



# UN Women Uganda Quarter Four Newsletter

October - December 2024



**FOR ENHANCED COLLABORATIONS TOWARDS BEIJING +30**



Heads of Missions, UN agencies, and male changemakers gather for a group photo following a breakfast meeting at the Netherlands Ambassador's residence.  
Photo: UN Women

This year marks 30 years since the adoption of the landmark global framework to advance gender equality and women's empowerment worldwide.

I am delighted to share with you the 4th quarter newsletter of 2024. This edition celebrates another impactful year, highlighting our collective strides in empowering women and girls across Uganda.

The past three months have been a time of reflection and action. From commemorating the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (25 November to 10 December), we have witnessed the power of partnerships in driving transformative change. These moments remind us that every step forward, no matter how small, contributes to a future where every woman and girl can live free from discrimination and violence.

On 22 November 2024, UN Women co-hosted a breakfast meeting at the Residence of the Ambassador of the Netherlands to Uganda. This event brought together Female Heads of Missions, UN Agencies, and Male Changemakers to discuss advancing women's rights and gender equality. It also explored the idea of a joint campaign in 2025 to commemorate the Beijing+30 anniversary. As we look ahead to 2025, let us renew our commitment to leave no one behind. Together, we can ensure that gender equality remains at the heart of Uganda's development agenda.

I extend my deepest gratitude to all our partners, stakeholders, and supporters for your unwavering dedication to our shared mission. Your contributions are invaluable, and we look forward to achieving even greater milestones together.

**Paulina Chiwangu**  
Country Representative to Uganda

**To our readers  
—development partners,  
government officials, civil society, the private sector, academia, and especially the women and girls of Uganda  
—I wish you a year filled with joy, progress, and success.**



# National Launch of 16 Days of Activism Against GBV in Uganda

Towards Beijing +30  
16 Days of Activism Campaign launch 2024



(Left-Right) Dr. Paulina Chiwangu, UN Women Uganda Country Representative, Mr. Leonard Zulu, UN Resident Coordinator to Uganda, Hon. Peace Mutuuzo, State Minister for Gender and Culture together with Diana Oroma a staff of Women’s International Peace Centre who received an accolade on behalf of her organisation in recognition of their work on women peace and security (WPS) in Uganda Photo : UN Women/Samuel Wamuttu

The national launch for the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based violence in Uganda was officially kicked off on the Monday 25, November 2024 at Hotel Africana in Kampala. This year’s theme, which resonates strongly with the global call for enhanced collaboration across sectors to create a safer and more equitable society is anchored in the UNiTE theme: **“Towards 30 Years of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action: UNiTE to End Violence Against Women and Girls.”**

The vibrant launch event united government officials, civil society organizations, development partners, activists, and community leaders. It set the stage for 16 days of intensified advocacy, community engagement, and policy dialogues focused on tackling the root causes of GBV and promoting sustainable solutions. Launches also took place at the field level.

Stakeholders donned themselves in orange scarfs and outfits to symbolize their dedication to hope, unity

and a bright future without gender-based violence. As part of that resolve, there was a launch and symbolic signing of a dummy report on Uganda’s National Progress of 30 years of the implementation of Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing +30) in Uganda (2020-2025).

**Speaking at the event, UN Uganda Resident Coordinator, Leonard Zulu, quoting the UN Secretary Generals message emphasized that “The epidemic of violence against women and girls shames humanity.” – In Uganda, 58% of partnered women face intimate partner violence. The time to act is NOW. Let’s dismantle systemic barriers and uphold dignity for all.” Zulu said.**

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## Netherlands Embassy and UN Women Launch Plans for Beijing+30 Gender Equality Campaign



UN Women and the Embassy of the Netherlands hosted a breakfast meeting in Uganda, bringing together Female Heads of Missions, UN Agencies, and Male Changemakers to discuss women’s rights and gender equality, and explore a potential joint campaign for the Beijing+30 anniversary in 2025.

