's rights, family issues and children's rights enhanced her level of responsibility to her family, fellow women and school children where she teaches.

Another beneficiary, the Hon. Mariam Ikalayi, district councillor, Pallisa district, attests: "The CEDAW trainings enlightened me about the dangers of Gender Based Violence and I now advocate against it."

The CEDAW trainings equipped women with knowledge and skills that emboldened them to fight for their rights in instances where they lost their husbands. For example, Angella Etochu, who had been threatened by clan leaders and in-laws against getting powers of attorney for her late husband's estate, attests: "I did not give up on getting the powers of attorney over my late husband's estate because of the knowledge I had acquired in the training."

Thirty-eight-year-old Fredrick Mubala, who is a church leader in Kamuge parish, Pallisa district, is one of the opinion leaders trained under CEDAW. He shared that the training had helped in reducing violence against women and girls. ■

CHAPTER FIVE

BOOSTED BY EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS AND TRAINING SUPPORT



KAS has supported ACFODE with education scholarships and training for its staff and members to promote their technical capacity to better execute ACFODE's mandate. The education scholarships have been implemented through collaboration with institutions and universities in and outside Uganda. Currently, KAS collaborates with Uganda Martyrs' University, Nkozi to provide undergraduate and postgraduate training to its scholars. Stories of how these changed their lives are shared by the beneficiaries. Ms Harpie Ainomugisha who currently heads the Human Rights and Governance Department at ACFODE gladly expresses her gratitude to KAS for a three-year distance master's scholarship in Governance and Human Rights that was awarded to her from Nkozi University. "It has added greatly on my career and to the passion that I have for the work that I do."

She joined ACFODE in 2011 as a volunteer and in regards to working on the ACFODE KAS project, Harpie had this to say, “on joining ACFODE, the first project I worked on was funded by KAS, and it focused on women leadership and youth participation in decision making processes. Prior to this engagement, I had never trained or engaged with community people in my life. But from the knowledge and skills I gained from trainings facilitated by KAS, I started to engage in training of women leaders, mentoring them in political leadership and gender accountability in several districts. Harpie is one of the ACFODE staff that has been at the centre of the women’s leadership capacity building activities.



Harpie Ainomugisha

George Kanyomozi is currently a DFID Regional Manager and an Acting Advisor for two other programmes. He has been a beneficiary of multiple interventions in ACFODE. He accessed a KAS-funded scholarship for a master’s degree in Human Rights and Governance when he worked at ACFODE as a staff member.

Mildred Nalubega who is currently the Nabakristu – head of the Catholic Christian community in Kawuku, Ggaba, Kampala district admitted that when she started interacting with ACFODE members, she realised she could only join ACFODE if she furthered her education. One day when she came to ACFODE, there was an advertisement of a scholarship for an associate degree in Development Studies offered at Uganda Martyrs’ University, Nkozi and supported by KAS. This degree opened more doors for her. It was the foundation for her to do the full degree – it ignited in her the desire to do the full degree.

KAS also sponsored ACFODE members and staff to attain training and enhance their capacities in some German institutions. A number of people went to Germany for short courses that did not only enhance staff knowledge and skills but also improved their exposure and outlook. Mrs Gertrude Ssekabira joined ACFODE in 1987. In 1993, when she was chairperson of the Programmes Committee, she got an opportunity to go to Marburg, Germany on a KAS-funded training in Women in Development. Gertrude said that this had inspired her and impassioned her to develop herself and others. Her enthusiasm to see that women’s lives improved grew; and this challenged her to develop herself so that she could develop others. Moreover, ACFODE membership had high profile personalities and this, too, spurred her on.

