

NEBBI WOMEN ASK GOVERNMENT TO PROTECT THEIR LAND RIGHTS

"When my husband passed away, my in-laws claimed that I am a witch and was responsible for my late husband's death. They kicked me out of my marital home, chased me away from my land, broke down my house and took all my property. My in-laws also promised to kill me if I ever attempted to return to my land. My case has been in court for a long time. I just want my home back."

In Nebbi district, this is a story told by one of the many widows and women who clan leaders and in-laws have evicted from their land on grounds of witchcraft. During this year's Land Awareness Week, women in Nebbi district called upon the government to protect their rights to access, and ownership of their land.

The Land Awareness Week was held between 3rd and 7th August 2020 under the theme, Secure Land rights for Socio-Economic Transformation. The annual week, which Oxfam supports every year, is aimed at strengthening the capacity of communities and grassroots organizations to effectively engage in their land governance, management and administration at local and national levels.

This year, capacity strengthening was done across six districts through community dialogues, legal aid clinics, radio talk shows and sharing information on land laws, rights and obligations.

The legal aid clinics in Pajulu Subcounty, Arua district, were led by Oxfam's Land Rights Coordinator, Jimmy Ochom. Jimmy said that the clinics were used as a space to sensitize communities on land laws and policies as well as referral pathways.

Local Council leaders in Nebbi district said that over 95% of cases reported to their offices are land disputes. These cases are usually referred to the Police because the local leadership does not have adequate capacity to resolve them.

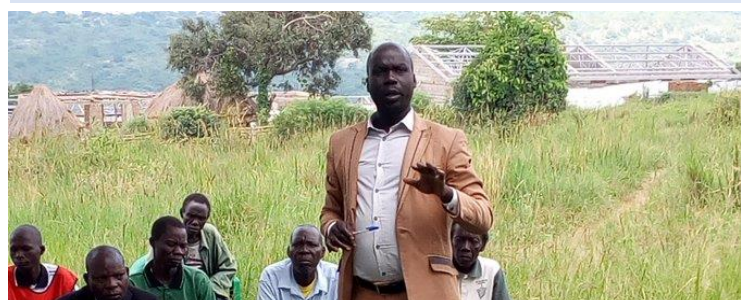
They asked the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Urban Development to strengthen their capacities by providing them with information on land rights and laws which will enable them provide justice to their communities.

Bob Williams Labeja, the Resident District Commissioner (RDC,) Nebbi district, said that land conflicts have increased during the COVID-19 pandemic and have in turn affected food production and increased food insecurity in the northern part of the country.

Dennis Obbo, the Head of Public Relations at the Lands Ministry said that each district has Area Land Committees. He however added that their capacities in handling land matters are still wanting and called upon government to increase its budget allocation to the land sector.



Women sharing their experiences on land disputes.



Patrick Agokothwo, the LCIII Chairperson of Atego Subcounty in Nebbi district encouraged people to register and acquire land titles for their customary land.

LOCAL HUMANITARIAN HEROES IN UGANDA CELEBRATED DURING THE WORLD HUMANITARIAN DAY



CHARTER FOR CHANGE WORKING GROUP HUMANITARIAN WEEK 2020

"CELEBRATING LOCAL HUMANITARIAN HEROES IN UGANDA"

13th-19th August 2020



As part of marking World Humanitarian Day 2020, the Charter4Change Working Group in Uganda held a series of activities from 13th -19th August 2020, under the theme, "Celebrating Local Humanitarian Heroes in Uganda."

While there are so many humanitarian actors in Uganda, local and national actors play a pivotal role in refugee response like being the first responders, being the source of the indigenous knowledge and staying within the communities after the response. However, they receive less than 1% of humanitarian funding for their work and therefore this needs to change.

The Charter4Change working group in Uganda therefore used this year's World Humanitarian Day as an opportunity to call for a better humanitarian response in a challenging world through a series of advocacy and influencing activities such as sub-national and national radio talk shows, regional dialogues, and a social media campaign aimed at amplifying the discussion on the localization of humanitarian aid into the public domain.

"As we celebrate #RealLifeHeroes on World Humanitarian Day, we should not leave it as a one-off ceremony, but rather use it as an opportunity to strengthen our commitment to local actors so that they can in turn, continue to support populations in need," said Ritah Nansereko, the Chairperson of the Charter4Change working group in Uganda and Executive Director of the African Women and Youth Action for Development (AWYAD.)

The group also published an [open letter](#) to international humanitarian donors asking them to take forward the Grand Bargain commitments made in 2016, aimed at improving the efficiency of humanitarian action.