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### 7th Annual Gender Statistics Forum: Driving Equality Through Data

UN Resident Coordinator in Uganda, Mr. Leonard Zulu signing on the disseminated documents.

Kampala hosted the 7th Annual Gender Statistics Forum (AGSF), a collaboration between UN Women, UBOS, MGLSD, and EPRC. The forum emphasized the power of gender statistics in shaping policies for gender equality and women’s empowerment in Uganda.

#### Highlights:

- Launch of key reports: “Women in the Labor Force,” “Facts and Figures on Women and Men in Uganda 2024,” and the “National Priority Gender Equality Indicators Report 2024.”
- Validation of the Uganda Women Empowerment Index (WEI), offering insights into gender progress and challenges.



UNFPA Country Representative, Ms Gift Malunga (2nd left, Hon. Peace Mutuuzo, State Minister of Gender and Culture, Maria Håkansson, the Swedish Ambassador to Uganda and Dr. Paulina Chiwangu, UN Women Uganda Country Representative and other stakeholders in a group photo with some of the survivors of GBV. Photo: UNFPA

### UN Women and Partners Spotlight SAUTI-116 Helpline’s Role in Supporting GBV and VAC Survivors During 16 Days of Activism

UN Women joined other stakeholders in visiting the SAUTI-116 Helpline in Kireka as part of activities for the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign. The visit highlighted the essential services provided by the SAUTI system, which supports survivors of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Violence Against Children (VAC), emphasizing its critical role in the fight against these issues.

The SAUTI-116 Helpline, established in 2014, is a toll-free, 24/7 hotline that provides a safe and confidential space for survivors of GBV and VAC to report incidents and access support services. The helpline has received over 1 million calls since its inception, with a significant increase in calls during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As Uganda continues to grapple with the challenges of GBV, the SAUTI-116 Helpline remains a beacon of hope for survivors, providing a safe and confidential space for them to report incidents and access support services.

In that regard, the importance of sustaining such a helpline at the community level cannot be overstressed as such resource provides a critical support system, ensuring survivors of GBV and VAC have access to immediate, confidential, and specialized services, fostering safety, empowerment, and justice within the community.





Gender Statistics Technical Working Group experts in a group photo at the end of a retreat in Entebbe. Photo: UN Women

## Strengthening Gender Statistics: Experts Convene in Entebbe

Entebbe hosted a Gender Statistics Working Group retreat, bringing together experts from government ministries, academia, the private sector, and UN agencies, including UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, and UN Women.

The retreat focused on building capacity, validating key reports, and preparing for the Uganda Annual Gender Statistics Forum 2024. Participants explored the Women's Empowerment Index (WEI), which measures empowerment across critical areas such as health, education, work and finance, leadership, and freedom from violence.

Through these initiatives, UN Women continues to support Uganda in strengthening its gender statistics framework, paving the way for more informed and equitable policymaking.

The retreat in Entebbe provided a platform for meaningful collaboration, fostering discussions on gender-sensitive data collection and analysis. By bringing together diverse stakeholders, including government officials, academics, and international agencies, the event highlighted the importance of integrating gender perspectives into national statistics. This collective effort contributes to enhancing the accuracy and comprehensiveness of gender data, which is essential for shaping policies that promote equality and address the specific needs of women and marginalized groups in Uganda.



## Championing Justice: Happy Ham Salongo's Volunteer Journey to Empower Communities in Bundibugyo

**Community Volunteers driving GBV behavioural changes in communities**

Happy Ham Salongo, 68, is a Community Based Volunteer in Kisubba Sub County, Bundibugyo district, southwestern Uganda.

Happy was trained on human rights in 2021 by the Justice Centres Uganda, a UN Women implementing partner of the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) Programme. Topics included gender-based violence (GBV) and land disputes, among other issues affecting the communities.