Hellen Ndikumwami Nshimiye currently works with a Kabale based CSO called Literacy Action and Development Agency (LADA) as a Youth Project Officer. She served as a woman councillor representing Nyarubuye Sub County in Kisoro District Council and that was the time she got deeply involved in ACFODE activities. In one



Ms Harpie Ainomugisha who currently heads the Human Rights and Governance Department at ACFODE gladly expresses her gratitude to KAS for a three-year distance master's scholarship in Governance and Human Rights that was awarded to her from Nkozi University. "It has added greatly on my career and to the passion that I have for the work that I do."

of the meetings, the facilitators from ACFODE told her about the scholarship opportunity – which she applied for and passed. She is completing her research for the award of a Master of Arts in Local Governance and Human Rights at Uganda Martyrs University, Nkozi. Though she has not fully completed her studies, her desire to study more around human rights issues has been whetted. She is looking into the future with focus on doing another degree in International Human Rights, and then a PHD.

She has found the relationship with ACFODE an interesting and exciting one. She has learnt to balance her private and public life. She has even gained training skills that have enabled her to be part of ACFODE's training teams for LC III female councillors. ■



Hellen Ndikumwami Nshimiye

CHAPTER SIX

THE MOTIVE POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS

KAS-ACFODE-EU Programme: a Partnership within the Partnership

ACFODE's growing capacity and competency has earned respect not only in the areas where she operates, but also nationally and among the funding partners. As a result, even in 2011, a big partnership was born – a KAS-ACFODE-European Union-funded programme aimed at building and enhancing the capacity of community-based organisations and political leaders in the areas of good governance, accountability and the rule of law as the benchmarks for efficiency in service delivery.

Mr. Andrew Ogwang is currently the Education Officer of Lira Municipal Council and has been in an elective position for the past 15 years. He had participated in the programme under the training for the district council members. He recounted the different trainings he had received in participatory leadership and accountability, gender mainstreaming in district budgets and development plans, rule of law procedures, how to enact policies and gender-based violence, as well as skills in report-writing, lobbying, teamwork and best practices in leadership. The district gained a lot from these trainings and has continued to hold accountability days, has become more gender-sensitive in policy formulation, and councillors are more involved in monitoring government programmes and in the implementation of policies that are meant to deliver services to the people.

This was affirmed in a different interview with Santa Angella, the chairperson of the Social Services Committee, who informed that they were going around the district to monitor UPE schools. Transformation gained through the engagements was evident as he proudly talked about his successes

Mr Robert Byamugisha Kakuru, the Executive Director of Kick Corruption out of Uganda (formerly Kick Corruption out of Kigezi) also has an interesting story to share in regards to the ACFODE KAS partnership and how it has impacted his organisation. They were beneficiaries of the KAS-ACFODE -EU intervention that was rolled out in 2012/2013. This participation created changes within the organisation – ranging from getting a home as opposed to operating in an ad hoc manner earlier, gaining a lot of trust from key stakeholders like the district leadership that normally partner with them to facilitate workshops, and recruiting well qualified staff with clear job descriptions. In addition, donor confidence has also grown, earning the organisation funding. Internally, the financial systems have been streamlined and an accounting system put in place. “Kick Corruption out of Uganda greatly appreciates the partnership which has led to tremendous growth within a short time,” Robert concludes.

More organisations attested to the life-changing benefits of this partnership. DREST Uganda, a Pallisa-based organisation, attributes a lot of its success to this. According to Samson Okurut, outgoing coordinator DREST-Uganda in Pallisa district, “It has gained visibility, especially from the training materials it receives. It has built synergies with many other partners; and the organisation has also attracted funding from other donors, like funding from the Inspectorate General of Government to train community monitoring groups to monitor USAF III. The knowledge and skills attained from the training in concept writing have enabled the organisation to win bids from government institutions. The internal systems within the organisation have been strengthened, for example departments of research and information, ICT and gender mainstreaming that were lacking before were made operational.

Kiboga Food Farmers Initiative (KIFFI) was initially started to uplift women and men who are part of the SACCO that was started with a grant from the HUNGER Project in 2007. They benefited from the ACFODE-KAS trainings in good governance and accountability. The training Sarah Nalugya, the Manager at KIFFI, underwent has been instrumental in shaping board decisions. Most importantly,



Robert Byamugisha Kakuru



Samson Okurut



Sarah Nalugya

however, is that KIFFI has integrated information on accountability into their content for sharing with community members. They have gone to schools to follow up UPE funds and to meet School Management Committees (SMCs) and head teachers, with the aim to understand how funds are used as a way of entrenching good governance and accountability principles. The annual District Accountability Day has become entrenched.

