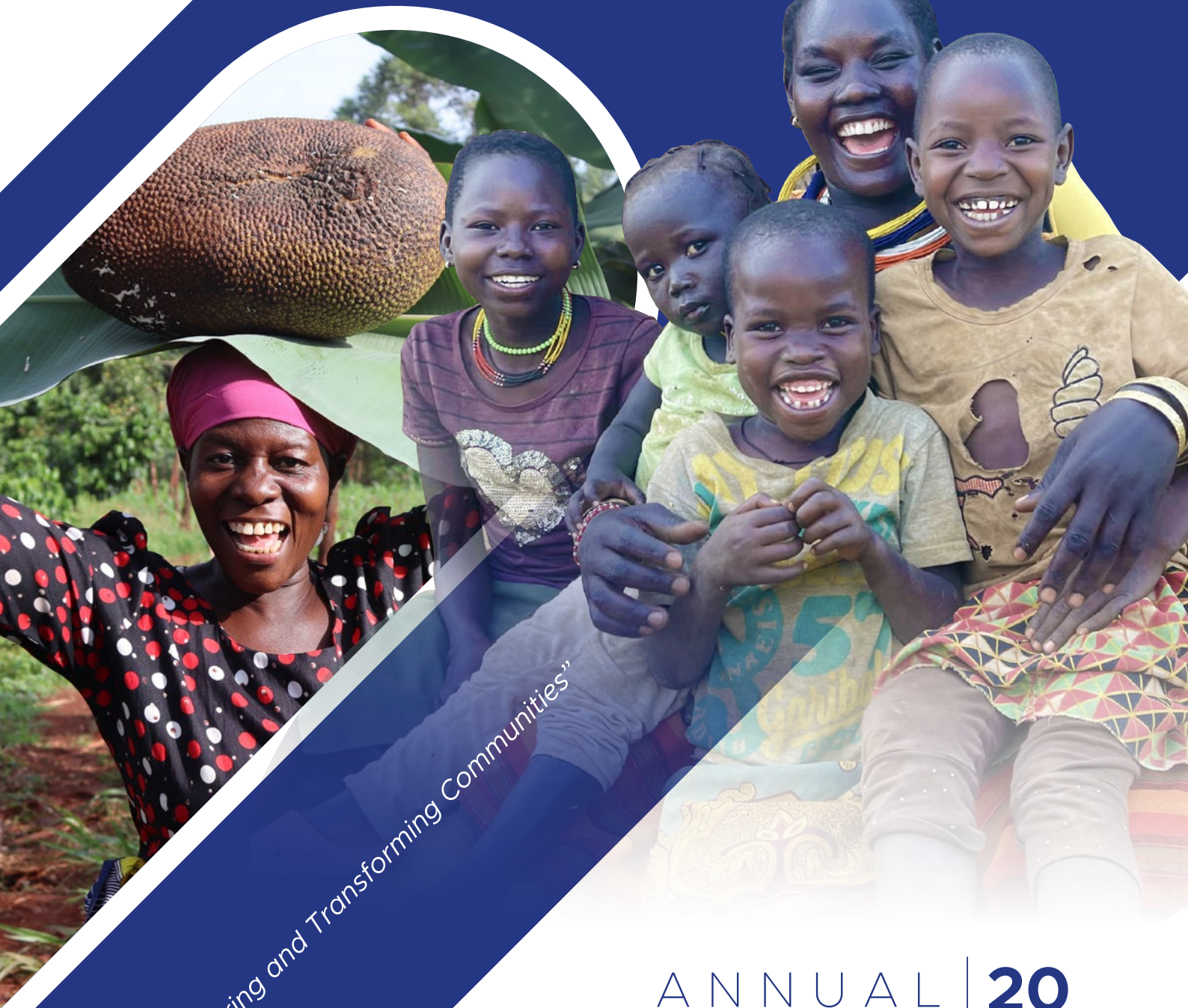




UGANDA COMMUNITY BASED
ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN
AND CHILDREN WELFARE
(UCOBAC)



“Empowering and Transforming Communities”

ANNUAL
REPORT | 20
23



UGANDA COMMUNITY BASED ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN WELFARE (UCOBAC)

“Empowering and Transforming Communities”

ANNUAL
REPORT | **20
23**



Children from Nambiya Primary School happy to receive books



Distribution of VSLA kits to one of UCOBAC beneficiary groups in Palabek refugee settlement

Table of Contents

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations	6
About Us	7
Remarks from Executive Director	8
Project Showcase	9
PROGRAM AREA 1: ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN	9
Project 1: Child Development Project	10
PROGRAM AREA 2: WOMEN'S LAND AND PROPERTY RIGHTS	15
Project 1: The Stand for Her Land (S4HL) Campaign	16
Project 2: Strengthening Women's Land Rights for Resilient Livelihoods in Karamoja Sub Region	27
Project 3: Strengthening Women's Access and Decision Making on Communal Lands and Natural Resources	30
Project 4: Regional Platform 4 Equal Land Rights for Women	33
Project 5: Improvement of Land Governance in Uganda (ILGU)	34
PROGRAM AREA 3: SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS (SRHR)	37
Project 1: Improving Food and Income Security, Climate Resilience and Women Empowerment for Refugees and Host Communities in Palabek Settlement	38
Project 2: Address Discriminatory Norms/Practices on HIV and GBV Against Women and Girls' Project	43
Project 3: Strengthening UCOBAC's Capacity in Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights and Safe Abortion Advocacy	45
PROGRAM AREA 4: CLIMATE CHANGE AND RESILIENT LIVELIHOODS (CCRL)	47
Project 1: Fair For All Project	48
Project 2: Nurturing Leadership of Grassroots Women's Organizations in Scaling Up Community Resilience in Uncertain Times	54
INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY STRENGTHENING	57

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AGM	Annual General Meeting
AFCFTA	Africa for Accelerated Implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement
CDP	Child Development Project
CEVs	Community Extension Volunteers
CLPA	Conference on Land Policy in Africa
CSA	Climate Smart Agriculture
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
GBV	Gender Based Violence
IGAs	Income Generating Activities
KAPs	Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices
LAW	Land Awareness Week
MLHUD	Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
SYFF	Securing Your Family's Future
SRHR	Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights
S4HL	Stand for Her Land
TOTs	Trainers of Trainees
UCOBAC	Uganda Community Based Association for Women and Children's Welfare
UWOPA	Uganda Parliamentary Women Association
VCAT	Values, Clarification, and Attitudes Transformation
VHTs	Village Health Teams
VSLA	Village Saving and Loan Association
WLRs	Women's Land Rights
WLRM	Women Land Rights Movement

About Us

Uganda Community Based Association for Women and Children Welfare is a national non-government organization in Uganda focusing on the promotion of women and children's rights in Uganda whose mission is to promote human rights and welfare of women and children using community-based initiatives.



Vision

We envision empowered communities free of poverty and able to exercise their human rights and fundamental freedoms.



Mission

To promote human rights and welfare of women and children using community-based initiatives.



Core Principles and Values

- i) Transparency and Accountability
- ii) Integrity
- iii) Excellence
- iv) Teamwork
- v) Mutual Respect
- vi) Inclusivity



UCOBAC objectives

- i) To identify and define vulnerable women and children, their needs and priority programs.
- ii) To plan, design and implement programs to promote human rights and improve welfare of women and children.
- iii) To advocate for positive welfare policies and programs to meet priority needs of vulnerable women and Children.
- iv) To strengthen capacity of grassroot and Community-based organizations to mobilise resources, develop local practices and advocate for rights and welfare of women and children in their communities.



Program Areas:

- 1) Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC)
- 2) Women's Land and Property Rights (WLPR)
- 3) Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)
- 4) Climate Change and Resilient Livelihoods (CCRL)

Remarks from Executive Director



It is with great pleasure that I present the annual report for 2023, highlighting the significant achievements and impact of Uganda Community Based Association (UCOBAC) in our mission to promote human rights and welfare of women and children using community-based initiatives.

I extend sincere appreciation to our esteemed government partners, development partners, civil society organizations, local leaders, media, academic institutions, local communities, and individuals whose steadfast support has been instrumental in advancing human rights and enhancing the well-being of women and children across Uganda. Our partnership and unwavering commitment has been pivotal in driving positive change within the communities we serve.

The year 2023 marked a series of pivotal milestones for UCOBAC, notably our Annual General Meeting (AGM), bringing together a growing membership of over sixty five (65) grassroots and community based organizations. This gathering served as a strategic platform for collaborative planning and knowledge sharing, essential for our sustained institutional growth, strength and impact.

Gratitude is extended to our valued financial and technical partners, including Canadian Feed The Children, Landesa, AWO International, DanChurchAid, International Land Coalition, GIZ, AWO International, PEPFAR, CEHURD, Oxfam-Novib, Huairou Commission, and SIDA. With their invaluable support, UCOBAC successfully implemented 11 projects across our four core program areas namely; Orphans and Vulnerable Children, Women's Land and Property Rights, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and Climate Change and Resilient Livelihoods spanning over 10 districts in Uganda.

The achievements documented in this report are a testament to the dedication of our staff and the guidance of our esteemed board of directors.

As we look ahead, UCOBAC remains steadfast in its commitment to leveraging community-based initiatives to drive transformative change in the lives of individuals, families, and communities.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support. Enjoy the read!

Frances Birungi-Odong
Executive Director,
UCOBAC



PROJECT SHOWCASE

PROGRAM AREA 1:
**ORPHANS AND
VULNERABLE
CHILDREN**

Program Objective:

To promote full development and realization of rights of orphans and
Vulnerable Children in Uganda.

PROJECT 1:**CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

The Child Development Project (CDP) aims at unleashing the potential of children and providing an enabling environment at home, school and their communities. The project constitutes five major sectors including health, education, livelihoods, community and organizational development, and food security and nutrition. Interventions are informed by a holistic and integrated approach to address the various needs of a child and these focus on four major spheres of influence and power i.e. self, household, institutions and community. CDP is being implemented in 10 Government aided schools in Bulesa, Kapyanga and Buluguyi sub counties of Bugiri district with support from Canadian Feed The Children (CFTC).

KEY MILESTONES**IMPROVED EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AND OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN**

Education is a basic human right and it is life changing for a child, their family and the community at large. UCOBAC worked together with teachers and Bugiri Local Government Authorities to improve the learning environment of children, through emphasizing quality teaching and ensuring effective school management through holding Parents Teachers Association (PTA) meetings.

A number of child ambassadors, 558 (262F/296 M) were provided with scholastic materials including, books, pens and pencils. This has helped improve learning outcomes in numeracy, literacy, writing and above all reduced absenteeism in schools.

EMPOWERING CHILDREN TO MAKE INFORMED CHOICES ABOUT THEIR LIVES

Children have a clear insight into their own reality and the power of their voices can collectively change their communities, they are not just passive recipients of social change.

Girls were given platforms to express their views, feelings, concerns and contribute towards making decisions that affect their lives, through established children clubs/safe spaces in their communities. For instance, 90 children clubs/safe spaces were established, and these engaged a total of 1806 girls.

With guidance from trained child mentors, the safe space platforms allowed girls to share, learn, and raise social issues that affect their wellbeing especially on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

(SRHR) empowered children with a number of things including; equipping them with skills on how to make reusable sanitary towels hence improving menstrual hygiene management.

Children engaged in a number of radio talk-shows on Eastern Voice FM where they discussed several topics around SRHR including; teenage pregnancy, child marriage, menstrual hygiene management and STDs/STIs among others; challenges they face and how they want parents and the community to support them.

This approach empowered children especially adolescent girls with life skills including, increasing their self-esteem and confidence to speak about SRHR, issues affecting them and how they can be addressed. Radio talk shows contributed towards increasing community awareness on children



A girl expressing her views against teenage pregnancy during one of the safe space platform sessions.

issues around SRHR from the children's perspective. Girls have further acquired knowledge and skills that have helped them to be healthy, live better lives and avoid Sexually Transmitted Infections and unwanted pregnancies.

The Menstrual Hygiene Management training has contributed towards fulfilling the unmet need for menstrual hygiene products, ended misconceptions and menstrual stigma thus increasing school retention among girls. There is also better menstrual healthcare and access to hygiene products in schools leading to improved sexual and reproductive health and reduced barriers to access and completion of school for the girl child. Girls have broken myths, stigma, harmful gender norms – taboos and misconceptions around menstruation. There is more inclusion and engagement of girls in community activities.



One of the Children's Club Members participating in a radio talk show at Eastern Voice Radio, Bugiri district.

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES IN LIVELIHOOD AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A total of 487 (349 F, 138 M) Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA) members were trained in business planning, record keeping and financial management. As a result, they gained more knowledge and confidence on the control of their finances. Today, they have better financial management skills and discipline hence changing the social construction in society including the gender social roles. More women have been empowered to make informed decisions about their family resources, household income generation and financial management including saving and investing more, and spending less.

In addition, 100 beneficiaries were provided with start-up capital and they started small scale businesses including selling of silver fish, vegetables and other food stuffs.

VSLA's serve as poverty reduction tools in communities as cheap loans are available in rural communities who do not have access to conventional financial support.

The VSLAs have also empowered participants to increase access and control over resources and use collective power to overcome social and financial barriers. Saving money in the VSLAs has helped to protect people in times of financial crises; make large purchases and have financial freedom. Over 60 per cent of the VSLA groups have records indicating members' daily savings, welfare contributions, loans and payments.

Overall, the trainings have empowered members to make informed business choices leading to growth of individual small-scale businesses thus improving the welfare of families.

INCREASED FOOD PRODUCTION AND BETTER NUTRITION IN COMMUNITIES

In an effort to address malnutrition and hunger in communities, a total of 300 (190F, 110M) farmers/ parents were provided with drought resistant cassava varieties and banana suckers. They were also equipped with knowledge on integrated pest and disease control, post-harvest handling, weed control, use of farm yard manure, and water conservation all leading to increased food production at the household level and guaranteeing daily meals for families.

The project also maintained school feeding programs, through provision of nutritious porridge flour to children in the 10 selected government aided schools in Bugiri district. As a result, 8280 (4138 F,

4142M) learners were guaranteed meals while at school hence minimizing absenteeism in schools for both teachers and learners. Children stayed at school for more learning hours (8hours a day) thus having more time for class work.

The school feeding program has provided educational and health benefits to vulnerable children including promoting higher school attendance and reduced dropout rates. It has also served as an incentive for parents to send children to school, leading to equity and inclusion especially for the girl child. It has further improved children's health and growth leading to reduced cases of malnutrition.

In addition, there has been improved concentration and performance in schools as children are energized to participate in class work.