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## Healing Through Hope: Grace's Journey to Mental Health Recovery in Kyangwali Refugee Settlement - Humanitarian Response

Grace, a 24-year-old living in the Kyangwali refugee settlement in Uganda's Kikuube district, has found a new sense of hope and purpose through Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) provided by the Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation (TPO).

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## UN Women Uganda joins partners in commemorating the 24th UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security



On 31st October 2024, UN Women Uganda joined partners in commemorating the 24th anniversary of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security (UNSCR1325). The event took place at the Uganda Media Center in Kampala and highlighted the importance of advancing the Women, Peace, and Security agenda.

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## UN Women Uganda Commemorates World AIDS Day 2024 in Buyende District

On December 1, 2024, UN Women Uganda joined partners in Buyende District to commemorate World AIDS Day under the theme, "Let's End Inequalities and Build Resilience Together." The event highlighted the need for gender-responsive interventions to address the disproportionate impact of HIV/AIDS on women and girls in Uganda.

UN Women emphasized tackling gender inequality, poverty, and stigma while advocating for investments in education, economic empowerment, and healthcare for women, especially in rural areas. Activities included free HIV testing, counseling, and community dialogues, reinforcing inclusive, community-driven approaches to ending HIV/AIDS. The event reaffirmed UN Women's commitment to empowering women and fostering resilient communities.

World AIDS Day 2024 served as a reminder of the collective responsibility to end the epidemic.



UN Resident Coordinator in Uganda, Leonard Zulu (3rd from right) with UNAIDS Uganda Country Director, Jackie Makokha, WHO Uganda Representative, Dr. Charles Njuguna and UN Women Uganda, Deputy Rep. Adekemi Ndieli during the World Aids Day Commemorations in Buyende District. Photo: UN Uganda

## UN Women joins UN Family in commemorating UN Day in Kampala



Left, UNICEF Uganda Country Rep, Dr. Robin Nandy marching together with UN Women Uganda Country Rep. Dr. Paulina Chiwangu in Kampala. Photo: UN Women /Schola Adong

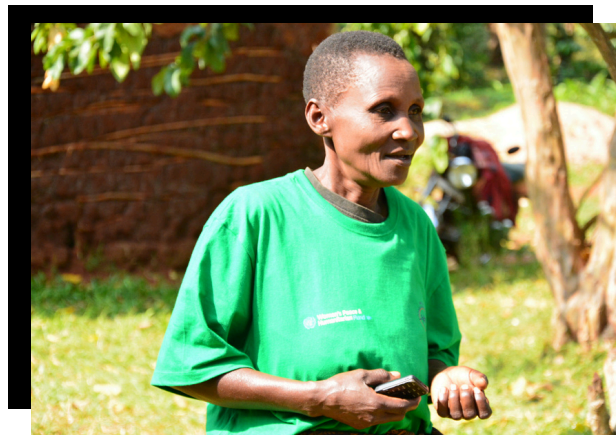
On October 24, 2024, UN Women Uganda joined the United Nations family, government officials, development partners, and the public to commemorate UN Day in Kampala. The event, held under the theme "Building a Sustainable Future Together," showcased the collective efforts of UN agencies in advancing sustainable development and promoting peace, equality, and resilience in Uganda.

As a key participant, UN Women Uganda plays a key role in driving gender equality and women's empowerment as critical components of sustainable development.

The celebration on October 24th was held at the MTN Omondi Stadium in Lugogo, Kampala, drawing an energetic crowd eager to embrace a day of community, wellness, and excitement. The event kicked off with a lively marching procession, led by the dynamic Uganda Police band, setting a vibrant and celebratory tone for the day.

The event featured energetic Zumba sessions, where participants danced and laughed together, along with health check-ups that provided practical wellness advice for all ages. Football matches sparked friendly competition, with teams composed of UN staff, KCCA representatives, and Members of Parliament of Uganda playing in great spirit.