Juliet Munyantwali is the General Manager of Alongside Africa Uganda that was selected by the district leadership to participate in the project implemented under the KAS-ACFODE-EU partnership. She told the team, “The engagement enhanced our accountability processes. The software that was introduced to us helped us to develop our own financial software that has improved our accounting processes. And we also learnt that accountability is not just about money but also doing what you claim to do, for example, holding leaders accountable to the electorate. People need to see the organisation doing what it claims to do.”

Mr. John Karisa is the Project Manager, Foundation for People with Disabilities, an NGO that was started in 1987 and is currently engaged in the production/provision of orthopedic gargets, which are sold at subsidised prices. Through the project, they have expanded their networks; for example, they have been connected with Kick Corruption out of Uganda. They integrate the learning into the sharing that they have with the leaders/members of the association who gather at the foundation offices weekly and have successfully lobbied the municipal council to construct a ramp on the building of the offices which had been left out in the original plans. This is happening with banks, churches, some schools etc. “The training helped us to re-energise,” Kariisa concluded.

Currently, ACFODE and KAS are also partnering on a UN Women project that seeks to enhance public support for women’s political participation, leadership and gender equality. The project is being implemented in Kamuli, Pallisa, Moroto, Gulu and Kampala districts. ■



Juliet Munyantwali



John Karisa

CHAPTER SEVEN

CHALLENGES STILL ABOUT

Beneficiaries and participants in ACFODE-KAS programmes ooze with satisfaction in what they have gained in terms of skills, knowledge, outlook and personal achievements, among other things. The interventions gave them energy to execute their mandates. However, they shared challenges that they encountered in the implementation of what they had learnt. Juliet Munyantwali's organisation, Alongside Africa, deals with street children and other vulnerable children. They have had to seek legal redress in cases of defilement owing to the red tape in the police and courts of law, which requires a lot of persistence.

For Toppie Kangye, the LC III chairperson of Buhunga sub-county, Rukungiri district “men have not yet accepted female leadership. There are also serious financial constraints as the election processes continue to become more commercialised.” Perhaps the biggest challenge Toppie recognises is that “we have not yet formed a critical mass of women that can shake up the status quo.”

Maclean Batwale notes, “there are conflicting loyalties. When I am home I have to do domestic work, however late, and it becomes very challenging to find time to handle all the activities that I must do even at home.” She has also found that women leaders still fear to be delegated – like at funerals.

In Pallisa, Esther Amulen complains about the unwelcoming attitude of some community members during community engagements. There is high expectation of financial gain from their leaders, which constrains sensitising them to pertinent issues. There is a challenge with the few numbers of women in the caucuses, which still hampers the passing of resolutions in favour of women’s issues.

Another challenge mentioned by most women leaders was the pull-her-down syndrome where some women do not support fellow women, especially if one is trying to enter the “men’s space”. This was re-echoed by Nakazibwe Ratifa Mutyaba, who said that there is still a misconception that some leadership positions are a preserve for men and, therefore, women should not aspire to them. Another form of pull-her-down syndrome is the misconception among some councillors that members of the Executive Committee, especially the Secretary for Finance, gain a lot monetarily.

Nakazibwe found out that a lot of people personalise issues and want to draw everybody into their fights. For example, “one time I asked why some resolutions had not been implemented; [and] I faced a hard time and intimidation from a section of councillors.”

Another challenge that was shared is the big gap between the councillors and the Members of Parliament (MPs), which continues to frustrate development at the sub-county level.

Africa Kilenga remarked, “Females themselves have still failed to claim their space. There is a whole mix of religion and culture that has kept its grip on them; some even think that a woman driving a bus is an abomination.” He feels isolated sometimes. The opposition to gender equality is real; people around him think he is advocating for western culture.