Children having a meal while at school



Parents attending a practical session on pests and diseases control in plants

INCREASED COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND OWNERSHIP OF THE PROJECT (CDP)



A Child Advocate sharing her findings in one of the quarterly review and monitoring meetings

Community participation is crucial for the sustainability of any project. In an effort, to increase community participation and ownership of the project, 50 (26F, 24M) Child Advocates were trained in project monitoring and evaluation. They were empowered with the knowledge to track the progress of the project, identify potential risks and challenges as well as design possible ways to mitigate them. This as a result, helped Child Advocates monitor and evaluate project interventions, while directly engaging beneficiaries and community leaders. And they had the opportunity to share their findings with UCOBAC staff during the quarterly review meetings. As a result, staff were able to gain feedback from the communities hence informing and improving future programming.



CHALLENGES

- Delayed communication from some parents of child ambassadors who change their children's school. These delays the provision of support to such children as tracing them becomes difficult.
- Presence of counterfeit pesticides in the market undermines the efforts of farmers in ensuring and promoting food security at household level.
- Social norms that hinder women from owning land, to freely practice agriculture undermines food security in the communities.



LESSONS LEARNT

- Including children in discussions related to their wellbeing empowers them to become agents of change and contribute to the shaping of policies and programs that directly impact their lives. It is therefore crucial to create safe spaces where children feel comfortable sharing their ideas, thoughts and concerns.
- Provision of support like scholastic materials, school meals, startup capital to school going children and their families empowers them to break barriers to children accessing formal education.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Government and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) should take into account the views, thoughts and concerns of children while designing policies and programs aimed at promoting their wellbeing since they are not passive recipients of social change. Every child deserves a chance to participate in the change process.
- CSOs need to continuously value the socioeconomic potential of people living in vulnerable situations, recognize their skills and strengthen their motivation to live a self-determined life
- There is need for the Bugiri Local Government Authorities to come-up with ordinances against counterfeit pesticides on the market.



PROGRAM AREA 2:

WOMEN'S LAND AND PROPERTY RIGHTS

Project objective:

To promote equitable security of tenure through promotion and protection of the land and property rights of women and girls.

PROJECT 1:**THE STAND FOR HER LAND (S4HL) CAMPAIGN**

The Stand for Her Land (S4HL) campaign is a civil society led global collaborative campaign with a mission to strengthen women's land rights through collective advocacy that aims to close the implementation gap between law and practice. The S4HL campaign engages in collective, country-led advocacy to remove social and structural barriers that prevent women from exercising their land, property and natural resource rights and to ensure that land tenure governance, reforms, and processes equitably include and benefit women.

The campaign in Uganda is coordinated by UCOBAC under the auspices of the National Land Coalition with over 30 civil society organizations and community-based organisations at the national, sub national and grass roots level respectively. The five-year campaign that is in its second-year running is implemented in partnership with Landesa, with financial support from BMZ.

KEY MILESTONES

In 2023, the Stand for Her Land Campaign in Uganda achieved significant milestones in our efforts to bolster women's land rights (WLRs). Our strategic approach involved organizing and actively participating in various advocacy activities, all aimed at bridging the implementation gap between legal frameworks and on-the-ground practices.

The milestones detailed in this report stand as a testament to the campaigns steadfast dedication to promoting gender equality and securing land tenure for women.

GRASSROOTS WOMEN LEADERS' ACADEMIES

The grass roots women leaders' academy is an initiative by the S4HL Campaign to establish a strong grass roots women regional base for collective advocacy on WLRs.

The academies are aimed at promoting grass roots women voice, participation and agency as one of the key advocacy issues under the Stand for Her Land Campaign in Uganda. Today the academies have been held in all the four (4) regions of Uganda including; Eastern Uganda in Soroti district May 5th to 6th, 2023, Central at Sports View Kireka, Kampala July 26th to 27th, 2023, Northern in Lira City August 31st to September 1st, 2023 and Western Uganda in Kabale September 27th to 28th, 2023.

90 grassroots women from selected organized women groups and CBOS from the districts of Kumi, Soroti, Amuria, Busia, Moroto, Napak, Kotido, Kaabong, Bugiri, Butaleja Mubende, Mityana, Kassanda, Masaka, Kampala, Lira, Zombo, Dokolo, Amolatar, Kabale, Kisoro, Mbarara and Ntungamo were trained on how to organize, engage and influence land governance processes. To improve and invoke women's participation, training materials were developed and they covered the most needed topics related to advocacy and leadership including; Human and women's land rights (WLRs), gender norms, power and empowerment, coalition building and communication, lobbying and advocacy.

At the end of the trainings, participants developed district specific advocacy plans that will be incorporated into the campaigns work plan.



A group photo with representatives of organised women groups and community based organisations from selected districts in Northern Uganda after attending the academy.

REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF THE MARRIAGE BILL, 2022

Over the years, there have been attempts to develop a comprehensive legislation governing marriage, considering the fact that the Marriage Act was enacted 119 years ago and has since not been updated. In 2022, Parliament of Uganda through the Uganda Parliamentary Women Association (UWOPA) embarked on the revival of the Marriage and Divorce Bill.

Guided by a Memorandum of Understanding with UWOPA, the campaign facilitated and was represented in a number of build-up activities towards the realization of the Bill. As a result, the campaign was represented in; lobby and technical retreat meetings attended by key influential directorates of government including; the Attorney General and the Parliamentary Legal Committee organized by UWOPA, and the CSO consultative meeting organized by S4HL on October 5th, 2023.



A photo moment with stakeholders who attended the CSO consultation meeting on the marriage bill, 2022 at Fairway Hotel, Kampala.

Some of the issues raised during the different consultative forums include; the need to address and deal with realities of cohabitation, interrogate whether marriage is a social or a legal issue, assess what amounts to presence of parties at a contraction

of marriage, strengthening the clause of notice of marriage and how to strike a balance between consent and cultural inclinations and pre-marital counselling before marriage.

GENDER ANALYSIS FOR THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS OF THE LAND ACT

Following the invitation from the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development to Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to submit views and recommendations on the on-going review of the Land Act, the S4HL Campaign in Uganda and Women’s Land Rights Movement held consultative engagements with key stakeholders to analyze the position of women in the proposed areas of reform in the Land Act.

The gender analysis focused on ensuring that, there is enhanced participation and representation of women, equal access to and utilization of services, a fair economic consideration in regard to women and men accessing land services, ensuring the sustainability of proposed systems to benefit more women and men and ensure that social and cultural issues in regard to women and men’s access to services and ownership of land are considered.

IMPROVING FUNDING FOR THE LAND SECTOR AND AGRO-INDUSTRIALIZATION

The S4HL Campaign in partnership with Food Rights Alliance held a CSO budget consultation meeting on 3rd October 2023 aimed at enhancing the knowledge and understanding of CSO actors in the national budget processes including preparation of the budget framework paper and preliminary budget estimates for FY 2024/25. It also focused on sharing aspirations geared towards improving the land sector and food productivity in Uganda.

From the deliberations, it was evident that land and agro-industrialisation sectors are among the least funded priorities in the national budget. Below are some of the Key proposals made during the dialogue.

Land governance

- Funding of the Area Land committees
- Allocation of funds for sensitizing communities at grass root level about the LIS
- Strengthening technical capacity on land management systems in a bid to promote peace
- Harmonizing formal and customary land laws
- Streamlining activities of regional land offices with the District Land Office

Agro-industrialisation

- Increasing the Agricultural fund from 3% to 8% or 10%
- Fast-track the implementation of the Agriculture Value Chain Development Strategy (AVCDS)
- Prioritization of regional common user facilities and incubation centers to support smallholder farmers improve the quality of their products.
- Improve road networks to connect rural agricultural areas to urban centers and export hubs.
- Build and upgrade marketplaces with necessary amenities.

A position paper detailing the CSO priorities for Land and Agri-industrialisation for Financial year 2024/25 was developed and later presented to stakeholders at a convening in Ridar Hotel, Seeta during the central local government budget consultative meeting for financial 2024/25.



Stakeholders attending the CSO budget consultative meeting at gold course hotel, Kampala

PUBLIC DIALOGUES AND CELEBRATION OF NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY DAYS



campaign in which key messages on the advancement of gender inclusive digitalization were shared. The online campaign was climaxed

with a radio talk show that highlighted the role technology plays in advancing women's land rights in Uganda.

International Women's Day

The Campaign joined the rest of the world to celebrate the invaluable contribution of women in their different capacities towards national and global development of the different sectors notably, food security, natural resource management and conservation among others. Under the Global Theme: **"DigitALL: Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality"** and the national theme **"Equal Opportunities in Education, Science and Technology for Innovation and a Gender Equal Future."**

In partnership with the Women's Land Rights Movement (WLRM) and the National Land Coalition (NLC) Uganda, the Stand for Her Land Campaign ran an online

The talk show was held on Radio 1 Spectrum and featured a representative from the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development (MLHUD), a Principal Information Scientist and Facilitator from the National Land Coalition and a Grass roots Woman Leader from a Community Based Organization in Butaleja. During discussions government was commended for establishing a digital National Land Information System, however little was done to address the gender data gap in the system. On using digital technology for awareness raising, government was called upon to regulate internet costs and reduce taxes on phones to ensure that women equitably benefit from the online opportunities. All panellists emphasized that, the use of digital technology in the land sector can only be effective if they are inclusive, affordable and context specific.

An opinion piece was also published on the Daily Monitor Newspaper of March 9th, 2023 highlighting experiences and recommendations for adoption of digital technologies on advancing women's land rights in Uganda. Find details on the following link:

 <https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/oped/commentary/digital-technologies-and-women-s-land-rights-4151822?s=08>



International Youth Day

The S4HL Campaign in Uganda, joined the rest of the world to celebrate the International Day of the Youth 2023 under the theme **“Green Skills for the Youth: Towards a Sustainable World”**. A webinar was held to discuss the effective participation of the youth in land governance. It aimed at strengthening youth inclusion in land governance and was attended by 56 stakeholders.


Some of the issues raised inhibiting effective youth participation in land governance include;

- Societal perceptions that the youth do not have the capacity to manage or make decisions on land
- High unemployment rate among the youth which limits their purchasing power

- Lack of knowledge on land related legal frameworks and policies
- Perceptions among the youth that land based activities such as agriculture are not profitable and take long to yield.

A number of strategies were made to enhance youth participation in land governance including; adoption of youth friendly educative approaches focused on create awareness on land related legal frameworks and policies, empowerment of youth councils and leaders to articulate land related matters and maximizing the potential and capabilities of the youth through interesting them in urban and small field agriculture, and organizing youth camps on land and property management.

The celebrations were crowned by an opinion piece on empowering youth through Secure Land Rights published on the Daily Monitor of August 14th, 2023.

 <https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/oped/commentary/empowering-youth-through-secure-land-rights--4334978>



International Day of Rural Women

The Stand For Her Land campaign in partnership with the Women's Land Rights Movement and Food Rights Alliance celebrated the International Day of Rural. The day was commemorated under the theme **“Financing for Rural Women's Empowerment”**. A series of activities were undertaken including raising awareness about the unique challenges facing rural women in access, use of, ownership and control of land and exploring critical actions to address them.

For instance, **Radio Talk Shows** were held both in Lira (Q.FM) and Kabale district (Voice of Kigezi). The shows focused on reflecting on the critical role land tenure security for women contributes to the actualisation of their empowerment, scrutinize the available government credit programs and assessing their performance in ensuring sustainable wellbeing of intended beneficiaries. They were attended by a number of stakeholders including; a Grassroots Woman Leader, the District Community or Gender Officer and a S4HL Coalition Member. A number of issues were raised during the discussions including; the significance of men in the struggle for women's land rights, sensitising communities more on the urgent need to uphold the rights of women and transforming discriminatory norms barring women from owning critical resources like land.

Radio Talk Show
CELEBRATING RURAL WOMEN
Theme: "Financing for Rural Women's Empowerment"
 Exploring Challenges and Opportunities for rural women in Uganda

Panelists

- Doreen Auma, Grassroots Woman leader
- Rebecca Aplo, ED-Land Justice Network
- Susan Aceng, Lira District Community Devt Officer

Q FM LIRA 94.3 fm
 OCT 18TH 7:30PM-8:30PM
 #IDRW23 #RuralWomenEmpowerment

Radio Talk Show
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF RURAL WOMEN
Theme: "Financing for Rural Women's Empowerment"
 Exploring Challenges and Opportunities for rural women in Uganda

Panelists

- Florence Tumuhirwe, ED Kigezi Women in Devt (KWID)
- Albert Taremwa, ED Local Sustainable Communities Org (LOSCO)
- Moses Akampurira, Senior Devt Officer-Kabale

Voice of Kigezi
 OCT 15TH 2-3PM
 #IDRW23 #RuralWomenEmpowerment

A webinar to examine the critical role of financing of the land sector for rural women's empowerment was held. It was held under the global theme: "**Financing for Rural Women Empowerment**" Opportunities and Challenges for Uganda.

WEBINAR

International Day of Rural Women
THEME "Financing for Rural Womens Empowerment": Exploring challenges and opportunities for rural women in Uganda

MODERATOR

- Mr. John Mwebe, Consultant, Land Governance, Development Financing & Corporate Accountability

PANELISTS

- Ms. Maxensia Nakibuuka, Grassroots woman
- Dr. Doreen Kobusingye, Facilitator, National Land Coalition
- Ms. Ritah Namuddu, Supervisor, Women in Business Finance Trust Bank
- Ms. Angella Nakafeero, Commissioner Women Affairs, Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development

Zoom
 Monday October 16, 2023 03:00PM Nairobi
 Register in advance for this meeting
 #IDRW23 #RuralWomenEmpowerment

The Land Awareness Week

The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development (MLHUD) in partnership with the District Local Governments, Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM) Uganda, CSOs and other Non-State Actors organized the seventh (7th) Land Awareness Week (LAW) 2023 in the seven



(7) districts of Lango Sub Region (Lira, Apac, Dokolo, Amolatar, Kwania, Kole and Alebtong). The land awareness week was marked under the theme "**Promoting**

Land Rights for Inclusive and Sustainable Development".

As a result, 3 radio talk shows were held in Lira district as part of the week's activities. The shows created awareness on the importance of women's land rights, especially in management and registration of customary land, marriage and succession.

THE 7TH NATIONAL LAND AWARENESS WEEK (LAW) 2023
THEME: "Promoting Land Rights and Inclusion for Enhanced Production and Sustainable Development"
Date: 28th August - 1st September, 2023 **Districts:** Lira, Dokolo, Amolatar, Kole, Kwania, Apac, Alebtong & Busia



Photos taken during radio talk shows in Lira at Q-FM to celebrate the contributions of rural women on International Rural Women's Day



The Northern Uganda Land Platform (NULP)

The Stand for Her Land Campaign participated in the NULP 2023, held in Moroto district under the theme **“Accelerating Sustainable Land Use Practices in the Wake of Technological Advancement”**. The event was coordinated by the Land Justice Network and it offered an opportunity for actors to deliberate on land issues affecting communities in the north. The convening was graced by Hon. Nakut Faith, the Woman MP for Napak district who called upon participants to embrace the power of awareness raising and legal literacy on regulatory frameworks on land, promoting legal registration, supporting communities to sustainably and effectively utilize land and further promote effective technological use through ensuring and supporting equal access to tools and skilling. Three grassroots women leaders from Karamoja sub region were facilitated by the campaign to participate in the event.



