

ACFODE NEWSLETTER



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Editorial

This newsletter highlights ACFODE's impactful initiatives aimed at empowering communities and promoting gender equality, from training educators to supporting GBV survivors. Through advocacy, practical skills training, and civic education

Our hardworking team has successfully implemented new strategies and projects, fostering an inclusive environment that champions the rights and voices of women and girls in Uganda

Top News

ACFODE Launches Awareness Campaign Against Gender-Based Violence in Schools.

ACFODE Support over 70 GBV Survivors Through Psychosocial Services



01/14

New Partnerships Formed

VISION

A just society where gender equality is a reality

MISSION

To empower women, girls and influence legislation and policy for gender equality in Uganda”

CORE PURPOSE

The organization's core purpose is advocacy for gender equality and the core

CORE VALUES

- Integrity
- Teamwork
- Respect
- Volunteerism
- Learning and commitment.





Teachers pose for a group photo after a training on GBV Prevention.

ACFODE Empowers Teachers to Combat Gender-Based Violence in Schools

In a significant move towards enhancing awareness and prevention of gender-based violence (GBV) in schools, ACFODE conducted a two-day training session for over 30 teachers from both the settlement and host communities. The training, which took place at Kibuye Primary School, included an equal representation of 15 men and 15 women educators, alongside five para-social workers from the Kanyinya and Kyakatwaga communities.

The primary objective of the training was to equip teachers with a deeper understanding of gender concepts, legal frameworks, and effective response mechanisms for addressing sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). The participating schools included Itambabininga, Bukere, Kaborogota, and Kabweza Primary Schools.

During the training, participants gained crucial insights into key terminologies related to gender, power relations, and the legal instruments that protect the rights of women and girls, as well as how to identify referral points for effectively managing SGBV cases within their schools and communities.

According to the international and national legal frameworks including The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the 2010 Domestic Violence Act of Uganda emphasize that the Girls' and Women's rights and SGBV is a violation of these rights.

Participants expressed their gratitude to ACFODE for the timely and relevant training. One teacher noted, "Engaging senior teachers is vital as we confront the issue of sexual violence in schools. This knowledge is essential in supporting survivors."

As part of their commitment to addressing GBV, teachers made several pledges, including prioritizing the issue of sexual violence, conducting awareness campaigns during parent meetings, orienting staff members on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), and sensitizing parents about GBV.

A patron of the GBV prevention club at Kibuye Primary School stated, **"I will ensure my fellow teachers are aware of the dangers and consequences of SGBV and establish a reporting system for survivors within our school"**

ACFODE Support over 70 GBV Survivors Through Psychosocial Services

In a concerted effort to address the impacts of gender-based violence (GBV), a recent initiative has successfully provided essential psychosocial support to survivors within refugee and host communities. The program focused on practical services aimed at helping individuals navigate the trauma associated with SGBV.

During the initiative, 36 home visits were conducted to foster and strengthen family relationships. This approach allowed support workers to engage directly with families and offer tailored assistance.

Through these visits, 133 adolescents comprising 88 females and 45 males received individual and group counseling, equipping them with techniques to cope with difficult situations.

The program also recorded 76 cases of reported GBV, with a significant focus on understanding the challenges faced by survivors.

The breakdown of these cases reveals that most victims are denied essential resources and emotional and physiological violence.

Of the reported cases, 46 were successfully closed following follow-up visits, indicating effective interventions through counseling and support. Meanwhile, 10 cases remain pending, and 17 have been referred to ALIGHT for further assistance. Additionally, three cases were directed to FCA for specialized case management services.

Support measures implemented during this initiative included counseling, mediation, and community sensitization efforts, all aimed at educating families about the impacts of GBV and fostering healthier relationships.

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GBV Prevention club members of Itambabiniga Primary School showing GBV prevention message readers donated by ACFODE.

ACFODE Launches Awareness Campaign Against Gender-Based Violence in Schools.

A Gender-based violence awareness campaign was successfully launched in three primary schools: Itambabiniga, Bukere, and Kaborogota. The initiative involved the installation of 16 compound messages designed to encourage students to foster a safe and respectful school environment.