The World Humanitarian Day is held every year on 19th August to purposely remember the people who risk their lives in order to save others, and more particularly the "unsung heroes" whose contributions go unnoticed.



Local humanitarian actors are at the forefront of responding to crises.

CSOS ASK THE GOVERNMENT TO ENSURE INCLUSIVE

IMPLEMENTATION OF EITI IN UGANDA

The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) admitted Uganda as its 54th member and the 26th African country to join the initiative on Wednesday 12th August 2020.

In a press statement published on 13th August 2020, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) called upon the government to ensure that the implementation of the EITI in Uganda is inclusive and embraces diversity among relevant stakeholders to optimally benefit from Uganda's membership.

CSOs also warned that whereas the government has done a good job in committing to transparency and subsequently being admitted to join the EITI, there are still gaps that need to be filled.

Gerald Byarugaba, Oxfam's Extractive Industries Coordinator, said that it is a very positive development that Uganda finally accepted to join the global coalition that works to support transparency and accountability in the oil, gas and mining sectors in resource-rich countries. He added that the country now awaits to see whether the government will live up to its commitments.

Winfred Ngabiirwe, the Executive Director of Global Rights Alert (GRA), also said that with EITI, the window has been opened and that there is going to be lots of information regarding the extractive industries sector. She added that the big question is whether Ugandans will be able to make use of this important information to create meaningful reforms at all levels.

USING ART TO FIGHT COVID-19

Community Empowerment for Creative Innovation (CECI), a local organization based in Arua district, has worked with musicians to produce a song targeting South Sudanese refugees as part of Oxfam and partner awareness creation initiatives around COVID-19.

Titled *It's Real and Dangerous*, the song emphasizes the need to practice COVID-19 preventive measures and has been produced in Arabic, Bari, Dinka, Nuer, Lugbara, and English languages. It is now airing on Radio Pacis, Arua One FM, and Spirit FM in Uganda and on City Fm in South Sudan.

The EITI is an international initiative that requires member countries and companies to submit and reconcile data on oil, gas, and mining revenues as a mechanism for ensuring transparency, accountability, and proper management of revenues that come from natural resources.

Matia Kasaija, Uganda's Finance Minister, told the EITI Secretariat that Uganda decided to join the initiative because the country values transparency as it moves nearer to getting money from its minerals and oil.

The EITI standard also requires the participation of women and marginalized groups such that oil, gas, and mining operations are managed in an equitable manner.



Civil society organizations briefing the media following the admission of Uganda as the 54th member of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative on 13th August 2020. Photo by Global Rights Alert.

The song is also available on YouTube here <https://youtu.be/89NPtR75szQ>.



Jackie, a Ugandan musician, recording the Corona awareness song.

OXFAM CALLS FOR IMPROVED LAND GOVERNANCE AND RESPONSIBLE AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENT

On 28th August 2020, Oxfam was joined by the Eastern and Southern Africa Small Scale Farmers' Forum (ESAFF) and the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Urban Development for a live show on NTV. The discussion was focused on a large scale land-based investment tool that is used to collect information on land issues and promote land rights.

Charles Opiyo, Coordinator, Seeds Program at Oxfam, said that many women are left out on land issues like large scale land based investment because of the patriarchal system which limits their participation. Jimmy Ochom, Oxfam's Land Rights Coordinator, highlighted that part of Oxfam's work is to ensure that women and other vulnerable groups are sensitized and encouraged to stand up for their land rights.

Ronald Bagaga, Program Officer- Advocacy and Policy at ESAFF Uganda also added that the large scale land-based investment tool empowers communities to take part in land processes.

Eunice Nabakwa, a Senior Land Officer at the Lands Ministry emphasized that the legal framework envisages the protection of women's land rights and is very clear on how women should be protected. She however added that most women do not register their land which usually puts them at risk.

The large scale land based investment tool also strengthens the negotiation capacity of smallholder producers to engage their leaders and investors for win-win business relationships in large scale land-based investments in the agriculture and extractives sectors.

Oxfam called for improvement in land governance and a focus on assisting all investors to understand the needs and tools for responsible land-based agricultural investment.



Eunice Nabakwa, Senior Land Officer at the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Urban Development speaking during the televised talk show. Photo by NTV

ENVIRONMENT ACTIVISTS OPPOSE GIVE AWAY OF BUGOMA FOREST FOR SUGARCANE GROWING

Edwin Muhumuza, the Youth Go Green Uganda Chief Executive Officer, recently told journalists that Bugoma forest has for generations contributed to eco-tourism, climate modification, provision of raw materials for domestic craft industries, construction and firewood and therefore needs to be protected.

