



# TRACK

NEWS LETTER ISSUE 23



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**O**ur esteemed readers, here again is another exciting edition of the **TRACK NEWSLETTER!** Eighteen months down the road, various fruits have been born from our project RWENLAP II. In this issue, we share with you some of the results realized through the various interventions undertaken through this project.

*Be sure to catch up with more stories of change; where through RAC's intervention, lives of many have been impacted.*

*Also, look out for highlights of activities implemented in the last quarter of 2019, where RAC recognized and awarded anti-corruption champions in the region.*

*Happy Reading*

*Victoria N. Busiinge*

# Commemorating the Anti-Corruption Week 2019:

On November 28, 2019, RAC joined the rest of the world to commemorate the Anti-Corruption Week 2019, a week that was set apart to decry the evils of corruption, demand for accountability and cause action against the corrupt.

The week-long series of activities were jointly organized with members of the Rwenzori regional governance cluster including RWEPOTA, KADIVDO, RIDE AFRICA, KRC, KANCA, TooroDev, KANCA, KADIFO, Kind Uganda, BAWILLAH, TAFORA, KNCF and RFPJ.

Activities conducted include among others; radio talks shows on local FM stations to implore the citizenry to join the anti-corruption struggle, football match (Governance cluster Vs. the media); giving back to the community (hampers of supplies to the mothers and neonates of Buhinga regional referral hospital), youth debate, award of anti-corruption champions and; a regional dialogue as a climax of the week-long commemoration, where IAF gave feedback and updates on the cases followed up during their monitoring visit to the region.

During the convention, RAC was highly appreciated for her commitment towards the fight against corruption. In his speech, the chief guest at the Anti-Corruption Convention – Hon. Fr. Simon Lokodo applauded RAC for being the leading NGO in the fight against graft across Uganda. "I have been around the country but I have not found any single organization that compares with RAC in terms of zeal and determination to fight against graft. Your tireless efforts towards this



*Hon. Lokodo addressing participants during the 2019 anti-corruption convention*



*some of the delegates at the convention*



*participants during the anti-corruption convention 2019*

fight proves that you are true citizens of Uganda..." said the minister.

He was however disheartened by the 'weevils' that had infiltrated the anti-graft agencies; instead of fighting against corruption, some of the anti-graft agencies are

instead promoting it. None of these agencies has survived infiltration – not police, nor the army, DPP, IGG, even within DEI and the IAF. "it is sad to note that the agencies entrusted with fighting against corruption are instead the ones at the center of promoting it..." The Minister

lamented! Nevertheless, the Minister reassured Ugandans that there is still a ray of hope, saying that with the commitment of the loving and patriotic Ugandans, corruption will one day be kicked out of Uganda

## Recognizing the anti-graft warriors...

Although the fight against corruption is far from over, various actors from different walks of life are determined to bring it to an end. From boarder to boarder, a number of initiatives and commitment to defeat corruption have been undertaken right from individual to state and non-state agencies at local, national and international level.

Looking at the sky-rocketing number of cases and monies involved in corruption scandals, one may wonder why we should even bother to support the anti-graft fight, since many have been made to believe that it is the order of the day. However, amidst all this pessimism, there are those who believe that their contribution, however meagre, may bring about the desired change.



*The RAC 2019 anti-corruption activists pause for a photo with with hon. lokodo*

It is from the above background that Rwenzori Anti-Corruption Coalition, during the commemoration of the 2019 Anti-Corruption Week decided to recognize and reward citizens and agencies that had stood out in contributing to the anti-graft war in Uganda, particularly the Rwenzori region. The citizens of Rwenzori through media and consultations were tasked to nominate individuals that had excelled in this

noble cause. These were vetted by RAC to come up with the best 8 nominees who, because of their commitment were awarded and recognized as the 2019 anti-corruption champions in the Rwenzori region. Many who witnessed these awards were challenged and pledged to join the fighters so that they too can receive this honor someday.



### Anti-Corruption Champions 2019

NO	DISTRICT	Champion	Occupation
1	Kabarole	Zahura Doreen	Headmistress Kasenda Primary School
2	Ntoroko	Ms. Julie Lagos	Head of family protection unit
		Mr. Baros Mugume	Commercial Officer
3	Kasese	Kule Josephat Mutahinga 1	Sub county Chief Karambi
		Joshua Mutugwanda	Former ACAO
		-	
4	Kyenjojo	Aganyira Cemerei	
		Bagyenyi Amos	Teacher at Butunduzi Model Primary School
	Kyegegwa	Mr. Kaliisa Keith	District Service Commissioner
	Bunyangabu	Dr. Obet Richard	DHO Bunyangabu
	Bundibugyo	Muhanguzi Umar	DRDC Bundibugyo
	National Level	Ministry of Ethics & Integrity	
		Office of the IGG – Fort Portal	

## Corporate Social Responsibility: The governance cluster gives back to the vulnerable at Buhinga ...



*(L-r) Kabarole Rdc, The Rac Ed And Deputy Cao With The Media And Governance Cluster Members At Buhinga Hospital*

It was the 28th day of November 2019 when members of the governance cluster with leaders from the Rwenzori region, in collaboration with the media fraternity stormed Fort Portal regional referral hospital to extend a helping hand to the vulnerable mothers and neonates at the hospital.