The messages, such as "Stay in school and complete P.7" and "Respect one another; a violence-free environment is my joy," aim to engage students in discussions about GBV and its prevention. Each school received tailored support from the GBV prevention club, with patrons actively involved in the initiative.

Teachers expressed their appreciation for the campaign's impact, noting that the visibility of the messages has made a significant difference in large school settings where reaching every learner can be challenging. One teacher highlighted that their long-standing request for such messages had previously been hindered by budget constraints, stating, **"Thanks to ACFODE, we finally have these vital messages in place."**

ACFODE Empowers Community Members with Practical Skills Training

In the host community, a two-day practical skills training program aimed at empowering members of the listeners' club and model couples was carried out.

The initiative focused on self-learning, experiential learning, and developing entrepreneurial skills, equipping participants with the knowledge needed to foster economic independence. Over 20 people participated in the training, learning how to create liquid soap and reusable pads, essential skills that contribute to personal and community well-being.

The training covered various aspects of entrepreneurship, including effective marketing strategies, the business canvas model for growth, and techniques for building strong client relationships.

Participants received hands-on experience in the production process, learning about the necessary chemicals and equipment involved in making liquid soap and reusable pads. They were guided through the step-by-step procedure, allowing them to apply their new skills practically.

At the end of the training, attendees made products for personal use and others they sold to support their community groups.

The economic impact of the training was notable, with the Central Listeners Club reporting sales of 12,000 shillings, the Humura Listeners Club 4,000 shillings, the Ruchinga Listeners Club 3,000 shillings, the Kyakatwaga Listeners Club 10,000 shillings, and the Kanyinya Listeners Club 8,000 shillings.

In total, the clubs generated 37,000 shillings during the event. Highlighting their success, the Kyakatwaga Listeners Club from the host community produced two jerry cans of liquid soap, earning 73,000 shillings, which they added to their savings group.

Meanwhile, the Humura Savings Group from the Itambabininga Listeners Club achieved even greater results, producing four jerry cans and earning 141,000 shillings to bolster their savings.

ACFODE remains committed to empowering individuals through practical training initiatives that promote economic self-sufficiency and enhance the overall quality of life in the region.



GBV Prevention club members after making sanitary towels.

ACFODE Launches Advocacy Training for Busoga Growers Cooperative Union.



BGCU Members taking part in the training by ACFODE.

ACFODE successfully conducted a two-day advocacy training for members of the Busoga Grower’s Co-operative Union (BGCU), aimed at equipping them with essential skills for effective advocacy.

This initiative responds to gender gaps identified in a recent gender audit and is part of ACFODE's broader mission to empower cooperatives and enhance community engagement.

The training aligns with We Effect’s Global Advocacy Strategy and the Programme Strategy “Stronger Together,” which focuses on food rights, gender equality, and social inclusion. Recognizing the need for enhanced advocacy capabilities, ACFODE aimed to empower BGCU members to influence public policies that impact their livelihoods and community development.

The training centered around three main objectives including knowledge enhancement, understanding the advocacy process, and identifying local issues.

Using participatory methods such as presentations, discussions, and group work, the training fostered an engaging and collaborative learning environment. Participants actively contributed their insights and experiences, enhancing the overall impact of the sessions.

By providing BGCU members with these vital advocacy skills, ACFODE strengthened their capacity to raise awareness, influence decision-makers, and eliminate barriers that hinder the success of cooperatives.

This initiative marks an important milestone in ACFODE's commitment to promoting social justice and equitable growth within the community. With empowered advocates ready to drive change, the future looks promising for BGCU and its members.

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ACFODE Empowers BIACE Members through Advocacy Training

In a move aimed at strengthening community engagement and enhancing advocacy skills, members of the Bushika Integrated Area Cooperative Enterprise (BIACE) were trained with support from We Effect, this initiative is part of a broader five-year project focused on promoting gender equality and women's rights across Uganda.