The Youth Go Green CEO was joined by Oxfam in a press briefing on 28th August 2020 to express dissatisfaction over the recent clearance given to Hoima Sugar Limited to use 9.1 hectares of the Bugoma central forest reserve for sugarcane growing.

Muhumuza said that young people envision forests as resources that should be managed in ways that enable continuous provision for the needs of current and future generations.

Jackson Muhindo Rukara, the Resilience and Climate Change Coordinator at Oxfam, said that environmental activists will petition the President of Uganda to intervene in this matter and clarify whether or not the giveaway of Bugoma forest contravenes with the law.

“Previously, we sought clarification from the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), National Forestry Authority (NFA), and Parliament about the matter. We now want the President’s intervention to clarify on the giveaway by NEMA and the terms of the licence. We want to know whether the giveaway is not in contravention of the laws of the country,” Muhindo said.

ON 24th August 2020, NEMA issued an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment report permitting Hoima Sugar LTD to use part of the Bugoma central forest reserve for sugarcane growing.



Jackson Muhindo, Oxfam’s Resilience and Climate Change Coordinator, addressing journalists on 28th August 2020. Photo by NTV.

CSOS DEVELOP ALTERNATIVE TAX PROPOSALS FOR FY 2021/22

On 24th and 25th August 2020, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) under the Tax Justice Alliance Uganda (TJAU) held a consultative meeting to develop alternative tax proposals for FY 2021/22.

During the two days’ retreat, sub-national and national CSOs whose work focuses on tax, the national budget, debt, agriculture, and extractives among other areas came up with alternative revenue proposals to inform the tax bills for FY 2021/22.

Jane Nalunga, the Executive Director at the Southern and Eastern Africa Trade Information and Negotiation Institute (SEATINI) Uganda, said that there is a need for the country to agree on the purpose of taxation and the challenges that we need to address.

“We must not forget the 4Rs of taxation; Representation, Redistribution, Repricing and Revenue as we propose alternatives. The ‘R’ of Representation is very key now that we are in the electoral period. We need to promote tax as a tool for representation,” said Jane.

Jane Ocaya-Irama, Oxfam’s Interim Country Director also said that CSOs need to engage policy makers and the different stakeholders on how to bridge the fiscal deficit gap.

Xavier Ejoyi, the Country Director, Action Aid Uganda, said that the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the economy, and the most vulnerable populations including women.

“In the last few months, we have witnessed various government efforts in terms of borrowing from multilateral lending institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF in order to revive the economy. As we wait to see the new taxation patterns and how these loans will be paid back, we need a progressive and just tax system that generates enough revenues to finance the different sectors and development projects,” said Xavier.



CSOs under the Tax Justice Alliance developing alternative tax proposals for FY2021/22.

OXFAM IN THE NEWS

- PEOPLE'S PARLIAMENT: Secure land rights for social economic transformation: NTV 9th August- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZNqtMOFcxD4>
- We Must Prioritize Local Solutions to Global Problems: Inter Press Service News Agency 18th August 2020- <http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/08/must-prioritize-local-solutions-global-problems/>
- C4C Letter to donors in Uganda: Daily Monitor & New Vision 19th August- <https://oxfam.box.com/s/a7ex54jkfx7ec6zh4fl6c7y67vcise4k>
- AFIC Contract Monitoring report cites procurement flaws in Local Governments: AFIC Web 13th August- <https://africafoicentre.org/afic-contracts-monitoring-report-cites-procurement-flaws-local-governments/>
- Report Cities Procurement Flaws in Districts: Daily Monitor 13th August 2020- <https://oxfam.box.com/s/evqwiro0cxb496906477uqsubl1yr7wy>
- Talk Show on localization of humanitarian aid in Uganda: Arua One Fm 13th August 2020- <https://oxfam.box.com/s/apqqt5rbvvpbjzb8yvqdsi0ij8i9jy569>
- Talk Show on localization of humanitarian aid in Uganda: Voice of Karamoja 11th August 2020- <https://oxfam.box.com/s/3fkyu1kl92rq09648xiszmn18x09kxz2>
- Talk Show on localization of humanitarian aid in Uganda: Radio One 19th August 2020- <https://oxfam.box.com/s/a4yyleuddudfcdkfwofe872oiq9ucby6>
- Uganda in tough test on oil money: The Independent 24th August 2020- <https://www.independent.co.ug/uganda-in-tough-test-on-oil-money/>
- Environment activists to petition Museveni over Bugoma Forest giveaway: Nile Post 28th August 2020- <https://nilepost.co.ug/2020/08/28/environment-activists-to-petition-museveni-over-bugoma-forest-giveaway/>



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