The initiative was one of the various activities conducted during the commemoration of the 2019 Anti-Corruption week in the Rwenzori region, spearheaded by Rwenzori Anti-Corruption Coalition (RAC). The team comprised among others; Bundibugyo and Kabarole District RDCs, Kabarole District Deputy CAO, RAC staff, other members of the Rwenzori regional governance cluster and the media.



In his remarks, the Kabarole District RDC – Mr. Asiimwe Stephen commended the brains behind this gesture of love that brought a smile to the faces of the less advantaged citizens. He further urged other agencies to do the same – for through such little things, many pitiable communities can be helped and transformed.

The RDC further commended the administration for the sanitation and general cleanliness of the hospital that had greatly improved! He however challenged them to pull up their socks in as far as the general administration and delegation of duty was concerned.

The hosts were equally grateful to RAC and the entire team for the love and care accorded to the mothers and babies. They however highlighted a number of

challenges faced, that were affecting the quality of services offered at this referral hospital, including among others; overwhelming numbers of patients visa vee existing human, financial and capital resources.

Sensitization of the community on nutrition to keep the children in good health, hence reduce their frequency to hospital due to malnutrition was resounded as a strong recommendation.

Sensitization may take different forms including distribution of fliers on nutritional facts, community sensitization programs through radio and Community Development Officers and demonstration gardens among others.

To this end, the two RDCs offered airtime to Buhinga hospital staff for these sensitization programs.



# Stories of change

## Fraudulent Sub-county chief remanded to prison

In the Financial year 2016/2017, Bundibugyo District Local Government transferred Youth livelihood funds to youth groups in various sub-counties in Bundibugyo district. However, in the year 2017, during RAC's routine monitoring visit, it was reported that Kaghema Youth piggery was a ghost group that had received 6,000,000/= for procurement of pigs, pigs feeds and construction of the shelter. Our findings further revealed that the former Kisuba Sub-County chief – Mr. Kitalibara Abel was behind the formation of this group. On establishment of this anomaly RAC opened up a General Enquires file at Bundibugyo Police station GEF 015/2016. The file was later forwarded to DPP, who advised that a separate file be opened up on charges of Forgery and Ushering false documents of the LC I stamp and signature that was used to establish the ghost group. Subsequently a new file was opened up in 2017 (case reference CRB 543/2017)

in the year 2017, during RAC's routine monitoring visit, it was reported that Kaghema Youth piggery was a ghost group that had received 6,000,000/= for procurement of pigs, pigs feeds and construction of the shelter.

The case was later forwarded to Court (CO-109/2018 in March 2018) but just after its first mention in court, the file went missing. RAC thus engaged the key stakeholders to ensure that the file is retrieved. As a result, a new duplicate file was made and the suspect appeared in court on December 17, 2019. He was then remanded to Bubukwanga government prison until 16th, January 2020 when he will re-appear before court for ruling. The community of Kisuba and Bundibugyo at large greatly appreciated RAC for following up this case to its logical conclusion, for justice to prevail.

The punitive measures taken against the errant sub-county chief is an eye opener for others with intentions of getting involved in similar actions of abuse of office to desist from them, lest they face the wrath of law.

## RAC-IAF Intervention halts illegal sand mining in Ntoroko

In the month of July 2019, a whistle-blower raised an alarm to RAC over illegal commercial sand mining at Karugutu Sub-County by Abas Balinda Sand Mining Company. Abas was accused of sand mining in Karugutu without authorization from the relevant authorities, causing heavy degradation of the environment.

When the Ntoroko Resident District Commission learnt of Abasi Balinda's illegal actions, he instructed the District Police Commander to impound all the trucks on site. However, when the DPC moved into action, the miners informed him that they had obtained permission from the district leadership. However, when contacted, The CAO and RDC dismissed the allegations as false and baseless, denying any involvement in this

illegal act.



With deep concern, RAC raised this report to the IAF during their monitoring visit to the region in the month of September 2019. During the meeting, the CAO informed the members that he had instructed the Environmental Officer to officially write and stop the miners from carrying out the illegal act. The Environmental Officer, bowing to the CAO's directive wrote to Abas Balinda – the Director of the Mining Company involved in the illegal sand mining. In his letter, the Environmental Officer requested Abasi Balinda mining company to provide documentation of the following

- Certificate of approval of Environmental Impact Assessment.
- Clearance from UNRA since their activities destroyed the road.
- Clearance from URA
- Clearance from UMEME since the site has

electricity poles on it.