Ms. Happy Ainomugisha conducting an advocacy training with members of Bushika.

The training brought together a diverse group of participants, including board members, management, staff, and cooperative members, to explore the importance of advocacy in effecting change at both district and national levels. ACFODE's Programme Officer, Ms. Rebecca Rukundo, emphasized the significance of the training in empowering participants to engage effectively in issues affecting their communities.

This was re-emphasized by Mr. Shadrah Wamboka who highlighted the cooperative's commitment to advocacy, expressing confidence in their ability to lead advocacy efforts and emphasized the importance of inclusive participation.

Working in groups, participants explored key questions related to advocacy, identifying it as a crucial tool for community betterment and empowerment.

Their insights underscored the potential for advocacy to influence policy changes and foster collaboration among community members.

As ACFODE continues its commitment to enhancing gender-inclusive programming and service delivery, the advocacy training marks a vital step towards empowering cooperatives like BIACE to effect meaningful change in their communities.

With the knowledge gained from this training, participants are now better equipped to advocate for their rights and drive progress within their cooperative and beyond.

Community Empowerment in Oriamo Sub-County: ACFODE Hosts Civic Education Meeting.



Community members after being trained in CIVIC Education by ACFODE.

ACFODE, a leading advocate for women's rights and governance, recently organized a Civic Education meeting in Oriamo sub-county, attracting approximately 140 participants, including women, men, local leaders, and youth group members.

The meeting, held under the theme of enhancing civic and political awareness, was opened by Mr. Eyamo Calvin, the Sub-County Chief.

He emphasized ACFODE's unique role as the sole development partner focusing on governance and women's rights in the area. **"Community members should take ACFODE's programs seriously for the development of their households,"** he urged, promising the full support of local leader.

● Key objectives

The key objectives discussed included fostering a deeper understanding of civic processes and encouraging community engagement, particularly among women and youth in upcoming elections.

Participants actively engaged in discussions, exploring the concept of gender and ways to promote women's rights. Suggestions included advocating for girls' education, supporting women's income-generating activities, and collaborating with cultural leaders to protect women's land rights.

The meeting also addressed challenges faced by women in advocating for their rights, with participants calling for resources to boost confidence and knowledge in legal matters. Community leaders agreed to enhance communication about available government programs and services, aiming to ensure that every member of the community is informed and empowered.

Overall, the Civic Education meeting was a significant step towards fostering active participation and advocacy in governance, paving the way for a more equitable community in Oriamo sub-county.

ACFODE Hosts Knowledge Café to Empower Women Through Land Rights on International Women's Day.



Participants during the Knowledge sharing session at the Women Land Rights Cafe hosted by ACFODE in Kampala.

In celebration of International Women's Day, Action for Development and its partners convened a knowledge café focused on the theme "Accelerating Gender Equality through Women's Economic Empowerment." The event brought together various stakeholders to discuss the crucial link between women's land rights and economic security.

The café opened with remarks from ACFODE Executive Director, Ms. Regina Bafaki, who acknowledged the government's efforts in promoting gender equality through legal frameworks like the Uganda Constitution and the Land Act. However, she raised important questions about the accessibility and effectiveness of these programs in genuinely benefiting women.

"The initiatives are in place, but we must ask: How many women access them, and how many feel they've benefited?" Ms. Bafaki stated, emphasizing the need for continued advocacy and collaboration.

Ms. Hajarah Nalubega from the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) also addressed participants, highlighting the ministry's support programs, including the Uganda Women's Entrepreneurship Programme (UWEP). She emphasized the importance of transparency in land ownership at the family level and urged for male engagement in promoting women's rights. The knowledge café featured two key presentations. Mr. Tom Balesesa who discussed the challenges women

face in agriculture, noting that while they constitute 76% of the agricultural labor force, secure land rights remain elusive. He pointed out that having ownership of land significantly enhances women's decision-making power and economic opportunities.

Ms. Stella Rose Akutui one of the presenters too, focused on grassroots women's groups, showcasing their vital role in mobilizing communities and advocating for legal reforms. Despite their effectiveness, she noted challenges such as persistent patriarchal norms and limited access to legal information.