## Alice Kirikarama's Journey to Justice: A Widow's Fight for Her Land



Alice during a interview at her home in Hoima District of western Uganda. Photo: MIRAC

Alice Kirikarama, a devoted wife, spent over 40 years in a loving marriage with her husband, Yacobo Kirikarama. Despite not having children, their bond was unbreakable. However, tragedy struck when Yacobo fell ill and was bedridden for over fifteen years before passing away. After his death, Alice found comfort in the life they had shared and continued to live on their two-acre piece of land in Kabaale sub-county, Hoima District, which had been her lifeline for survival.

Five years later, Alice's peaceful existence was shattered. Yacobo's stepchildren began pressuring her to vacate the land, claiming that her lack of biological children disqualified her from any inheritance rights. Their threats escalated as they attempted to sell the land, disregarding her rightful ownership. Feeling vulnerable and overwhelmed, Alice turned to a trusted community member, trained by the Mid-Western Region Anti-Corruption (MIRAC), an organization funded by the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) in Hoima District.

MIRAC quickly intervened, educating Yacobo's stepchildren on Uganda's inheritance laws, which grant a legally married widow the right to her husband's property, regardless of children. When the stepchildren presented a will they claimed justified their actions, a MIRAC legal officer examined it closely and uncovered significant irregularities, including the absence of witnesses, rendering the will invalid.



Through a series of mediated dialogues, MIRAC helped reconcile Alice and the stepchildren, with the family ultimately acknowledging Alice’s legal and moral entitlement to the land. MIRAC facilitated the formal allocation of the land to Alice, securing her rights with a document confirming her exclusive ownership. The land was measured, marked, and protected to prevent future disputes.

Alice’s transformation was remarkable. From a distressed widow under threat of eviction, she became a confident and empowered landowner, her rights reaffirmed and safeguarded. This case is a powerful testament to the critical role of organizations like MIRAC and WPHF in protecting the rights of vulnerable women, particularly widows. By addressing systemic injustices, providing legal education, and advocating for women’s rights, MIRAC not only resolved a land dispute but also restored Alice’s dignity and security, empowering her to rebuild her life.

**Amudat District participated in launching 16 Days of Activism with Local Leaders Driving Action Against GBV in Karamoja region**



*Community members who have benefitted from UNJPGBV support through CDFU rehearse for 16 DoA launch (2024) in Amudat district, Karamoja sub-region. Photo: UN Women*

On 6th December 2024, Amudat District in the Karamoja sub-region of Uganda launched its 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence at Kalas Primary School. The event was attended by several local leaders and community members.

Similar events were held in Moroto, with community dialogues also taking place in Tororo and Napak. These dialogues aim to sensitize communities on GBV prevention and response and raise awareness about referral pathways for those experiencing GBV.

The dialogue meetings involve the police, cultural leaders, and staff from community based departments, such as community development officers from the district.

This approach is designed to help communities better understand GBV and build confidence in addressing cases.

Cultural leaders are particularly encouraged to engage with men to challenge and transform cultural norms that perpetuate gender-based violence.

**UN Women and Partners Launch 16 Days of Activism in Uganda’s West Nile Region: Addressing Teenage Pregnancy in Adjumani District**



*Guests react to speeches during the launch of 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence Campaign 2024 in Adjumani district. Photo: UN Women*

The launch of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence in Uganda's West Nile region took place in the Oligi settlement in Adjumani District. The event was attended by key partners, including UNHCR, the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), Medical Teams International, World Vision, Plan International, Mercy Beyond Borders, Window International, UGANET, and local organizations.

UN Women, in collaboration with partners, is conducting dialogues with parents and girls to address teenage pregnancy, a significant issue identified in Adjumani District through a GBV safety audit report conducted earlier this year. These dialogues are being led by Overcomers, a women-led organization.

The discussions are taking place in sub-counties such as Itirikwa, Dzipi, and Ukusijoni, as well as in settlements like Pagirinya, Nyumanzi, Maagi I, Maagi II, Maagi III, and Agojo. Itirikwa has been highlighted as one of the areas with the highest rates of teenage pregnancy in Adjumani





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