Despite the request, Abasi did not comply. He neither stopped the illegal mining nor provided the information required.

To verify the above allegations, RAC together with the IAF team and the district leadership moved to the site where two trucks were found. These were immediately impounded and taken to Fort Portal Police post. In addition, 3 men reported to be Abas Balinda's employees were arrested and detained at Ntoroko police post, but later released. In addition, the Minister gave a directive to have the site under 24 hour surveillance for a minimum of one week to guard against any chances of the miners returning in the night hours.



In our follow up investigations, RAC was informed that the illegal activities were stopped. This was affirmed by the Ntoroko district RDC who during the commemoration of the ACW in Fort Portal thanked RAC and the entire IAF team for their efforts through which illegal sand mining

in Ntoroko was brought to a standstill. The RDC further reported that similar activities that were happening in other parts of Ntoroko had stopped after learning of the punitive measures taken against those involved in the illegal act.



# ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

What follows in this section is a highlight of the activities implemented in the fourth quarter of the year 2019. Key among these were;

## RWENLAP II PROJECT MID-TERM REVIEW



pursuit of our vision – a corruption- A Mid-term Review (MTR) for the RAC DGF funded project – Rwenzori Local Accountability Project (RWENLAP II) was conducted to determine the extent to which the set project goal and objectives have been realized thus far. Two years down the road, the 3-year project has made significant strides in free society, as elucidated in the MTR findings below:

The project is empowering citizens, communities and duty bearers to address accountability and service delivery issues they face in their daily livelihoods. The presence of community monitors, activists, civil society and involvement of other accountability stakeholders in the 8 districts and 63 sub counties is having far reaching effects in engendering governance programming in the region.





The project is increasing the involvement of citizens in governance of their communities. 77% of the respondents attested that they had engaged their government representatives/ duty bearers in the last one year. The engagement took the form of joining in monitoring government projects and service delivery, participating in planning and budgeting meetings, participating in radio programs, attending village and also local council meetings at different levels

A high proportion of 80% of the respondents affirm that the duty bearers are now responsive to citizen's demands. This responsiveness is exemplified by having 51% of the issues raised having been responded to by having action taken, followed up, referred and giving feedback to the citizens. Signed MOUs between RAC and the respective Local governments is reported to have increased commitment and involvement of duty bearers in being responsive to citizen's issues raised.



The RAC secretariat has demonstrated significant capacity in implementing accountability projects. The level of expertise and motivation is impressive, complemented by the ability to draw on substantial programme management and technical resources that provide an important supporting structure. Although the RWENLAP project is not new to most of the participating stakeholders, their ability to draw on the broader experience of the governance and accountability and well established implementation modalities has played an important factor in the progress that has been achieved to date. RAC through the RWENLAP II has taken strides to cultivate a good working relationship and partnership with state accountability institutions especially the DEI, IG, OAG and the district local government structure of District public Accounts Committees (DPACs). This collaboration has streamlined referral and expedited management of issues hence the increased rate of resolution standing at 51%.



## Other activities implemented...



District Integrity Promotion Forum (DIPF): A total of 16 DIPF meetings were carried out in this quarter, bringing together various stakeholders including RDCs, District Chairpersons, CAOs, DISOs, district heads of department, representatives from the judiciary, police, IGG, DPAC, District service commission, and members of the governance cluster among others to discuss, understand, respond and act on accountability and issues raised by the citizens. The DIPF are carried out on a quarterly basis and have resulted into increased collaboration and partnership between RAC and state agencies, hence expediting response to cases reported, as well as renewed trust, transparency and commitment between the two parties accelerated by information sharing.

DPAC, Internal Audit and other committees supported to monitor the extent of implementation of their recommendations: A total of 16 stakeholders meetings were conducted, bringing together a total of 154 participants to share experiences on the operations, achievements, challenges and recommendations so as to address the existing gaps in Internal Audit, DPAC, District service commission and procurement/contracts committees. Participants included members from DPAC, Internal Audit, Procurement, contracts committee, District Service Commission, office of the CAO, RDC and District Chairperson among others. These meetings have gone a long way in addressing some of the existing gaps faced in the above stated bodies; including discussion and implementation of DPAC recommendations by district council

Monitors' knowledge in evidence-based monitoring and reporting enhanced: in regard to this output, all the RAC monitors and activists were taken through a series of trainings to impart them with skills in evidence-based monitoring and reporting. As a result of the

training, monitors' confidence in probing and information gathering for evidence-based reports were strengthened, hence producing detailed factual reports with evidence on the status of service delivery in their localities. The evidence in the reports produced by monitors has greatly contributed to expedited response and action by duty bearers,



leading to correction of the anomalies reported. The evidence-based reports produced have also contributed to RAC's credibility and respect from the leaders, knowing that the information produced is factual and un-biased.