Throughout the event, participants engaged in discussions, sharing insights on barriers to women's land ownership and proposing actionable recommendations. There was a consensus on the need for ongoing sensitization, collaborative partnerships, and empowerment through training.

The knowledge café concluded with a strong call to action, highlighting that securing land rights for women is essential for achieving broader economic empowerment and gender equality. ACFODE and its partners are committed to continuing their advocacy efforts, urging all stakeholders to work together towards a more equitable future for women in Uganda.

As the world celebrates International Women's Day, the message is clear: empowering women through land rights is not just a necessity; it's a crucial step towards achieving sustainable development and social justice.

Community Training Empowers Women and Youth to Advocate for Gender Equality in Leadership.

A recent community training session focused on gender concepts and the importance of political participation for women and youth has sparked a renewed commitment to advocating for equality in leadership roles.

The session, led by a facilitator using participatory methods, engaged participants in defining key gender-related terminologies and discussing their implications.

Participants highlighted various gender concepts, defining gender as the relationship between men and women, and sex as the biological differences between them. They discussed critical issues of gender inequality, citing examples such as the lack of access to education for girls, denial of employment opportunities for women, and restrictions on women's voices in public forums.



Community members after being trained in CIVIC Education by acfode.

The community's perception of gender roles was starkly outlined, with men often viewed as heads of households and property owners, while women were expected to focus on domestic responsibilities. **“Women are seen as responsible for childbearing and household chores, while men have the freedom to go anywhere at any time,”** one participant noted.

The training emphasized the constitutional mandate for women and youth to engage in political leadership, referencing Uganda's 1995 Constitution and various legal frameworks that promote gender equity. Participants agreed on the importance of female representation in leadership, citing transparency and the need to address the marginalized voices of women and youth.

However, there was a general acknowledgment of several challenges, including women's reluctance to enter politics due to domestic overload and societal biases against female leadership. One participant remarked, **“Women are often shy to stand for elective positions, and even when allowed, they hesitate.”**

The training also addressed the importance of citizen participation in democracy, referring to Article 1 of the Constitution, which emphasizes that all authority derives from the people. Key principles of democracy discussed included accountability, transparency, and the need for regular, free, and fair elections.

ACFODE Empowers Communities Through Civic Education in Mpara and Kyatega.

Action for Development hosted successful Community Barazas in Mpara and Kyatega sub-counties in Amolatar District, focusing on enhancing awareness of gender equality and civic participation among local residents.

The initiative aimed to equip community leaders and members with knowledge about their rights and responsibilities as enshrined in gender equality frameworks. Over 295 participants, including local council leaders, religious figures, educators, and community members, attended the events, which transformed selected duty-bearers into civic educators empowered to share vital information within their communities.

The Barazas encouraged vibrant discussions on gender roles, leadership, and citizen participation, exploring how societal norms contribute to gender inequality, and emphasizing the need for gender equality and equity. The importance of women and youth in leadership roles was also highlighted, identifying barriers to political participation and the need for empowerment.

The sessions resulted in heightened awareness among community members, who expressed a commitment to -



Community Members of Kyatega pose with Posters on the roles of CIVIC Educators after a training conducted by ACFODE.

participating in local governance and addressing barriers preventing women and youth from leadership roles. Suggestions for improvement included ongoing capacity-building for women and youth, ensuring gender representation in local committees, and increasing community workshops on gender issues.

Participants praised ACFODE for its efforts to empower women and youth, with many requesting more Barazas in various parishes.

Concerns raised included challenges related to children's rights, substance abuse among youth, and social stigmas surrounding women in leadership. Mr. Kitembe Richard, sub-county chief for Kyatega, emphasized that political engagement promotes gender equity and empowers women in economic development.

The successful Barazas in Mpara and Kyatega mark a significant stride toward fostering inclusive governance and empowering women and youth, as ACFODE remains committed to addressing community needs and enhancing awareness of rights and responsibilities for a more equitable society.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE
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