16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence

The S4HL campaign joined the world to commemorate 16 days of activism against GBV. The 16 days were celebrated under the theme **“UNITE! Invest to prevent Violence against Women and girls”**.

A number of activities were undertaken to mark the celebrations including; a TV news feature aired in English and Luganda on both NTV Uganda and Spark TV on December 10th, 2023. The objective was to assess the nexus between land related gender- based violence and key S4HL campaign advocacy issues like the lack of awareness on land laws and policies in communities; discriminatory social norms and the underlying challenges inhibiting access to justice for women.

The stories aired detailed the magnitude of land related gender-based violence. Victims were interviewed to explore how the land issues they were facing generated into GBV and how they attained justice. The story also captured interventions undertaken by partners to support women access justice. It also captured perceptions of community leaders on the possible strategies of mitigating gender based violence amidst property management in families. Details of the stories can be accessed on the following links;



<https://youtu.be/GTtqqUSUs0w?si=UdvSXQqfOoLCsQN1>

and https://youtu.be/SmcfXLfevEs?si=_SJtokljdxlHy76R

ENGAGEMENT IN NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY FORUMS

A number of conferences were organized at the national, regional and international level. Participating in these events enabled the campaign to achieve visibility as well as advocacy towards closing the implementation gap on women's land rights.

Engaging in these spaces worked towards popularising the Stand for Her Land Campaign's strategic objectives in addition to taking stock of the legal laws and policies, information dissemination and strengthening effective accountability in the delivery of land services at both local and national level. Some of the events that the campaign engaged in include;

Conference on Land Policy in Africa (CLPA 2023)

The Stand for Her Land campaign participated in the CLPA 2023 conference held at the African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from November 21st - 24th 2023 under the theme ***"Promoting Sustainable Land Governance in Africa for Accelerated Implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement (AfCFTA)."***

The campaign held a side event and a paper was presented on Strengthening Women's Land Rights for Accelerated Realisation of AFCFTA. The conference provided an opportunity for regional land actors to reflect on the significance and added-value of Women Land Rights in trade.

The side event featured a panel discussion comprising of three speakers who deliberated on the theories underpinning gender and WLRs; they examined the efficacy of existing laws, highlighted the obstacles encountered, practical strategies and demonstrated how stronger WLRs can support accelerate the realisation of AfCFTA.



L-R, ILC Africa Regional Coordinator Mr Audace Kubwimana, Huairou Commission Chair Ms Violet Shivutse, Regional Platform 4 Chair Ms Motlanalo Lebepe and a Land Governance Thematic Specialist Mr Jonathan Ochom speaking at the S4HL side event at the CLPA.



Stakeholders pose for photo after the panel discussion at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on November 22nd, 2023

The campaign also held a technical session where the Executive Director of UCOBAC, Ms. Frances Birungi presented a paper on strengthening WLRs for accelerated realisation of AFCFTA.

During the presentation, she underscored the pivotal role of women as primary land users, emphasizing that the realization of the objectives of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AFCFTA) hinges significantly on securing their land rights. While acknowledging that several countries have enacted legislation to ensure equal access and ownership of land; she pointed out the stark reality that limited efforts have been made to effectively implement the laws.



Ms. Frances Birungi presenting a paper on Strengthening Women Land Rights For accelerated realization of AFCFTA during a technical session

Key recommendations from the side event include;

- Participants called for a revolutionary response, highlighting the vital importance of the digital revolution. Acknowledging the global trend toward digitization; it was emphasized that women must adapt to these changes to actively engage in trade.
- There was a call for the reinforcement of Women’s Land Rights (WLRs). It was emphasized that the prospect of trade itself hinges on the establishment of a robust WLRs.
- A collective call to broaden the discourse beyond WLRs. The suggestion was to step back and reflect on commitments made by the African Union, specifically referencing the 2009 guidelines aimed at securing women’s land rights.



Women Deliver 2023 Conference (WD2023)

The Conference took place in Kigali Rwanda from 17th – 20th July 2023. It served as one of the largest multi-sectoral convening's to advance gender equality. It was attended by over 6,300 people and held under the theme **“Spaces, Solidarity and Solutions”** and with funding from Landesa. The Stand for Her Land Campaign in Uganda was represented by a grassroots woman leader.



Commission on the Status of Women (CSW67) 2023

We participated in the Sixty Seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women that took place from 6th to 7th March, 2023 in New York under the theme **“Innovation and Technological Change, Education in Digital age for Achieving Gender Equality and the Empowerment of all Women and Girls.”**



Global Landscape Forum

With support from the United Nations Convention to combat desertification, we facilitated a grassroots woman leader attend the forum in Kenya. The conference aimed at exploring local solutions to the climate and biodiversity crises.

The National Land Policy Platform

The S4HL campaign was represented at the National Land Policy Forum held between October 31st and November 2nd 2023 at Hotel Africana. The convening focused on discussing progress made in the implementation of the National Land Policy activities in the last 10 years and reviewing of the new policy. During the meeting, a detailed position of CSOs was presented

The campaign participated in the **National Learning Exchange** on securing Women's resource rights through gender transformative approaches. The event took place on December 6th, 2023 at Hotel Africana.

DOCUMENTATION OF PROGRESSIVE CULTURAL PRACTICES AND SOCIAL NORMS

The Campaign recorded a podcast to document and publish culturally acceptable practices on access, ownership, use and control of land in the Lango sub-region. The objective is to ensure that societies appreciate culturally acceptable norms and practices in their respective traditions by understanding certain practices and guide communities towards identifying and transforming harmful and discriminatory practices. The process will also enable cultural institutions to document culture for future generations and popularize progressive practices. The podcast will be published in 2024.

BUILDING CAPACITY OF COALITION MEMBERS ON EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY

The S4HL campaign held a partners meeting to take stock of the progress of the campaign's activity implementation in 2023 and share the work plan for the year ahead. The meeting provided a platform for partners to assess the progress of the campaign's activities, discuss potential areas for collaboration in 2024, and explore partnership opportunities at both organizational and campaign level.

A number of issues were raised during the meeting including; having a sustainability plan in place at the end of the campaign. The meeting was attended by several partners including international NGO's, Civil society Organisations and Community Based Organisations.



Stakeholders pose for a group photo at the S4HL partners meeting, November 9th, 2023 at Hotel Africana



A Group discussion going on at the S4HL partners meeting, at Hotel Africana

PROJECT 2:

STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S LAND RIGHTS FOR RESILIENT LIVELIHOODS IN KARAMOJA SUB REGION

With funding from DanchurchAid (DCA), UCOBAC implemented the “Strengthening Women’s Land Rights for Resilient Livelihoods in Karamoja Sub Region” in Napak district, Lorengecora Sub County. The one-year intervention focused on **“Ensuring that women living in Karamoja sub region access, sustainably use and meaningfully participate in decision making on land as a pre-requisite for food and income security.”**

The project was built on the social norms transformational model while using the Securing Your Family’s Future (SYFF) Model. It was guided by three specific objectives including; increasing women’s legal literacy and self- efficacy to WLRs, supporting transformation of negative and harmful norms to WLRs and enhancing food and income security for target households in the Karamoja sub region.

KEY MILESTONES

BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

A total of 8 (4M/4F) community volunteers were identified, trained and facilitated to lead community mobilization and dialogue sessions in the parishes of Lolet, Cholichol and Kokipurat. The training was guided by the Securing Your Family’s Future (SYFF) curricula for men and women. They were equipped with knowledge on land legal frameworks and policies, and the various family laws including marriage and succession laws that support women’s land rights.

They were also equipped with knowledge on women’s land rights, and social norms transformation.

The champions were further equipped with work aides, community mobilisation skills and facilitated to lead engagements in their communities. As a result, 355 (130M/255F) community members have been reached through community dialogues on women’s



Community Volunteers engaging in a group work session during the training

land rights and social norms transformation. The Community Volunteers have also played a great role in linking the rights holders with disputes to the respective offices including formal and informal structures for redress.

INCREASED LEGAL LITERACY AND WOMEN'S SELF EFFICACY TO WLRs

To promote legal literacy and women's self-efficacy among selected communities, the project supported two core activities; Community dialogues on land laws, gender, women land rights and social norms transformation and awareness raising through radio talk show programs.

- **Community Dialogues on Land Laws, Gender, Women Land Rights and Social Norms Transformation**

80 community dialogue sessions were conducted by trained community champions to create awareness on, women's land rights, gender and social norms transformation. A total of 355 project rights holders spread across

villages were reached. Topics covered include introduction to women's land rights, with key interest on land laws and policies supporting WLRs, gender and gender boxes, joint decision making, successful families and land rights, goal setting and mapping, and actions that can be undertaken by both men and women to secure their families' future. Key actions emphasized in these dialogues include will writing, registration and co-registration of land, registration of marriages, and participation of women in land administrative processes. This has resulted to, increased appreciation of joint land registration as it guarantees security of tenure for the spouses and their children. It has also prevented forceful inheritance of widows which is a common practice in the Karamoja sub region.

- **Radio Talk Shows**

Eight (8) radio talk shows were held on Ateker FM, a Moroto based radio station with the widest coverage in the sub region. Radio talk shows were organised to enhance awareness raising efforts and ensure a wide reach of the project messages. The radio talk show discussions were facilitated by district technical officers such as the Senior Lands Management Officer, Gender Focal Person, District Land Board Chairperson, representatives of the Community Volunteers and CSOs. Topics discussed were the prominent intersecting issues identified during the community engagement including; women's land rights, gender, land registration, large scale land-based investments, succession and inheritance etc.

ENGAGEMENT OF LOCAL LAND ACTORS TO TRANSFORM NEGATIVE AND HARMFUL NORMS ON WLRs

Conversations were held with local land actors including local council and traditional leaders. The purpose of the training was to strengthen their capacity in dispensing gender responsive land justice governance on communal land and natural resources through shifting norms, perceptions and attitudes towards women's land rights.

Topics covered include, land legal frameworks and policies as well as mediation to enhance their capacity to perform their mandate and support women to realise their land rights. This engagement facilitated learning among participants and was a very significant step towards transforming societal held discriminatory social norms.

CAPACITY BUILDING ON CLIMATE SMART AGRICULTURE

8 (4M/4F) Community Volunteers were successfully trained on Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA). The training provided a platform to discuss adaptive and indigenous measures to the effects of climate change within the region. Three climate smart practices including water harvesting and storage, soil management and use of organic fertilizers and tree planting were promoted during the training. These include, water harvesting and storage, soil management and use of organic fertilizers and tree planting as the most common, affordable and prominent mitigation measures.

UNDERSTANDING THE SITUATION OF WOMEN'S LAND RIGHTS IN THE KARAMOJA SUB REGION

A baseline study was conducted to collect project information (understanding the current situation), monitor and assess progress of program implementation. The purpose was to understand the context, national laws and policies that promote, protect and support Women's Land and Property Rights (WLPR); challenges women in Karamoja face in advancing land rights; community beliefs, practices and attitudes towards WLPR; support structures available for women to access gender justice and threats to food and income security; and the effects of climate change and indigenous adaptation practices.

The study revealed that;

- The structure of community champions formed have some level of confidence but their capacity and confidence need further strengthening and confidence building.
- Community's knowledge on laws and policies on women's land and property rights was generally low, with women scoring poorer than men.
- The social norms on women's right to own (individually or jointly), access, control, inherit land and property is deeply entrenched; a number of these norms are more harmful than positive.
- Few women reported experiencing land related conflicts which upon occurrence, they refer to a number of community-based structures. However, most of these are male-dominated and tend to represent the interests of men and to maintain male chauvinism. This undermines women's trust and confidence in the structures yet they are less accessible to the women.
- On climate change mitigation and adaptation, targeted communities were yet to embrace appropriate soil conservation practices and intentional planting of trees. This in part accounts for the prevailing food and livelihood insecurity in targeted communities

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

A number of recommendations were generated and these include;

- Enhancing the capacity and confidence of the community to the required level.
- Building synergies between traditional and formal structures with a role to promote women's land and property rights.
- Be intentional in journeying with the men to translate their intentions i.e. bequeathing land to their spouses and daughters, committing to writing a will, and registering their family land.
- Capacity building of local land administrative and justice structures on their roles and responsibilities; on the land laws and land rights of women cognizant that most of them handle the bulk of land cases amidst ignorance of the law but only guided by patriarchal system that favors men.
- Sensitizing community members, men and women on women's land and property rights
- Address low knowledge and the poor attitude and negative practices towards agroforestry

**CHALLENGES**

- High demand by communities to scale-up the number of beneficiaries.

**LESSONS LEARNED**

- Involvement of district and sub county officials, before community stakeholders in project activities plays a key role in activity implementation as they influence and motivate the communities to embrace development and this also helps in smooth coordination with different stakeholders in the district.
- Working with resource persons in the community is key in guaranteeing project buy-in especially for sensitive interventions as community members identify with them.

PROJECT 3:**STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S ACCESS AND DECISION MAKING ON COMMUNAL LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

UCOBAC is implementing the **“Strengthening Women’s access and decision making on communal lands and natural resources”** project in Nabwal and Lorengecora sub counties of Napak district. The project aims at ensuring that women living and dependent on communal land and natural resources have secure land rights and can ably participate in decision making processes regarding these key livelihoods’ resources. This participation is important in ensuring their voices are listened to and taken care of for improved food productivity and security, livelihoods and reduced poverty line ultimately igniting sustainable development. The project is implemented through four key objectives;

- i. Promotion of legal literacy
- ii. Transformation of discriminatory social and gender norms on women’s land rights
- iii. Strengthening of women meaningful participation in governance of communal land and
- iv. Amplification of grassroots voices in local, national, regional and international level to influence policy and practice in a way that advance their land and natural resources rights on communal land.

KEY MILESTONES**PROJECT INTRODUCTORY MEETINGS**

The meetings aimed at introducing the project to rights holders identified by both the Champions and the Local Council 1 Chairpersons in the selected sub counties in Napak district while using the agreed criteria. A total of 1271 (620M/651F) were reached during the project inception meetings with rights holders.

As a result of the meetings, there was great support and commitment secured from both selected beneficiaries and local leaders. The forums also served as an opportunity to introduce the Community Champions to the rights holders, local leaders and the generally public in addition to leveling the ground for the Champions to enroll for the Sessions of “Securing Your Family’s Future Course”.

COMMUNITY DIALOGUE SESSIONS

During the period, 144 community dialogue sessions were conducted with targeted beneficiaries and reaching a total of 1271 (620M/651F) project rights holders. Topics covered during the sessions include; introduction to women’s land rights, basic land laws and policies supporting women’s land rights, gender and gender boxes, joint decision making, successful families and land rights, goal setting and mapping, what men can do to ensure equitable land rights, will writing and registration of marriages, registration and co-registration of land and land administrative structures that support land registration processes.