Monitoring service delivery and case follow up: With the confidence, knowledge and skills obtained from the monitoring trainings, the RAC monitors and activists were able to monitor service delivery in their respective localities, bringing issues of concern to their leaders for response and action. Copies of their monitoring reports and findings were shared with the secretariat for further follow up with the duty bearers. Sectors monitored included among others; health, education, production, works and administration.

Social audit and joint monitoring: in the period under review, a total of 16 social audits and joint monitoring of 35 projects were carried out across the 8 districts of the Rwenzori region. From the social audit, on-spot response to some of the queries raised was obtained, with action points to address the defects observed on given projects. A case in point is the tarmarking of Kibuku road in Ntoroko district where leaders unanimously agreed that the contractor must fix all defects on the road within a period of one month at his own cost.

District and sub-county plans analyzed, simplified and disseminated: RAC, with support from district planners obtained, analyzed and simplified the approved 8 district and 63 sub-county work plans and budgets within RAC's area of operation. The simplified plans and budgets were then disseminated to the RAC monitors and activists to guide them through their periodic monitoring of government projects and programs stipulated in the approved plans. This was aimed at enabling the community to monitor government programs and projects from the start to the end, to avoid post-mortem reporting

Budget consultative meetings: These were conducted at village, parish, sub-county and district level bringing together 7118 Participants in village ,parish and subcounty budget and planning meetings i.e. male were 4078 and female were 3040, 82 PWDs to present their community priorities for consideration in the district plans and budget. During these consultative meetings, a total of 155 community priorities were proposed for consideration, out of which 73were adopted in the approved district plans and budgets. It is anticipated that through community participation in the budget consultative conferences, people-centered plans will be developed, and these will greatly contribute to improved livelihoods of the community

RAC further participated in the regional consultative budget meeting in Fort Portal and Mbarara where we presented a report with Rwenzori regional concerns and priorities for consideration and adoption into the National Budget Framework Paper. The regional consultative meeting was organized by CSBAG in partnership with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development

Joint monitoring and reflection meeting with the governance cluster: two quarterly reflection meetings were held with members of the governance cluster; in these meetings, members shared reports on key service delivery gaps reported within their areas of operation; as well as community priorities for adoption into the district and national budget framework paper. These were presented at the regional budget consultative meeting in Fort Portal and Mbarara for adoption

In addition, members of the governance cluster made a joint monitoring visit to Kyembogo Datic – the proposed site for the industrial park in Kabarole. The industrial park is one of the proposed projects to be undertaken under the Agri-led program of operation wealth creation. The purpose of the visit by the cluster members to the park was to assess the progress of the proposed park, to avoid post mortem reporting. Our field findings revealed construction works had not kicked off but plans to start were underway. RAC together with the governance cluster will closely monitor all the agri-led project in the





Media campaign/radio programs: a total of 5 radio talk shows were conducted in the period under review. All the five talk-shows provided a platform for leaders and RAC to give feedback to the community on the cases/issues of concern raised and reported to RAC. In addition, the radio listeners were able to call in to seek clarification and at the same time report other issues of concern/service delivery gaps within their localities for response and action by the relevant stakeholders.



Media briefs: in addition to the talk-shows, 3 media briefs/press conferences were conducted in the period under review, bringing together a total of 22 participants (8 women and 14 men) from 10 media houses (regional and national). This platform enabled RAC to bring the media up to speed with the various activities conducted and updates on cases reported. The media in return publicized the information received to the wider community.



Whatsapp groups of different district leaders and citizens created: 8 district-based Whatsapp groups were created to link the citizens with their leaders. The Whatsapp groups have provided a platform for citizens to engage their leaders on service delivery gaps within their localities and at the same time enabled the leaders to provide on-spot feedback to some of the concerns raised by the citizens. In the period under review, a total of 18 cases were reported through Whatsapp groups and these were taken up for further investigation and action by the relevant stakeholders.

Community Feedback meetings: these were conducted across the 63 sub-counties in a bid to bring the community up to speed with the status i.e. responses and actions taken by the duty bearers in regard to the cases reported. The same platforms were used to obtain new community issues of concern for response and action by the respective duty bearers. By enlightening the citizens about the status, feedback and leaders' commitments to address the service delivery gaps reported, the citizens are now in a better position to hold their leaders accountable and follow up the commitments made to ensure access to better service delivery.