The ACFODE Executive Director commented, “The demand for KAS-ACFODE programmes is high while the funding is constant.”

Matthias Kamp observed, “There are some lapses in communication from both sides but this should not be the case irrespective of the hectic work they both get involved in.” ■



Nakazibwe Ratifa Mutyaba (far right), sharing about the challenges that women leaders face.

CHAPTER EIGHT

HOW TO IMPROVE THE PARTNERSHIP

Jolly Twinamasiiko, Rukungiri district: “KAS-ACFODE should improve on the menu for the exchange visits to include other aspects like agriculture and artistry, as ways of enhancing economic development.

Betty Muzanira, Rukungiri district: “ACFODE should have an effective database and mobilise all these people to make a contribution towards a cause – as a way of sustainability.”

Maude Mugisha, ACFODE member: “All generations in ACFODE have space and should be embraced fully so that they can make their contribution. ACFODE has to find space for the younger generations so that leadership for the future is built.

Matthias Kamp: “We must work to get closer so that we all know what is happening by keeping the flow of information. “ACFODE needs to exert pressure for KAS to increase the funding and tap into the existing goodwill as well as scaling up the utilisation/absorption of funds.”

Bernard Mukhone: “ACFODE should scale up the debates at regional level so that more youth can be included. The female youth leaders have their special needs which need interventions that are tailored.”

Regina Bafaki, ACFODE Executive Director: “KAS could look into the possibility of contributing towards ACFODE endowment for sustainability and reduction on donor dependency.”

Gertrude Ssekabira, ACFODE member: “Advocacy is important but economic empowerment gives real power – to reduce domestic violence, school dropouts, and it should be addressed.”

Hellen Ndikumwami Nshimiye, Kisoro district: “ACFODE/KAS should continue to work with the youth but this ought to be extended to secondary schools, too. Understanding and unpacking the concept of gender in secondary schools will build the confidence of the youth, especially girls, at an earlier stage as opposed to gaining this knowledge at university. It is not easy to challenge the mind-set of university students.”

Africa Kilenga applauds ACFODE and KAS for the work started in universities: “When students leave university, they go into policy-making positions – as policy-makers, consumers or implementers. They need to follow up students who have been part of their processes. There is impact – one of the debate counterparts has opened up an NGO in Sudan.”