The dialogue sessions were led by trained community paralegals, with close support and monitoring of the UCOBAC project team. The dialogues led to positive power relations among target households in selected Sub Counties, there is an appreciation of change of practice/ concept of WLRs among both direct and indirect male beneficiaries leading to increased family peace and harmonious relationships. As a result, both direct and indirect rights beneficiaries have embraced joint decision making leading to joint registration of land to protect their spouses and children. This is seen in land sale agreements e.g. a case in Kodike Parish, Nabwal sub county.

CAPACITY BUILDING OF LOCAL LAND ACTORS

Local land actors play a very significant role in providing redress to aggrieved persons within communities. Strengthening their capacity to offer gender responsive land justice would therefore enable women who are most affected to receive timely and affordable justice. Under this project, a three days training of local land actors who included local council leaders, members of lower land structures and traditional leaders was organized in both project sub counties.

A total of 74 (13F/61M) local leaders received a training on gender and Women's land rights, legal frameworks and policies on land, and the various family laws that support WLRs. The training was used to reflect on the underlying negative and harmful norms prohibiting women from fully exercising their rights to land in the Karamoja sub region. The local land actors also discussed and reflected on their legal mandate in land governance and administration.

PROMOTION OF CLIMATE SMART AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES

A training on Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) was held and it was attended by 20 (10M/10F) Community Volunteers. The training aimed at providing a platform for knowledge and information sharing about CSA to project beneficiaries. It also aimed at enhancing skills of community volunteers to support target households to adopt indigenous knowledge and local practices on three practices including water harvesting and storage, soil management and use of organic fertilizers and tree planting as the most common, affordable and prominent mitigation measures. The trainings were practical in nature and at the end the community volunteers were supported to set-up model farms.

PROJECT REVIEW MEETINGS

Four quarterly review meetings were held during this project reporting period, to discuss project progress, successes, challenges and how they can be addressed. The meetings aimed at strengthening stakeholder project buy in and also enhance sustainability plans for the project. The meetings brought together key project stakeholders including; Sub County Chiefs, Community Development Officers, Chairpersons LC111s, Sub County Councilors, Extension Officers and Community Volunteers. In total, the meetings were attended by 48M/41F stakeholders.

AMPLIFICATION OF GRASSROOTS VOICES ON LAND GOVERNANCE PROCESSES

Involvement of grassroots women in national, regional and international debates and discussions on land and its management is one way of ensuring their participation and benefit in land governance processes. UCOBAC through the Stand for Her Land Campaign supported 03 grassroots women from the project area to participate in the Northern Uganda Land Platform. Furthermore, one grassroots woman and 01 UCOBAC staff were supported to participate in the Community Land Summit in Samburu County, Kenya organized under the theme "gender equality and participation of women and youths in land ownership, natural resource management and enhancement of sustainable local economies".



Community Champions preparing nursery beds for horticulture crops



The District Agricultural Officer of Napak district (Wearing a Coat), demonstrates nursery bed preparation to the Community Champions



CHALLENGES

- The Social norms approach to strengthening WLRs is slow as it tends to avoid conflict with the TLs. Customary law is easily enforced and prevail over state laws among the local communities, this delayed harvest of outcome as there was staggered direction due to influence of Custodians of Customary laws.
- Demand by communities to scale-up the project against limited resource.



SUSTAINABILITY

- The approach of community champions is sustainable as they are part of the community in which they work. UCOBAC continues to build their technical capacity through support visits and guidance.
- Involvement of lower local government leaders e.g. Parish Chiefs is an approach focused on sustaining outcomes.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- UCOBAC and the host district local government authorities should continue with awareness creation at all levels. Ignorance of the law and the negative effects of the social and harmful norms by men and traditional leaders is a major reason for continued violation of WLR in Karamoja.
- Strengthening women voices to assert, speak and claim their rights is critical for the promotion and protection of their rights.
- Local Land Actors should continue applying gender responsive land governance in dispensing justice in the community.

PROJECT 4:**REGIONAL PLATFORM 4 EQUAL LAND RIGHTS FOR WOMEN**

The Regional Platform 4 is a regional grouping of 30 Civil Society Organizations under the International Land Coalition (ILC) including Non-Government Organizations, Community Based Organizations, Grassroots Women Groups, and People's Organizations collectively advocating for gender equality in the enjoyment of land rights in Africa.

The main goal is to promote people centered land governance in Africa through advancing equal land rights for women and girls. The platform focuses on three core issues including; Bridging implementation gap on women's land rights, strengthening grassroots women voice and agency on women's land rights, promoting women's land rights for climate change action and Social Norms Transformation for WLRs.

KEY MILESTONES**ENGAGEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL EVENTS**

The platform in partnership with the International Land Coalition co-hosted a side event at the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW67) conference in New York, and presented a paper titled ***"Securing Women's Rights to Land and Natural Resources through Technological Innovation for Economic Justice and Resource Rights."*** Platform members also participated in the Africa Regional Learning Exchange Week in Naivasha Kenya which focused on increasing their collaborative efforts towards Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IP&LC) land rights, while providing space to learn, inspire, discuss and coordinate on how best to advance different aspects of tenure security. This event was organized by the International Land Coalition in partnership with the Tenure Facility.

The Platform Chair also participated in the Conference on Land Policy where she called to action African countries to rigorously enforce and implement existing laws and policies, with specific emphasis on the Maputo Protocol. She noted that, the protocol underscores the critical importance of Women's Land Rights (WLR) and advocates for the allocation of resources to ensure their effective realization. She underscored the necessity for African states to allocate resources dedicated towards the successful implementation of these policies. She further, pointed to the proactive role of civil society, citing the development of the Kilimanjaro Charter of Demands. This charter serves as a comprehensive document outlining the substantial challenges faced by Women's Land Rights in Africa. In addition, she emphasized the strategic use of such protocols to elevate Women's Land Rights, not merely in policy but in practical implementation as this is crucial in facilitating women's active participation and will contribute towards economic development in the continent.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

To support successful roll-out of the platform activities, members embarked on the process of developing an advocacy and communication strategy to inform, persuade and drive action and change. The strategy will ensure coherence and consistency of messages while maximizing outcomes. The strategy was developed in a consultative way, with information generated from diverse stakeholders and learnings from various regional representatives.

CAPACITY BUILDING OF MEMBERS ON GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE PROGRAMMING

To contribute to the realization of the set priorities including the core one on Social Norms Transformation, the Regional Platform 4 organized a virtual learning session on Gender Transformative Approaches focused on enhancing the capacity of members to design, implement and monitor gender transformative programs and projects, and ensure that individuals, families and communities support women's land rights.

KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE SHARING

The platform made a presentation at the GIZ land hub meeting focused on sharing knowledge and experiences within the international land community. UCOBAC presented on the applicability of Gender Transformative Approaches in land related projects through showcasing their work and experiences in implementing the social norms transformation interventions in their land rights interventions.

PROJECT 5:**IMPROVEMENT OF LAND GOVERNANCE IN UGANDA (ILGU)**

The Improvement of land Governance in Uganda (ILGU) is a partnership project between Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German Development Cooperation) (GIZ) and the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development (MLHUD). The intervention is focused on increasing the productivity of small-scale farmers (tenants and landlords) sitting on private Mailo-land. It is part of a wider project known as **Responsible Land Policy in Uganda (RELAPU)**, which is part of the Special Initiative "One World, No Hunger" of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The project is jointly funded by the European Union and the German Government.

In a bid to realize the intended objective, GIZ contracted UCOBAC to conduct **nine - months** of key project interventions (**October 2023 to June 2024**). The project is being implemented in the five sub counties of Kiboga District including; Bukomero, Muwanga, Nakasozi, Kibiga and Nkandwa.

KEY MILESTONES**CAPACITY BUILDING ON LAND RELATED MATTERS**

UCOBAC with the support of Kiboga district local government authorities and GIZ identified and trained 69 Community Volunteers (45M/24F). The volunteers were drawn from the sub counties where the project is being implemented. They comprised of parish chiefs and selected representatives of LC1 and LC2 chairpersons; local, religious and opinion leaders. The training equipped them with key information

about the project including its objectives, activities and expected results. Their capacity was built on a number of issues including; private land rights, women land rights, land documentation and steps involved in processing a certificate of occupancy. After the training, volunteers are expected to lead community sensitization meetings at the grass root level or in their communities on issues pertaining land rights, land documentation and processing certificates of occupancy.

AWARENESS CREATION ON LAND RIGHTS, DOCUMENTATION AND PROCESSING OF CERTIFICATES OF OCCUPANCY

With the support of UCOBAC field staff, the trained community volunteers successfully conducted 23 community sensitization meetings in all the 23 parishes covered by the project. They reached a total of 642 community members (478M/164F). Community members were sensitized with key project information including its objectives,



A Community Volunteer making her submission during the capacity building session on land-related matters

activities and expected results. In addition, to information relating to private mailo land rights, land documentation processes and steps taken in the processing of certificates of occupancy. The targeted local leaders at the parish level including; local council leaders (1 and 2), parish councilors, opinion leaders and religious leader among others. The local leaders are expected to popularize the project at the community level and secure buy-in of community members.



CHALLENGES

- Kiboga District has many absentee land lords, which issue has affected the composition of community sensitization meetings and in turn affecting the process of land inventory / bibanja mapping.



LESSONS LEARNT

- Establishment of community own support structures contributes greatly to project buy-in and sustainability



A grassroots woman making her submission during the grassroots academy training for central Uganda



A child advocate sharing her findings in one of the quarterly monitoring and evaluation meetings



A photo moment with stakeholders who attended the CSO



Staff Capacity Building on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)



PROGRAM AREA 3:

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS (SRHR)

Project Objective:

To promote and protect women and young people's sexual and reproductive health rights through increasing their access to sexual and reproductive health information and services.

PROJECT 1:

IMPROVING FOOD AND INCOME SECURITY, CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT FOR REFUGEES AND HOST COMMUNITIES IN PALABEK SETTLEMENT

Refugee influx into Lamwo district triggered by unending insurgencies in South Sudan has led to increase in population pressure on available resources e.g., land and strained social service systems e.g., health systems which is causing competition between the Ugandan natives and refugees. By mid-2023, Palabek refugee settlement reached its full capacity with over 75,000 refugees, with more new arrivals reporting at the reception centre in Lukung.

With support from AWO International, UCOBAC has since rolled out a three-year project entitled **“Improving food and income security, climate resilience and women empowerment for refugees and host communities in Palabek settlement.”** This project is currently being implemented in Zone 6, Zone 9 and in three (3) host community villages (Beyogoya, Padollo and Alimo-tiko West) with a target beneficiary scope of 360 direct beneficiaries. This project aims at having refugees and host communities empowered and food secure, diversified their income sources and adopted climate friendly practices. In 2023, some of the key milestones include;

KEY MILESTONES

PROJECT INCEPTION MEETINGS

Two (2) project inception meetings were held at the settlement base camp and Lamwo district headquarters. The meetings were attended by 93 stakeholders from both the settlement and district.

The meetings aimed at introducing UCOBAC’s new project to the settlement and district stakeholders, and informing them about the project objectives, intended outcomes, and the target beneficiaries. These forums also provided an opportunity for the stakeholders to share how best the project can be implemented and

enhanced their commitment towards successful implementation of the project.

One of the district officials appreciated UCOBAC’s work, he said, “We are grateful for UCOBAC’s continuous support in Palabek refugee settlement. I therefore argue all district officials to support the intervention.”

FORMATION OF 12 VSLA GROUPS

At the start of the project, 840 people were reached to

introduce UCOBAC’s new project in the selected zones and villages allocated by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). Out of 840 community members, 360 beneficiaries (240 refugees and 120 host community - 12 groups) were selected as direct beneficiaries. From the 360 beneficiaries (226F/134M) - 24 Community Extension Volunteers (CEVs), 36 Community Peer Educators (CPEs) comprised of 12 youth mentors and 24 VHT members, 30 male engagement champions, and 1 land committee were formed as community social structures.

A BASELINE STUDY TO ASSESS THE CURRENT SITUATION AND MEASURE PROGRESS

A baseline survey was conducted in the new areas of operation, to assess individuals' level of knowledge on food and income security, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), women empowerment, and climate resilience amongst the new arrivals. This enabled us to identify the needs and priorities of the target population, and formed a foundation for monitoring and evaluation. The survey also focused on producing representative estimates for the project indicators before implementation. Findings will enable project implementers to evaluate the performance by establishing what changes will have occurred between the start and mid or end of the intervention.

The survey unveiled a number of findings including;

- 50% of household heads in the host community and 10.4% in the refugees had saved in VSLAs in 2022. This portrayed a certain level of VSLA knowledge and willingness to improve house hold livelihood/income security.
- Almost all households in the host community have access to land (hired) for agriculture; most having more than five acres. On the contrary, only 22.4% of refugees had access to other land for agriculture and all of them have less than three acres.
- Although the project targeted persons aged 18 years and above, it is recommended that this should expand to include teenagers, especially given the fact that many were found to be household heads, spouses, and others are sexually active; and can make independent decisions.

ADDRESSING LIVELIHOOD AND CLIMATE CHANGE EFFECTS AFFECTING SETTLEMENT COMMUNITIES

The land committee held a number of stakeholder engagement meetings including; two (2) Grass root academies, 6 consultation and action planning meetings, and 1 climate risk mapping with key stakeholders in the settlement's including the OPM, UNHCR, district officials, settlement leaders, NGO and beneficiary representatives and land owners. The dialogues focused on discussing how new refugee arrivals and host communities could best access land to engage in farming, identifying/assessing climate change issues, and designing climate change mitigation measures that may be used in Lamwo district.

The meetings further sought to secure advisory services and information from settlement stakeholders and land owners on how to create friendly land agreements or relations to enhance the beneficiaries' access to land as a strategy to improve their nutrition and food security; and preventing land conflict between refugees and host communities.

The engagements revealed that, the district had previously drafted the **"Protection of Awic Micro Catchment by-law 2022"** to mitigate environmental effects through awareness creation and community sensitization on how to protect the environment and its associated benefits. As a result, the district requested UCOCAC to support them in facilitating processes to have the by-law legalized. Its passing will help mitigate climate change effects through sensitizing communities on the regulations governing environmental protection and penalties that could accrue as a result of the abuse.

WORKING WITH SOCIAL STRUCTURES TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY INCOMES AND LIVELIHOOD

24 CEVs and 1 land committee were identified to promote and provide information, advisory services, food and income security, climate resilience, and land consultations for increased food production. The CEVs were trained on VSLA methodologies to increase their understanding of the VSLA concept, provide advisory services, and be able to support 12 VSLA/ farmer groups (360 direct beneficiaries) from a well-informed point of view. The CEVs were also provided with working aides including; bags, reflector jackets, books, bicycles and gumboots for easier visibility and identification within the community, data collection and storage, and transportation.

BUILDING CAPACITY OF BENEFICIARIES ON GOOD AGRONOMIC PRACTICES AND NUTRITION

360 direct beneficiaries (240 refugees and 120 hosts) were trained on good agronomic practices (GAPs) and kitchen/home garden, nutrition and VSLA methodologies. The trainings aimed at introducing the above concepts to the beneficiaries, to enhance their VSLA skills, increase food production, and above all improve their nutrition. They were taken through good nutrition practices in addition to identifying the causes, signs and how to prevent malnutrition.

MONITORING VISITS TO FORMER BENEFICIARIES

Monitoring visits were conducted to assess the performance of the former 150 project income generating activities' (IGAs) - beneficiaries. The visits assessed the progress and performance of old beneficiaries' IGAs. The venture include; poultry, retail businesses, produce buying and selling, vegetable growing, hair dressing, piggery, tailoring, silver fish selling, bakery, and carpentry. In the process, guidance's/advice was provided to the beneficiaries facing challenges, with key focus on how to overcome them, and improving their business performance.

The IGAs have improved the livelihoods of beneficiaries rather than encouraging them to rely only on humanitarian aid. However, from the monitoring visits, piggery and tailoring were observed to be the best-progressing IGAs, whereas the poultry keeping performed poorly. Most of the birds died due to the poor weather conditions that affected their health.

ADDRESSING HEALTH CHALLENGES THROUGH GRASSROOTS ACADEMIES.

Grassroots academies were held with the settlement's key stakeholders, including the OPM, UNHCR, district officials, settlement leaders, NGOs, and beneficiary representatives. Two (2) grassroots academy engagements focused on addressing the rising cases of teenage pregnancy and mental health issues affecting refugee and host communities. The deliberations revolved around identifying major causes of health issues affecting communities and developing strategies/ mitigation measures to address them. On mental health, it was discovered that it is one of the biggest health concerns affecting people and they are not aware of their mental health condition; whether they are mentally ill or not, and whether they need support or not.

AWARENESS CREATION ON SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND GENDER EQUALITY

Due to the existing strong norms associated with the South Sudanese culture, most women refugees are not aware of their SRHRs and do not know where to access SRHR and GBV information and services, including family planning, HIV and AIDs testing, and counseling, among others. To change this, three (3) radio talk shows were held to sensitize communities on the above issues, and they were attended by health workers, gender specialists, and the UCOBAC Project staff. Information disseminated during the shows reached over 15,000 people. It resulted in a slight shift in knowledge and practice on the use of family planning amongst new arrival beneficiaries and host community members.



Distribution of VSLA kits to one of UCOBAC beneficiary groups in Palabek refugee settlement

ADDRESSING SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND SOCIAL ISSUES AFFECTING COMMUNITIES.

36 Community Peer Educators (12 youth mentors and 24 VHTs) and 30 male engagement champions were identified to promote and provide information on SRHR and gender equality to members of the community including young people. 1 exchange visit was held by the CPEs and VHTs in Gulu city to share work-related experiences and develop better strategies to engage members of the public. A number of community engagement activities were undertaken within Palabek refugee settlement including; outreaches, dialogues and household visits. These forums have helped identify gender-based violence (GBV) cases in communities and are referred to community leaders and the police for resolution.

Land consultation meetings were also held between the land committee and the settlement stakeholders. This resulted in one (1) land owner willingly offering his piece of land for the establishment of the safe space to meet the SRHR needs of young people. An agreement has already been signed between the land owner, settlement stakeholders and UCOBAC towards this effect and the safe space will be established in the year 2024 to meet the expressed SRHR concerns of young people, who already have fewer options for recreation and affordable health services. As much as the youth and adolescents are the main targets to use the space, the entire community may also benefit due to the easy and quick accessible SRH and GBV information.

Ngec Lonyo VSLA group being trained on how to use the VSLA kits

BUILDING CAPACITY OF SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND BENEFICIARIES ON SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH (SRH), AND SEXUAL AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE (SGBV).

Two (2) trainings on SRHR (contraception and family planning) and SGBV were held in the project areas of operation. The trainings focused on building the capacity of beneficiaries on the above concepts including; the importance of family planning, understanding the different forms of SGBV and how/where to access SRHR and SGBV information and services. The SGBV and SRHR trainings were attended by 360 direct beneficiaries (240 refugees and 120 host community members). Topics covered on SRHR include contraception and family planning.

One (1) training covering the topics of gender equality, women's rights, GBV, contraceptives, peace and reconciliation was held, and attended by 30 Male Engagement Champions and 36 CPEs. The social structures training aimed at equipping stakeholders with knowledge to help them best support GBV survivors and make SRH referrals from a well-informed point of view. The training also empowered structures on how to maintain peace and harmony by enabling them to appreciate the importance of living in peace and harmony in their communities.



ASSESSING PROJECT PROGRESS AND IMPACT CREATED

Project review and feedback meetings were held with 30 male champions, 24 CEVs, 36 CPEs, and one (1) land committee to provide updates on GBV including; the number of registered GBV cases (101), cases handled/referred and other social challenges facing communities. During this monitoring visit, we were able to assess the progress made, including GBV cases, resolving the number of cases resolved, challenges faced, and how they can be addressed. For unsolved cases, the social structures made referrals to the Uganda Police Force. From the updates provided by the structures, UCOBAC realized that the issue of mental health is a big challenge in communities and yet there's limited awareness of mental health within the settlement thus escalating the situation.

Two (2) monitoring visits were also conducted by AWO International. The visit involved interacting with the project staff in various sessions, paying courtesy visits to the OPM, Ogili sub-county chairperson, Lamwo district headquarters, visiting both old and new beneficiaries, attending CEVs and CPEs meetings, and attending one of the new VSLA groups' weekly meetings.



CHALLENGES

- Due to the food ratio reduction, refugees have a lot of pressure and high expectations on UCOBAC and other settlement partners to fill in the gap.
- Language barrier amongst group members and social structures hinders communication and breaks the flow of correct information, especially if interpretation is made in different languages.
- Unpredictable and unreliable weather conditions affected agriculture and other project activities e.g. drought affected beneficiaries' agricultural production; sometimes community events had to be postponed or shortened - the rains affected the road networks which hindered staff to easily access the venues of activities' implementation.
- High level of thefts due to hunger and food insecurity especially among refugee families that are not attached to any implementing partner or have no access to land for farming.
- Discriminatory social and cultural norms against women and young girls from accessing SRHR, GBV and livelihood information and services limits ability to enhance their economic capacity and improve their health conditions and livelihood.
- The high rate of violence amongst refugees, resulting from petty misunderstandings or including fighting for small items like refreshments leading to critical injuries.
- Unwillingness of refugees to save. Due to negative attitude or mind-set some of the refugees uttered that "We are refugees. How can a refugee have money to save in a VSLA?"



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Need to continuously extend advisory services to beneficiaries on the importance of saving rather than having a negative mind-set towards VSLA.
- Scale-up of livelihood interventions for households to engage in, to close the gap created by ration reduction.
- Need to capacitate social structures with several trainings to equip them with in-depth information on climate resilience and food and income security as a sustainability strategy of them extending advisory services to the direct beneficiaries and wider community even after the project ends.
- Need to lobby resources that will be used to conduct mental health interventions since there are very few service providers providing such information and services.
- The use of drama groups can be a strategy to disseminate information on mental health, SRHR, and GBV since there is no rehabilitation center in the settlement or district, and or availability of a few safe spaces.
- Need to capacitate social structures with several trainings to equip them with in-depth information on climate resilience, food and income security as a sustainability strategy.



LESSONS LEARNT

- Creating a good working relationship with local authorities and land owners may be of greater importance in assisting refugees to enhance their access to land for agricultural production thus improving both their food and income security.
- Male engagement in form of agents of change is very paramount in dealing with gender- based violence in communities.
- Inclusion of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in all our interventions is vital.
- Alternative dispute resolution is more effective in solving GBV issues than taking cases through the legal processes.

PROJECT 2:**ADDRESS DISCRIMINATORY NORMS/
PRACTICES ON HIV AND GBV AGAINST
WOMEN AND GIRLS' PROJECT**

In partnership with the US Embassy Department of State through PEPFAR Uganda, UCOBAC implemented the “Address Discriminatory Norms/Practices on HIV and GBV against Women and Girls” project. The project aimed at tackling deeply entrenched negative social and gender norms, and practices that influenced community attitude towards persons living with HIV; hindering progressive support and stopping many from adhering to treatment by shying away from accessing care and counseling services in Telela East and Yitoduny West villages in Ogom sub-county, Pader district. This project that commenced in 2022 and concluded in 2023 targeted 50 households and 200 direct beneficiaries.

KEY MILESTONES**WORKING WITH MALE ROLE MODELS TO SUPPORT YOUNG WOMEN AND GIRLS REALISE THEIR RIGHTS.**

20 community owned resource persons were identified from within the community, trained and continuously engaged to support female beneficiaries realize their rights. The male champions counseled and offered other psychosocial support services including referrals for GBV survivors, identified and reported perpetrators of violence and followed-up on Persons Living with HIV (PLWH). As a result of male engagement, a slight shift in beliefs and social norms around positive living and a reduction in HIV infection rates, and GBV cases among beneficiary households has been registered.

LIVELIHOOD AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT FOR VULNERABLE GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN

A total of 78 young females and child mothers were enrolled for the livelihood and skills development program. The program focused on improving the young girls and their families' standards of living. Topics covered during the different trainings include; planning, financial management, and choice of enterprises for revenue-generation.

The second batch of 80 girls were further trained on goat farming, care and rearing, and were provided with goats (per person). From monitoring visits executed by UCOBAC, a majority of the girls and women's beneficiaries have multiplied the goats they received. The increment in the number of goats has acted as their other source of income which has enabled them to meet their families' basic needs and social services like education, and enhanced their social and economic well-being.

AWARENESS CREATION ON HIV/AIDS AND ENDING GENDER BASED VIOLENCE.

Safe space engagements, radio talk shows and community referrals were conducted to create awareness on HIV/AIDS and ending GBV. The activities aimed at addressing the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS among young women and girls, as well as ending GBV. During the sessions a number of information, education and communication (IEC) materials were disseminated including; posters with clear messages and images on HIV and GBV prevention and management, as well as where to obtain additional information and services. Lessons and best practices on sexual and reproductive health and rights for young girls and women were also shared during the awareness programs.

Outcomes of the interventions

- More than 200 beneficiaries were reached with HIV and GBV messages, thus increased knowledge of the GBV and HIV linkage and their effects.

- Due to increased knowledge, more young women and girls are now more willing to access and utilize SRH/GBV services.
- Four (4) secure spaces were created for the 80 teenage girls and young women to gather, interact, and discuss issues on HIV and GBV prevention.



CHALLENGES

- Despite a limited budget, there are high expectations and requirements in the community.
- Widespread staff transfers between health facilities and sub counties. The project improved the capabilities of Sub County and medical facility staff in the district. Due to frequent personnel turnover, it was extremely difficult for new staff to pick up and continue with smooth implementation.



LESSONS LEARNT

- Better health seeking behaviour is seen among community members both those living with HIV and not.
- School health is key. Through this, girls open-up and discuss their health problems than when they are mixed-up with young mothers



RECOMMENDATIONS

- HIV-related projects need the full cooperation of healthcare professionals; therefore, special training should be provided for staff members of healthcare facilities to enable them to take on the various tasks with enthusiasm. This can be met by offering them allowances or training programs that increase capacity.
- Proper planning and timing of events or activities. To ensure meaningful implementation and prevent continuous postponement of the most urgent tasks, development partners must make timely disbursements of funds. For example, safe space meetings for teenage girls are more effective during the summer months when students are not in school.

PROJECT 3:**STRENGTHENING UCOBAC'S CAPACITY IN SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH RIGHTS AND SAFE ABORTION ADVOCACY**

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) is still a subject that is difficult to discuss in many contexts, especially the invisible SRHR issues. Visible SRHR issues commonly addressed include teenage pregnancy, HIV, child marriage, family planning, among others unlike the invisible ones like abortion, infertility, and menopause/andropause, which most people shun away from.

In the past years, UCOBAC mostly addressed the visible SRHR issues, which have now unfolded the invisible SRHR issues like abortion that both women and young girls practice, and in most cases, they turn out to be unsafe abortions. Despite noting a clear link between the visible and invisible SRHR issues, the organization has not been able to adequately respond to the invisible SRHR issues, such as abortion, which have come up in its working experience. This is mainly due to low staff knowledge capacity on safe abortion and uncertainty/ poor attitude towards the subject. In partnership with the Center for Health, Human Rights and Development (CEHURD), UCOBAC kicked off the **“Strengthening UCOBAC’s capacity in Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights and Safe Abortion Advocacy project”** in Kampala and Lamwo districts in 2023. This project aims to strengthen UCOBAC’s capacity to effectively address both visible and invisible SRHR issues based on a well-laid-out advocacy strategy. The key milestones include;

KEY MILESTONES**STAFF CAPACITY BUILDING ON SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS (SRHR)**

An internal Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices (KAPs) survey on abortion was administered among UCOBAC staff to identify the knowledge gaps on SRHR gaps, which informed a Values, Clarification, and Attitudes Transformation (VCAT) training. A KAPs survey tool comprised of a pre-test and post-test was designed by an external SRHR expert and administered to the UCOBAC staff. The survey aimed at assessing staff’s knowledge gap and knowledge shift before and after the VACT training. The KAPs tool covered areas on SRHR invisible and visible issues, and existing beliefs in regards to SRH information and services.

As a result, 23 UCOBAC staff (15F/8M) were successfully trained on VCAT. The training aimed at increasing staff’s level of knowledge on abortion related issues. The VCAT entailed group work and an evaluation of personal beliefs on abortion. Discussions on different statistics, policies and other SRH details were held. After the training, it was observed that there has been an increased level of knowledge of SRHR among the staff and anticipate that staff shall ably increase aware on SRHR especially the invisible SRHR issues.

MEDIA SENSITIZATION CAMPAIGNS ON SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS (SRHR)

In most rural communities, many people especially women are not aware of their SRHR or do not know how/where to access SRHR information and services including; family planning. This is due to the existing social and gender norms and the limited services provided at health facilities within the settlement. For instance, within the settlement, there’s a common myth that if one uses family planning products or services, they would lose their child or become infertile. To overcome such existing myths, two (2) radio talk shows were held at Tembo FM in Kitgum district by UCOBAC staff and District Health Officers to sensitize and create awareness on prevention of unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortions among the youth and adolescents.



UCOBAC staff group photos after a VCAT session at Silver Springs hotel in Bugolobi

INCREASING AWARENESS ON FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES AND UNSAFE ABORTION

223 community members (135F/88M) attended the one (1) community outreach held in Palabek refugee settlement. It aimed at creating awareness on unsafe abortion and providing family planning information and services to the wider community. Abortion and family planning information and services were provided by 4 SRHR experts including; 1 midwife, 1 counsellor, 1 clinical officer and 1 laboratory technician.

During the outreach, it was observed that young people are willing to access SRHR information and services but they are held back by fear of being judged by the society and attachments to existing cultural and gender norms.