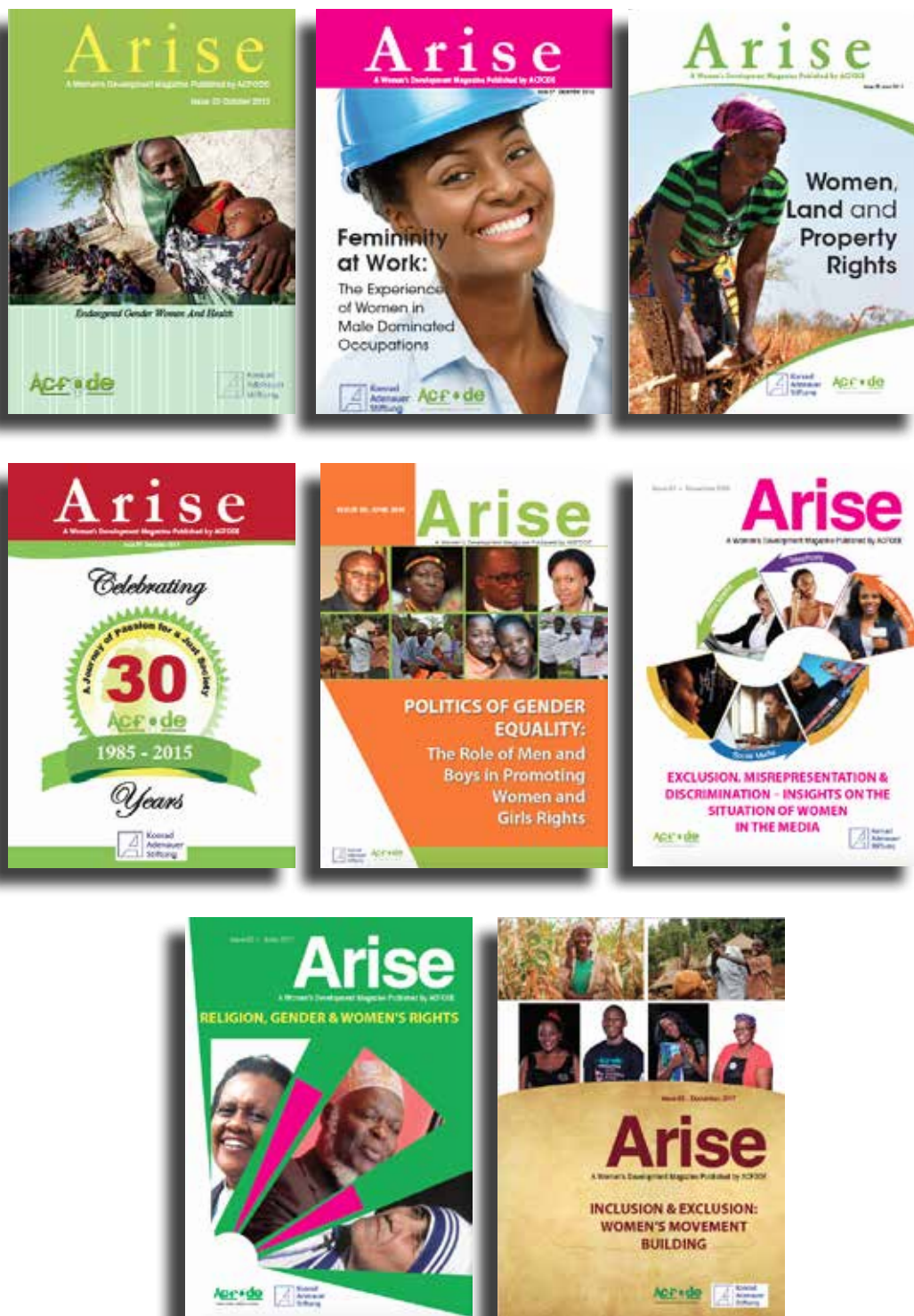
Laker Gender Fancy: “ACFODE and KAS should take the debates to the grass-roots level. Let people debate in their local language – known as kabake in Acholi – as a way of reaching the typical rural women and youth.” Fancy also believes that teacher training institutions are a virgin area for such activities.”

Other recommendations include:

- Extending capacity-building trainings to the sub-county local level as well.
- Supporting the trained people to reach the village – facilitate them.
- Increasing the frequency of the exchange visits with other districts throughout the country for learning and experience-sharing. ■

Reference List

1. A shattered dream gave Birth to ACFODE'S Incredible Journey – 2010.
2. Report on the Training of ACFODE members in Gender and Civic Education – ACFODE, 2000
3. Report on Monitoring the Effective Participation of Women in Politics and Decision Making in Soroti District, July 2001
4. The constitution of the Republic of Uganda – 1995
5. Arise Magazine – Issues 31, March 2001; 32, July 2001; 51, September, 2011; 60, June, 2016; 61, November, 2016; 62, June, 2017
6. Report on the Legal and Human Rights Training Workshop Based on CEDAW for LC 3 Councillors and Other Opinion Leaders in Soroti District – July 2006
7. Strategic Plan (2012/13 – 2017,18) for Action for Development (ACFODE)
8. Research Report on **Women in Political Leadership: Challenges and Opportunities** – ACFODE, 2002
9. ACFODE Annual Report - 2007





For More Information Contact

The Executive Director

Action For Development

ACFODE House

Plot 623/624 Lutaya Drive Bukoto

P.O.Box 16729 Kampala - Uganda

Tel: +256 414 531 812, +256 393 114 890

 www.acfode.org

 <https://www.facebook.com/ACFODE>

 [@acfode](https://twitter.com/acfode)