An SRHR expert conducting a practical session on SRHR reality vs beliefs among staff



CHALLENGES

- Discriminatory social and cultural norms against women and young girls from accessing SRHR information and services limits their ability to improve their health and livelihood conditions.
- Language barrier amongst community members and health care workers that provided SRHR information and services during the outreach.



LESSONS LEARNT

- Many young people are sexually active, which results in unwanted pregnancies. This usually leads them to get involved in unsafe abortions due to fear of being judged by the community/ family members for getting pregnant at an early age.
- Most of the participants personal values revolve around social norms, religious and cultural beliefs; and existing myths that if a woman aborts, they have less chances of conceiving; and religious beliefs that refer to abortion as “Murder” and against God’s purpose of re-creation.
- The VCAT was an eye-opener to all staff that were trained. At the start of the training, majority of the staff could not differentiate between invisible and visible SRHR issues. However, the narrative was changed by the end of the training. Most of them were amused by how invisible SRHR issues are neglected, yet they require lots of attention, especially for the elderly.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Need to establish friendly SRHR safe spaces for the youth and adolescents to easily access SRHR information and services without fear of shame or judgment/biases by the community and health workers.
- Need to lobby for more funds to broadly address invisible SRHR issues within refugee settings.
- Youth and adolescent health clubs and other SRH programs should be developed and established in different schools within the settlement.



PROGRAM AREA 4:
**CLIMATE CHANGE
AND RESILIENT
LIVELIHOODS
(CCRL)**

Project Objective:

To build resilient communities to effects of climate change

PROJECT 1:**FAIR FOR ALL PROJECT**

UCOBAC in partnership with Huairou Commission and Oxfam – Novib is implementing a five (5) year project entitled **“FAIR4ALL”**. The project aims at strengthening grass root women and small holder farmers’ participation, voice and agency in trade and value chain processes. The project is implemented by Uganda Community Based Association for Women and Children Welfare (UCOBAC) in Bugiri, Action for Women and Awakening in Rural Environment (AWARE-Uganda) in Kaabong and Slum Women’s Initiative for Development (SWID) in Jinja.

KEY MILESTONES**CAPACITY BUILDING ON
ADVOCACY AND POLICY
INFLUENCING**

300 grassroots women small-scale producers and farmers were successfully trained on stakeholder mapping, advocacy, lobbying and negotiation; policy analysis and influencing.

24 Trainers of Trainees (TOTs) were trained. The training was conducted at the Executive Hotel in Bugiri district and they later conducted community trainings with the supervision and monitoring of UCOBAC staff.

In the process, they were equipped with knowledge and skills on how to pass on information to the rest of the group members hence empowering women on stakeholder mapping. They understood stakeholders they were to work with in regards to participation and involvement in agricultural value chains, particularly in the fields of cassava, rice and coffee.

Women also fully understood the concept of policy analysis, to ascertain whether a given regulation is pro-women or not and what steps can be taken to influence it to fit the women’s agenda. Women are now speaking up on issues affecting them. Grassroots women farmers are effectively lobbying and negotiating with their leaders for improved service delivery in their communities

The training strengthened the capacity of grassroots women to lobby and negotiate for policy reforms addressing challenges in the agricultural value chain. They influenced government decisions, raised public awareness and promoted adoption of policies benefiting society. The women are more confident, have choice and control as they secured their land rights and are able to represent women interests and obtain the services they need.

Women have influenced the decision-making processes in agri business and are able to use the advocacy cycle including; access to information, exploring choices, deciding on a goal, agreeing on an action plan, taking action and reviewing the process.

At the end of the training, grassroots women were able to come-up with advocacy strategies and this will help them address the challenges they are facing in addition to improving their agricultural value chain.



The Senior Commercial Officer of Bugiri district training grassroots women on the formation of Cooperatives.

TRANSFORMING EXISTING GRASSROOT GROUPS INTO SACCOS

In an effort to increase income earning opportunities including access to markets, financial resources and farm inputs; grassroots women groups were transformed into to SACCOS. The objective was to strengthen their bargaining power for better prices for their goods. To date, 118 women small-scale farmers from Muterere, Iwemba and Bulesa were successfully trained in all steps/ processes in the formation of SACCOS.

As a result of the training, members resolved to form farming/agricultural cooperative groups. They went ahead to form bye laws, filled founder membership forms and all necessary documents were submitted for registration. Three (3) farming/agricultural cooperatives from Bulesa, Iwemba and Muterere were formed and registered with the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives. This has increased bargaining power for their agricultural products in addition to widening access to bigger markets and financial services.

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR RURAL WOMEN CELEBRATION

On October 26th, 2023, UCOBAC and the SWID celebrated the International Day for Rural Women. The day was commemorated under the theme **“Financing for Rural Women Empowerment. Exploring Challenges and Opportunities for Rural Women in Uganda.”**

The celebration took place at Jinja Rugby Grounds. It focused on appreciating the contribution of rural women towards economic development. It offered a renewed opportunity of building on the vision of the feminist plan of re-affirming human rights principles and values of agency, autonomy and inclusiveness in order to support rural women to fully benefit from their productivity.


- As a result of the celebration, grassroots women were able to network, exhibit and sell their agricultural produce hence earning some income in the process.

- Awareness was created on existing government programmes supporting farmers. For instance, the Commissioner at the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries encouraged women to apply or participate in programmes provided by the Government of Uganda including; applying for tractors and ox-ploughs as groups.

The celebrations were attended by over 100 stakeholders including grassroots women from Bugiri and Jinja city; local government leaders from Bugiri, Kaliro and Kamuli districts and officiated by Mr. Dhamuzungu, a Commissioner in the Min. of Agriculture, Cooperatives and Fisheries as the Chief Guest.

Below are some links of the published articles and a video documentary about the celebration:

Published articles;

 <https://ucobac.org/inclusive-and-sustainable-agricultural-trade-and-valuable-chains/>

 <https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/news/national/rural-women-benefit-from-shs2b-project-4417014>

 <https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/oped/commentary/about-rural-women-s-participation-in-agriculture-4404506>

Video documentary;

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Vynhmlx7nk>



Women marching in Jinja city to mark the International Celebration of Rural Women

PEER LEARNING VISITS

A mutual capacity strengthening peer learning visit was held at EMRICH Agro-Ecological Farms in Iganga district. The objective was to share knowledge and experiences; learning from each other, replicating best practices, discussing challenges and finding solutions, and strengthening networks enhancing agri-business. A total of 40 grassroots women from Bugiri district attended the learning visit.

- As a result, grassroots women acquired skills in organic/ ecological farming, coffee farming - management and value addition, urban and green house farming, cassava growing, seed processing and storage, using solar dryers (improving post harvest handling), making organic or composite manure, and water and soil conservation practices.
- They gained skills and knowledge in operating the modern coffee grinder which grinds coffee into powder hence earning more returns.
- Grassroot women were linked to a number of opportunities including funding programs offered to women entrepreneurs; and they committed to applying for them. They were also guided on how to register to acquire the coffee mother gardens in addition to registering with the Uganda Coffee Development Authority to enable them acquire certificates and legally operate/own coffee mother gardens. This would enable them sell coffee seedlings and earn extra income. Seedling can be sold to Uganda Coffee Authority.
- Strengthened networks and working relations between grassroots women and staff of EMRICH Agro-Ecological farms as they interacted well, leading to better market prices for their coffee.
- Grassroot women appreciated the concept of good packaging .i.e. they learnt how to make packaging bags which skill will enable them package their products well including; flour, pan cakes and coffee hence increasing sales and incomes.

PARTNERSHIP COALITION AND NETWORK BUILDING

Grassroots women from UCOBAC, Slum Women’s Initiative for Development (SWID), AWARE-Uganda, and other likeminded Civil Society Organizations attended the Grassroots Women Academy at Elgon Palace Hotel in Mbale City. The second grassroots women assembly was held at Rider Hotel in Mukono. The academies provided an opportunity for women to learn from each other, build a collective agenda and an advocacy plan.

The forums availed women an opportunity to brainstorm and contribute ideas for joint action, and design a road map to heighten women’s participation; break barriers to women’s economic justice, give women equal access and participation in the economic decision-making process and ensure that women get better proceeds from their agricultural produce in addition to securing opportunities to benefit from the funding initiatives run by the Government of Uganda.

As a result, a number of support programmes run by the Government of Uganda were shared with grassroots women including; the irrigation loan scheme, parish development model and tractors which are all given out to organized groups.



Grassroots women learning how to use a solar dryer during the peer learning visit at EMRICH Agro-Ecological Farms in Iganda.

- The event was attended by 50 grassroots women, who were equipped with more knowledge on the different policy frameworks, advocacy plans/ strategies and best practices to adopt.
- Grassroots women developed a common advocacy issue/agenda in the agricultural value chain including; climate change, poor roads and strategies drawn on how to address them by engaging different stakeholders.
- There was strengthened relationship between the public and private sector, and grassroots women which has enhanced cooperation and sharing of valuable information among stakeholders.
- Strengthened networks and coalitions; where grassroots women from Bugiri, Jinja, Kaabong, Kamuli and Kaliro district shared experiences with each other and other stakeholders from different CSOs. They exchanged ideas, contacts and always consult each other in case they need any help.
- Grassroots women developed work plans for their respective groups and districts which they will follow for their advocacy work. The key advocacy issues identified were in the area of agricultural trade and value chain, climate change, care economy, women land rights, digital economy and access to better markets.



Grassroots Women attending the Grassroots women Academy at Rider hotel in Mukono



(Left) A grassroots woman from Butaleja district sharing her experience in rice growing during the Grassroots Women Academy in Mbale



(Right) Coordinator Enterprise Development at the Parish Development Model highlighting issues during the Grassroots Women Assembly.

ADVOCACY AND POLICY INFLUENCING

Women conducted Evidence based advocacy and awareness raising interventions through grassroots women action led research; gender audits using tools like the gender evaluation criteria, stakeholder mapping, joint advocacy planning and strategizing; collective advocacy multi stakeholder engagements through local-to-local dialogues, grassroots women assemblies, media engagements, development and dissemination of policy position papers, policy briefs, public dialogues and rallies among others.

Grassroots women small-scale farmers after conducting the above research and engaging in different activities were able to understand the extent to which Uganda’s government programs benefit women and if they observe gender equality or not.

DOCUMENTATION AND REGISTRATION OF CUSTOMARY LAND

Grassroots women leaders were trained in the use and importance of the Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM) methodology. A team of field assistants, local council members together with the Area Land Committee members were trained in the use of the GPS system to survey land. Together with the selected women who had acquired consent from their spouses, the team embarked on the physical measurement of individual plots of land belonging to the women. The Area Land Committee (ALC) at the sub-county sat to verify the mapping out puts before they approved them for onward referral to the district land board for final verification. Upon approval, the district issued Certificates of Customary Land ownership.

The use of the STDM methodology is preferred because it is pro-poor - it is not expensive, simple and easy to manage. The process is participatory as it involves all categories of people right from the women, their spouses, children, neighbors; local leaders and the district authorities. Issuance of the Customary Certificates to the grassroots women small-scale farmers guarantees their security of tenure on the land they live and cultivate. It allows the women to have access over and ownership of the piece of land. She can freely exercise her right over the land by planting whatever crops without anybody interfering.



CHALLENGES

- Lack of National Identification Cards by some members made it difficult during registration of SACCOs since it is mandatory to attach copies of members I.Ds.
- Digital exclusion of small-scale farmers in rural areas has affected their access to information, markets and other resources that could benefit them.
- The Fair4All project by design is more of a capacity building and advocacy project and not service delivery. Most project participants are inclined towards projects that provide tangible inputs like seeds and farm inputs.
- Limited collaboration and exchange learning with other Fair4All consortium partners at National level
- Climate change and its devastating impact on livelihoods



LESSONS LEARNT

- Conducting evidence-based research gives feedback to funding initiatives of the government of Uganda hence improving planning and effectiveness.
- Grass root women need to take-up leadership positions in the society so as to influence policy
- Grassroots women have limited access to information on some of the government programs including; availability and provision of grinding machines , tractors, rice threshing machines etc which can be provided to them in groups for free.
- When agricultural products are well packaged and branded, it adds more value to the product hence attracting wider markets and fetching higher prices.
- Green house farming and shed net farming are key measures that farmers can adopt to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change



RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is need to continuously monitor and support farmers cooperatives to enable them run their activities smoothly and have better bargaining power.
- Grassroots women need more exchange visits to continuously learn more and not stick to the traditional way of doing things.
- Grassroots women need to be supported with value addition machines like the coffee roaster, coffee grinder and ovens. They are expensive for grassroots women to purchase yet they simplify the process of value addition.
- Small scale farmers need a learning hub within their community to ease the learning process and adaptation of new knowledge and skills.

PROJECT 2:

NURTURING LEADERSHIP OF GRASSROOTS WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS IN SCALING UP COMMUNITY RESILIENCE IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

UCOBAC in partnership with SIDA and Huairou Commission is implementing a two-year project titled Nurturing Leadership of Grassroots Women's Organizations in Scaling up Community Resilience in Uncertain Times implemented in Bugiri district with the aim of promoting climate justice and resilient communities to effects of climate change targeting 60 grassroots women.

KEY MILESTONES

BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF GRASS ROOTS WOMEN TO MANAGE CLIMATE CHANGE SHOCKS.

A total of 60 grass roots women, (30) from Iwemba sub county and the other from Muwayo Town council were identified, mobilized and sensitized on collective organizing through group/organization formation, management and systems strengthening.

The objective was to strengthen the leadership and organizing capacity of grass roots women to manage climate change shocks. Grass roots women were trained in group dynamics and organization formation and saving for investment.

As a result, they have formed strong saving groups where they meet regularly to share ideas on combating climate change including; planting drought resistant crops, tree planting, and income generating activities in addition to accessing simple loans and addressing different issues affecting them in their communities.

The knowledge acquired has helped women strengthen their groups and appreciating the value of joining and working in groups. Belonging to a group binds them together and acts as social capital even in times of need or sorrow. Today, women are also investing in themselves as leaders.

TRAINING OF GRASSROOTS WOMEN ON GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS

A number of 60 grassroots women were successfully trained on gender equality and women's rights. The training was conducted in the two sub counties of; Iwemba at Nambo village and Muwayo at Buduma village with the objective of equipping women with knowledge on women's rights and gender equality.

It focused on increasing women's understanding of gender and women's rights, illustrating the relationship between gender and climate change and drawing solutions to reduce women's vulnerability to the effects of climate change.

To date, grass roots women fully understand climate change and are aware that it affects them most. They also appreciate that, it's something they can address using the knowledge and resources within their reach. After the training, grass roots women also started a savings group where they now save and access simple loans to better their lives hence empowering themselves economically. The case in point, is a one Mirembe Marriam, a grass root woman from Buduma who acquired a loan from their savings group and supported the husband to complete their house.

BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF GRASSROOTS WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP, COMMUNICATION AND POLICY ADVOCACY

A number of grassroots women were successfully trained in leadership, communication skills and policy advocacy. The training was conducted in the two sub counties of Iwemba at Nambo village and Muwayo - Buduma village.

The training focused on building the capacity on women in leadership and advocacy with key interest in increasing their understanding on the concept of leadership and advocacy, understanding climate change causes and affects; and empowering how to use advocacy skills to address climate change effects.

As a result of the acquired skills, grass roots women successfully applied the knowledge and skills acquired to engage their sub county leaders through local to local dialogues on the issue of climate change and why it's not prioritized in the sub county budgeting process. Through this, they were able to influence sub county leaders to consider increasing the next financial year's budget to cater for tree planting and acquisition of quality drought resistant crop varieties/ seeds.

The training also built the confidence of women, as they can now freely express themselves. This inspired them to vie for different leadership positions and some won and became councillors. A majority are also preparing to stand for different leadership positions in the next elections as they realized they can better influences and advocate for different issues at that level. Their problem-solving skills have also improved especially in the areas of; solving family matters, land issues concerning women and any other domestic matter that they stand for in the community.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE ADVOCACY STRATEGIES ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE

Two advocacy plans/strategies were successfully developed. These focused on streamlining how women can engage with other stakeholders to address the issue of climate change and other challenges facing them.

The advocacy plans or issues were developed while using a participatory approach, where all group members convened and generated ideas. The advocacy plans were successfully shared with the sub county leadership during the community engagement dialogue held at Bugiri Executive Hotel for consideration. These advocacy plans have helped the sub county leadership prioritize women's concerns/issues affecting them. For instance, prioritizing these women when enrolling beneficiaries for the Parish Development Model and micro scale irrigation scheme where one grass root woman (Elizabeth Kulabako) was considered and has already received the micro scale irrigation equipment as a result of the advocacy efforts.

HOLDING COMMUNITY DIALOGUES TO INFLUENCE BUDGETS AND GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES

A one local to local community dialogue was held and it was focused on influencing the budget and government programs. It also aimed at equipping grass roots women with budgeting skills to enable them monitor government programs.

The dialogue was attended by 20 grass roots women leaders selected from the two women groups in Muwayo Town council and Iwemba sub county; and five key stakeholders including the Town Clerk and the Speaker of Muwayo Town council, the Senior Assistant Secretary, Sub County Chairpersons, and the Agricultural Extension Officer from Iwemba sub county.

During the dialogue, the Speaker of Muwayo Town Council pledged to advocate for the increment of the tree planting budget from ugx 1,000,000 to ugx 2,000,000 and the budget for purchase of improved seeds of maize and beans from ugx 1,000,000 and above; and these will be provided to women.

CLIMATE CHANGE AWARENESS CREATION

Two radio talk shows were held on Eastern Voice 102.3 FM. The shows were aimed at creating awareness on climate change, with key interest on what women can do to address to address the effects of climate change.

During the talk show, panelists discussed various issues concerning climate change and how it affects women especially in the rural areas. Climate change effects were illustrated during the show including; prolonged drought, unpredictable rain fall patterns, pests and disease manifestations and food insecurity among others.

They also shared insights on how women are relying on the environment and other natural resources to sustain their families as compared to men who usually run away from their families during hard times or times of disaster; hence making women more vulnerable to climate change effects as they are frequently closer to natural resources than men. For instance, women rely on trees to get firewood, water bodies to get water for domestic use, and land to cultivate food for their families, etc.

As result, the Sub County leaders of Iwemba and Muwayo committed to prioritize climate change issues and include them in their next financial year budgets with key focus on supporting women with tree seedlings, and drought resilient maize varieties. The environment and agriculture officer of Bugiri district committed to support the grass root women groups to access and benefit from the ongoing government programs aimed at mitigating climate change i.e. the Micro Scale Irrigation System, the PDM and Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration.

The talk shows were attended by representatives from the district including; the Agricultural Officer, Environment Officer; a Grass Roots Woman and UCOBAC Staff.



CHALLENGES

- Bad weather - rainfall interruptions during community events including trainings.
- High expectation of agro inputs by participants especially when training on climate smart agriculture as an adaptation strategy against climate change.



LESSONS LEARNT

- It was seen that, women have the capacity to influence change if empowered with knowledge and skills to organize and speak out to the issues affecting them.
- It was noticed that, there is a high radio listenership during evening hours implying that, in case of media engagement, the most appropriate time is during evening hours when targeted farmers are at home.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is urgent need to train and empower the two groups in financial literacy as they started savings and loan associations.
- There is need for more community engagement mainly targeting village savings groups for sensitization on the existing government programs on climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- There is need for continuous trainings and demonstrations on climate smart agricultural practices as a strategy for climate change adaptation



INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

Strategic objective:

To build a strong and sustainable institution to effectively and efficiently operate and deliver organization's services.

KEY MILESTONES/ACTIVITIES

- **Registration with the Data Protection Office**, the organization registered with data protection office and they issued with a certificate.
- Established a formal partnership with Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) by signing a three-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).
- **Updated the organizational information** with the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB).
- Filed annual returns for with the Financial Services Bureau
- **Held 3 Board quarterly meetings**, aimed to facilitate effective governance, decision-making, and communication within an organization.
- **Organised and held the General Assembly/ Annual General meeting (AGM)**

The engagement, which was held on the **12th of December 2023** at Ridar Hotel, in Seeta became a convergence point for key stakeholders. The event witnessed the participation of Board members, Honorary members, and former district affiliate committee members hailing from Kapchorwa and Kiboga districts.

During this gathering, the members took decisive steps to reinforce community representation. They re-established District Affiliate Committees (DACs) and carefully selected chairpersons for each committee. This strategic move aimed to enhance local engagement, ensuring that the organization's impact resonated at the grassroots level.

The General Assembly and Annual General Meeting marked a moment of unity, collaboration, and forward momentum. The strengthened membership, coupled with re-established district committees and constitutional amendments, positions the association for greater effectiveness, transparency, and community impact in the years to come.

a) **Organised and Held the Staff Retreat**

The UCOBAC staff retreat was held from 13th -15th December at Victoria Forest Resort in Kalangala. The retreat was attended by 29 staff and it focused on staff self-reflection, personal development, and contributions to organizational success.

The objectives of the retreat included team building for cohesive collaboration, employee/workplace wellness through various programs with emphasis on effective organizational communication, ensuring staff understanding of financial procedures, and strategic planning for the organization's future (2025–2029). The retreat also aimed at enhanced teamwork, employee well-being, communication, financial management, and strategic alignment for the organization's continued success.



Members take oath during the AGM



KEY OUTPUTS

- Development /revision of organizational policies and procedures to enhance governance, transparency, and accountability.
- Implementation of improved financial management systems, including budgeting, accounting, and financial reporting.
- Development or refinement of strategic plans and successful implementation of identified strategies.
- Organise activities aimed at improving relationships with stakeholders, such as general assembly/annual general meeting with members.
- Creation and implementation of programs for staff development, including training sessions, mentoring programs, and performance appraisal systems.
- Development and implementation of protocols to ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, as well as improved risk management strategies.
- Establishment of strategic partnerships with external organizations, agencies, allies and communities to leverage resources and expertise.
- Implementation of communication strategies to enhance internal and external communication, fostering transparency and engagement.



KEY OUTCOMES

- Strengthened governance structure, leading to better decision-making processes, increased transparency, and enhanced accountability.
- Improved financial management practices and responsible resource allocation to ensure financial sustainability.
- Upgraded skills and competencies of staff through training, resulting in a more capable and motivated workforce.
- Improved engagement with stakeholders, fostering collaborative relationships and strategic partnerships.
- Strengthened systems for compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, to mitigate potential challenges.
- Cultivation of a positive organizational culture, including a sense of commitment, teamwork, innovation, and adherence to ethical values.
- Improved systems for monitoring and evaluating organizational performance and continuous improvement.



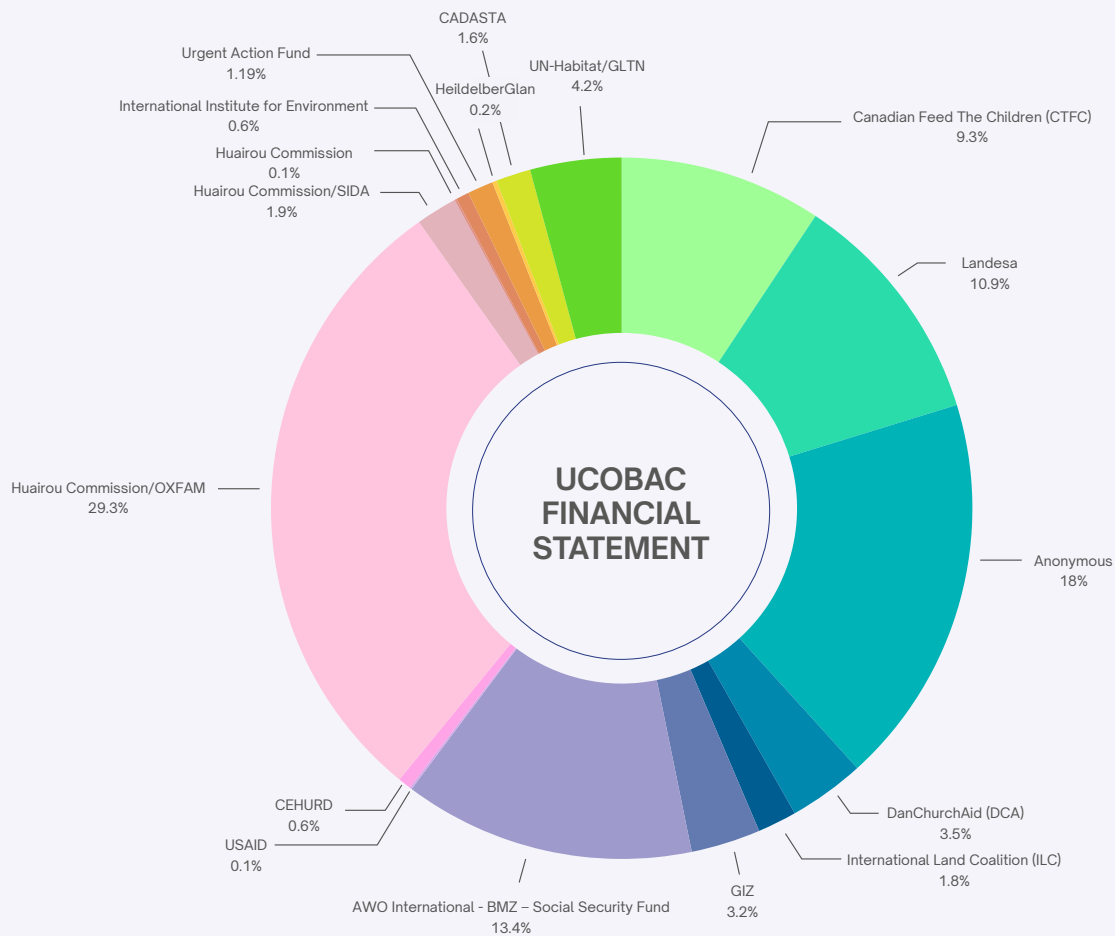
KEY CHALLENGES

- Limited funding for the institutional strengthening program.
- Increased prices of essential resources, goods, or services.

External Events/Engagements that Staff attended and made presentations

No	EVENT	DATE	ORGANISER	LOCATION
1.	Expert Group meeting on evaluating the performance of SDGs	8 th - 9 th February	UN-DESA/DSDG, UN-HABITAT AND UNDP	Bilbao, Spain
2.	67 th Commission on the status of Women	6 th -17 th March	IGAD and ILC	UN HQ - New York
3.	Partners meeting	2 nd to 4 th May	UN-Habitat/GLTN	Nairobi
4.	Digitization and Technology impact on Gender and Social Norms	14 th -15 th June	Care International-EALC	
5.	Expert Group meeting on Gender strategy and youth participation on land	15 th -17 th June	GLTN, University of East London and Huairou Commission	London
6.	Caregivers Summit	28 th -30 th June	Huairou Commission and Government of Mexico	Mexico
7.	Landac conference	28 th -30 th June	Landac, Land -at-scale	Netherlands
8.	National Consultative meeting to build synergies for collaboration and partnership on WLR	3 rd -4 th July	WLRM and LANDNet	Fairway Hotel - Kampala
9.	National dialogue aimed at tracing progress of the implementation of the Uganda National Land Policy-10 years after it was launched	16 th August	Makerere University, MLHUD, Netherlands Enterprise Agency, UN-Habitat and GLTN	Makerere University- Kampala
10.	Learning Exchange	2 nd – 5 th October	ILC	Nairobi
11.	STDM Steering Committee Write shop and Workshop	5 th – 6 th October	GLTN	Netherlands
12.	Fair4All - Power of Voices Partnership peer leaning exchange	15 th – 21 st September	Oxfam Novib	Cambodia
13.	Africa Regional meeting	7 th - 9 th November	Huairou Commission	Accra
14.	Conference on Land Policy in Africa; Topics: *Strengthening Women Land Rights for accelerated realization of the African Continental Free Trade Area *Nexus between Women land rights and the African Continental Free Trade Area *Empowering Grassroots women in Agri business value Chains	21 st -24 th November 2023	AUC, AFDB, ECA	Addis Ababa - Ethiopia
15.	6 th National Girl Summit under the theme: A united Society free from child marriage	30 th November	Girls not Brides	Silver springs Hotel, Bugolobi, Kampala

UCOBAC Financial Statement



FUNDING PARTNER	PERCENTAGE
Canadian Feed The Children (CTFC)	9.3
Landesa	10.9
Anonymous	18.0
DanChurchAid (DCA)	3.5
International Land Coalition (ILC)	1.8
GIZ	3.2
AWO International- BMZ -Social Security Fund	13.4
USAID	0.1
CEHURD	0.6
Huairou Commission/OXFAM	29.2
Huairou Commission/SIDA	1.9
Huairou Commission	0.1
International Institute for Environment	0.6
Urgent Action Fund	1.19
HeidelberGlan	0.2
CADASTA	1.6
UN-Habitat/GLTN	4.2

UCOBAC Master Workplan 2023

UCOBAC MASTER WORKPLAN 2023																
PROGRAM	PROJECT ACTIVITIES	TIMEFRAME												ACTIVITY TARGET(S)	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)	
		Quarter1			Quarter2			Quarter3			Quarter4					
		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC			
Project 1: Child Development Project - Funded by Canadian Feed The Children																
Orphans and Vulnerable Children	District (s) of project implementation: Bugiri															
	Providing nutritious porridge flour to children.													8,280 children to be provided with nutritious porridge flour.	Susan Gamwino	
	Providing farm inputs to identified and selected parents.													300 selected parents to be provided with farm inputs	Susan Gamwino	
	Training parents through farmer field schools.													300 parents will be trained.	Susan Gamwino	
	ToT for community volunteers as agricultural extension workers.													50 community volunteers to be trained.	Susan Gamwino	
	Organising plant clinics to help farmers identify pests and diseases.													100 farmers to be engaged.	Susan Gamwino	
	Refresher training for VSLA members in business planning, record keeping and financial management.													20 VSLA members to be engaged during the refresher training.	Susan Gamwino	
	Following up existing VSLA groups by UCOBAC staff and VSLA agents.													20 VSLA members to be followed up.	Susan Gamwino	
	Supporting parents to start small businesses they can manage by providing start up capital.													200 parents to be supported.	Susan Gamwino	
	Verifying all sponsored child ambassadors who are still continuing with education.													558 sponsored child ambassadors to be verified.	Susan Gamwino	
	Updating all sponsored child ambassadors.													558 sponsored child ambassadors to be updated in the system.	Susan Gamwino	
	Providing scholastic materials to child ambassadors.													558 children to be provided with scholastic materials	Susan Gamwino	
	Training safe space girls in SRHR.													1800 girls to be trained.	Susan Gamwino	
	Training adult mentors in sexual reproductive health.													25 adult mentors to be trained in SRHR.	Susan Gamwino	
	Organising the Day of the African Child.													A total of 450 will be organised.	Susan Gamwino	
	Forming safe space groups.													80 groups of girls to be formed.	Susan Gamwino	
	Holding radio talk shows about children rights.													12 radio talkshows to be held.	Susan Gamwino	
Training community child advocates in project monitoring and reporting.													50 community child advocates to be trained.	Susan Gamwino		
Organising staff quarterly meetings between staff and child advocates/volunteers.													4 meetings to be held.	Susan Gamwino		
Project 2: Stand for Her Land - Funded by Landesa/BMZ																
Women's Land and Property Rights	District (s) of project implementation: National Level															
	Capacity building training for 54HL members on coalition building and Advocacy.													30 coalition members trained at National level and 64 coalition members trained at regional level.	Carol, David	
	Dissemination of the strategy and the background analysis.													30 coalition members met at National level and 64 coalition members met at regional level.	Carol, David	
	Mapping of coalition members.													Atleast 100 organisations will be registered.	Carol, David	
	Quarterly review meetings.													04 meetings organised.	Carol, David	
	Roundtable dialogues.													06 roundtable dialogues organised.	Carol, David, Jordana	
	Participation in public dialogues and advocacy events and campaigns.													To participate in atleast 06 events.	Carol, David	
	Media campaigns.													To hold 04 radio talk shows.	Carol, David	
	Documentation and publications.													10 blogs, issue briefs, fact sheets TO BE produced and disseminated.	Carol, David	
	Participate in legal review and adoption of the marriage and divorce bill.													The campaign will in partnership with Uganda Women Parliamentary Forum participate in legal reviews and advocate	Carol, Jordana, David	
	Organizing grassroots academies.													To facilitate 04 consultation meetings.	Carol, David	
	Facilitation to participate in National level land related events.													Grassroots women to participate in atleast 04 events at national level.	Carol, David	
	Project 3: Strengthening Women's Land Rights for Resilient Livelihoods - Funded by DanChurchAid															
	Women's Land and Property Rights	District (s) of project implementation: Karamoja Sub region														
		Identification, training and facilitation of community paralegals.													Identify, train and facilitate 05 community paralegals.	Carol, Geoffrey
		Designing and production of a training manual.													Produce 10 copies of the training manual.	Carol, Geoffrey
		Hold community dialogues for organized groups of beneficiaries.													Conduct 72 community dialogue sessions for 150 project beneficiaries.	Carol, Geoffrey
Hold Radio talk shows.														Hold 04 radio talk shows.	Carol, Geoffrey	
Hold community dialogue sessions/conversations with traditional leaders/elders.														Hold 04 community dialogue sessions (02 meetings per parish) with 20 traditional leaders/elders.	Carol, Geoffrey	
Conduct trainings with project beneficiaries on climate change adaptation and climate smart agriculture.														04 community level trainings.	Carol, Geoffrey	
Provision of drought resistant seed varieties.														100 women beneficiaries to receive 02 seed varieties.	Carol, Geoffrey	
Provision of tree seedlings.														150 project beneficiaries to receive 01 tree seedling.	Carol, Geoffrey	
Project inception meeting.														Hold 01 project inception meeting.	Carol, Geoffrey	
Baseline study.														01 baseline study.	Carol, Geoffrey	
Quarterly review meetings.														Hold 02 quarterly review meetings.	Carol, Geoffrey	
Documentation of Most Significant change stories.														Significant change stories documented.	Carol, Geoffrey	
Project 4: Scaling up Community Based Land Registration and Land Use Planning on Customary Land in Uganda - Funded by Global Land Tool Network																
Women's Land and Property Rights		District (s) of project implementation: Butaleja														
		Print and issue CCOs.													1624 CCOs printed and issued.	Mark, Jordana
		Draft Environmental brief.													1 Environmental Brief Developed.	Jordana
	Application for wetland use permit.													1600 Wetland Users apply for wetland use permit.	Jordana	
	Finalisation of video documentary.													1 video documentaries produced.	Mark, Jordana & Gloria	
	Hold a multistakeholder workshop.													1 multistakeholder engagement held.	Jordana	
	Training in Gender Evaluation Criteria.													One fact sheet produced.	Jordana	
	Develop Standard operating procedures on customary land registration, land use planning and ADR.													3 Standard Operating Procedures on Customary Land registration, land use planning and ADR developed.	Mark, Jordana	
	Undertake mapping, inventory and enumeration of customary land rights.													350 parcels of land mapped.	Mark	
	Process and issue Certificates of Customary Ownership.													350 files ready for presentation before the lower Physical Planning Committee and DLB.	Mark, Jordana	
	Undertake mapping, inventory and enumeration of wetland user rights.													400 plots mapped, 1 wetland use map produced.	Mark, Jordana	
	Organise a multi stakeholder workshop, dialogue, meetings and events.													1 Policy brief developed.	Mark, Jordana	
	Train Wetland User Association members.													Wetland committee for Mawanga established and deployed.	Jordana	
	Train in Gender Evaluation Criteria.													GEC committee consisting of stakeholders established.	Jordana	
	Gender Evaluation Criteria report.													1 GEC Report developed.	Jordana	
	Conduct regular project monitoring and evaluations.													2 monitoring and Evaluation assessments conducted.	Mark, Jordana	
	General Operations & reporting.													Project report developed.	Mark, Jordana	
Project 5: ILC-RP4 - Funded by International Land Coalition																

		District (s) of project implementation: Africa Sub region													
	Completion of the development of a strategy.													1 platform strategy developed.	Carol,ED
	Development of the detailed workplan.													A platform workplan developed.	Carol,ED
	Development of a detailed monitoring, evaluation and learning framework.													A platform MEL plan developed.	Carol,ED
	Development of the advocacy and communication plan.													A platform advocacy and communication plan developed.	Carol,ED
	Development of a fundraising plan.													A platform fundraising plan developed	Carol,ED
Project 6: Strengthening women's access and decision making on communal lands and natural resources - Funded by anonymous donor															
		District (s) of project implementation: Karamoja Sub region													
	Hold a District inception meeting.													01 district inception meeting held.	Carol,Geoffrey
	Sub County inception meeting.													02 sub county inception meetings held.	Carol,Geoffrey
	Review and customization of the training guide.													01 training guide developed.	Carol,Geoffrey
	Identification and training of community paralegals.													28 community paralegals identified and trained.	Carol,Geoffrey
	Project introductory meetings with project beneficiaries.													14 introductory meetings held.	Carol,Geoffrey
	Baseline study.													A baseline study conducted.	Carol,Geoffrey
	Community dialogue sessions on WLR.													98 dialogue sessions organised.	Carol,Geoffrey
	Training on smart climate agriculture practices.													28 community paralegals trained.	Carol,Geoffrey
	Procurement and distribution of seeds.													28 project beneficiaries receive farm inputs.	Carol,Geoffrey
	Develop and produce a leadership training resource manual.													01 leadership training manual produced.	Carol,Geoffrey
	Hold leadership courses for women leaders.													01 leadership training held.	Carol,Geoffrey
	Facilitation of grassroots women to participate in National advocacy events and campaigns.													Grassroots women to participate in atleast 04 events at national level.	Carol,Geoffrey
	Radio talk shows.													16 radio talk shows held	Carol,Geoffrey
	Radio spot adverts.													04 radio spots adverts produced.	Carol,Geoffrey
	Training of local land actors.													179 local land actors trained.	Carol,Geoffrey
	Quarterly review meetings.													04 quarterly review meetings organised.	Carol,Geoffrey
	Documentation of grassroots women's leadership experiences.													01 documentary produced.	Carol,Geoffrey
	Development , production and distribution of IEC materials.													1000 copies of popularised versions of the succession act.	Carol,Geoffrey
	Local to local dialogues.													14 local to local dialogues organised	Carol,Geoffrey
Project 7: Power of Voices (Fair for All) -Funded by Huairou Commission															
		District (s) of project implementation: Bugiri/Jinja/Kabong													
	Training of grassroot women farmers in stake holder mapping, policy analysis and advocacy strategies, lobbying and negotiation skills.													300 Women to be reached.	Susan Gamwino
	Capacity building of grassroots women farmers on governance and management, market analysis and value chains and facilitation of formal registration and certification.													300 Women to be reached.	Susan Gamwino
	Transformation of existing grassroots groups to SACCOS .													10 groups to be engaged.	Susan Gamwino
	Hold exchange meetings between farmers,private sector and government.													5 meetings to be held.	Susan Gamwino
	Build coalitions with farmer/producer groups and like-minded partners/CSOs.													2 academies to be held.	Susan Gamwino
	Writing and presenting position papers and policy recommendations to parliament and various actors.													3 position papers to be presented.	Susan Gamwino
	Facilitation of recordation and registration of land rights for women small scale farmers.													300 women to be engaged.	Susan Gamwino
	Peer learning exchange visit.													1 exchange visit to be made.	Susan Gamwino
	strengthen security of land tenure through registration of land rights.													150 women to be involved.	Susan Gamwino
	Project 8 : Improving food and income security, climate resilience and women empowerment for refugees and host communities in Palabek settlement. - Funded by AWO International														
		District (s) of project implementation: Lamwo													
	Inception meeting.													55 stakeholders to take part in the meeting.	Hedwige, Silvanous and Jennifer
	Baseline survey.													Baseline survey will be carried out by a consultancy firm.	Hedwige, Silvanous, Jennifer & a consultant
	Formation of farmer/VSLA groups and communication on roles/expectations.													12 groups will be formed with 30 members in each group	Silvanous, Hedwige
	Formation of Community Extension Volunteers /climate actors group													1 CEV (with 24 members) will be formed.	Silvanous
	Training farmer/VSLA group members on VSLA methodology.													360 beneficiaries will be trained.	Silvanous
	Monitoring meeting with CEVs/climate actors.													6 monitoring visits will be done.	Silvanous
	Procurement and distribution of VSLA kits and training CEVs on use of kits.													360 kits will be purchased and distributed to 360 beneficiaries.	Silvanous
	Monthly monitoring of IGAs of old farmer groups.													12 old farmer groups will be monitored.	Silvanous,Priscilla
	Training farmer/VSLA groups on nutrition.													360 beneficiaries will be trained.	Silvanous
	Identification and grouping of Community Peer Educators (CPEs).													36 peer educators will be identified.	Jennifer
	Identification and grouping of male engage champions.													30 male champs will be identified.	Jennifer
	Training farmer/VSLA groups on contraception and family planning.													12 groups will be trained on contraception and FP.	Jennifer
	Training health and social workers on adolescent and youth friendly services.													30 health & social workers will be trained.	Jennifer
	Radio talk shows on gender equality, social cohesion and SRHR issues.													3 radio shows will be held.	Jennifer
	Monitoring meeting with CPEs.													6 meetings will be held.	Jennifer
	Quarterly grassroots academy.													4 grassroot academy meetings will be held in line with the project components and community needs.	Jennifer,Hedwige
	Training farmer/VSLA groups on SGBV.													360 beneficiaries will be trained on SGBV.	Jennifer
	Monitoring meeting with male engage champions.													6 meetings will be held.	Jennifer
	Consultation and action planning by land committee.													30 stakeholders to be consulted.	Jennifer, Silvanous
Participatory climate risk mapping by climate actors and priority action planning.													24 climate actors/CEVs will participate in climate risk mapping.	Hedwige, Silvanous and Jennifer	
Project 9 : Addressing Discriminatory Norms/Practices on HIVand GBV against Women and Girls - Funded by US Embassy-PEPFAR															
		District (s) of project implementation: Pader													
Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights and Gender Based Violence	Radio talkshows.													2 radio talk shows will be held on HIV.	Joel
	Male engagements to support women and girls rights.													20 active male champs to support girls in the community at large.	Joel
	Community awareness meetings on GBV and its implication.													200 beneficiaries to be reached.	Joel
	Strengthening community referral system to support victims of GBV.													Community at large through the help of the probation officer.	Joel
	Establishing safe spaces with adolescents girls and young women to engage on issues of HIV and AIDS.													12 safe-space sessions will be held with the 4 existing beneficiary groups (girls)	Joel
Reporting.													Financial and Narrative reports to be sent to PEPFAR	Joel,Hedwige and Agnes	
Monitoring and Evaluation															
	Hold a joint discussion on the common concepts/terms as applicable to M and E and the importance of M & E to projects, programs and the organization.													24 UCOBAC staff complete a joint discussion on basic M and E concepts and the importance of M and E to organisations.	John supported Gloria
	Hold a joint discussion on the practical use of the Key M and E tools.													25 UCOBAC staff complete a joint discussion on the practical use of the key M and E tools.	John supported Gloria
	Hold a joint discussion of the current draft M and E policy.													Draft M and E policy document discussed and adopted.	John with all Staff
	Discuss with SPOs the program level filled M and E framework.													Program level M and E frameworks developed.	John, Gloria, SPOs & ED
	Discuss with SPOs and ED the organizational level M and E framework.													Organisational level M and E framework developed.	John, Gloria, SPOs & ED
	Operationalise all the developed frameworks.													Program and Organisational M and E frameworks become operational.	John, supported by Gloria and SPOs
Finalize UCOBAC M and E policy.													UCOBAC M and E policy final copy in place.	John, Gloria, SPOs & ED	

Our Visual Highlights of 2023



UCOBAC members pose for a group photo with the UCOBAC Board members



A group photo of grassroots women and government officials after the Grassroots Women Academy

A glimpse of the UCOBAC staff retreat at Victoria Resort, Kalangala





Our Partners

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to our partners for their role in making 2023 a success and fantastic year.

Thank you for your support.



International



Empowering and Transforming Communities



Uganda Community Based Association for Women
and Children Welfare (UCOBAC)

P.O.Box 75198, Robert Mugabe Road, plot 17
Kampala, Uganda

Email: info@ucobac.org

Website: www.ucobac.org

Facebook: [UcobacUganda](https://www.facebook.com/UcobacUganda)

Twitter: [@Ucobac_](https://twitter.com/Ucobac_)

@2023