

UGANDA MEMPROW *Girls' Newsletter*

THE WESTNILE CHAPTER | DEC 2022 | VOLUME 2



MENTORING AND EMPOWERMENT
Programme for Young Women

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WELCOME ON BOARD

Sharon Ocola Katho | Communication Officer

Welcome to our newest Newsletter volume 2022. Stay glued and catch up on the Amazing accomplishment made by MEMPROW, her partners, friends, and networks and most importantly, get to view our work through the right holder's lenses.

Enjoy the Read!!



PROGRAMME DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

“
*...we committed to
breaking down all glass
ceilings that prevent girls
from reaching the sun!*”



Ms. Sarah Nakame

Programmes Director – MEMPROW

Dear MEMPROW Girl, Sibling

This is a heart-to-heart letter, from the heart of MEMPROW to yours. As you turn the pages, may the experiences and lessons shared here speak to your strengths, your dreams, and your fears! May you find inspiration to move past the fears and be ignited to launch into your wildest aspirations. We are cheering you on!

This season has been fruitful, enjoyable, and challenging for the MEMPROW team. It was challenging because we committed to breaking down all glass ceilings that prevent girls from reaching the sun!

We hope that by advocating for safer sports, ending teen pregnancy and child marriages, and creating conducive and supportive environments for girls' educational attainment, every girl and woman will see themselves as unique, celebrated, and with valid dreams. In that spirit, this newsletter

has been written to cast a spotlight on the untold stories of brevity, resilience, innovation, sisterhood, and all things in between.

Thank you for walking this journey with MEMPROW and for believing in and committing to the MEMPROW mission to build young women's agency and a feminist movement for an inclusive and violence-free society. MEMPROW Girls participated in various sports, learned social survival skills, and supported each other in girls clubs at their schools, which resulted in the milestones we recorded this season.

Our commitment is that we will continue to coalesce around all these wins, and we will continue to walk this journey with one girl or woman at a time.

Happy 2023!



Sustaining Women's leadership

RIGHT HOLDERS! STORIES & POEMS

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Sustaining Women's leadership

NEBBI TOWN SS SUCCEEDING WITH MEMPROW THROUGH THE YEARS

Tr. Robinah,
Patron MEMPROW Girls' Network
Nebbi Town SS



My Journey with MEMPROW started in 2014 after they invited several teachers to a community dialogue. There was a lot of discussion, particularly over the old-fashioned traditional view that women did not inherit land from their parents and did not own any property. The majority of the men in attendance responded favorably to the conversation by acknowledging the significance of giving girls' inheritance of family land equal weight.

"Our school greatly appreciates MEMPROW's efforts to educate young girls about their rights as women and help them grow into responsible adults. With this, I think the future you are creating for today's young ladies will be better. A generation of women will take a position and fight for the underprivileged"

Tr. Robinah

After that, MEMPROW moved on by bringing Nebbi Town S.S on board and empowering the girls and few

boys' social survival skills. Girls gained leadership skills, management of personal hygiene, communication skills, and, to rap it all, they learnt to be confident in whatever they do during this session. Due to this, a few of the girls who participated in the program adopted the viewpoint that books should come before children.

Girls gained leadership skills, management of personal hygiene, communication skills...

Meanwhile Since boys had held the position of head prefect for more than ten years, I began to notice ladies showing guts and competing for the highest leadership position. And, in the year 2022, a girl from MEMPROW competed fiercely against boys and prevailed.

co-curricular activities via intra-school competitions, females began to reflect on how they had been cut off from what might have helped them succeed in life, particularly in sports. They expressed gratitude to MEMPROW for doing so. Some of the girls entered national competitions after becoming more outgoing and fervently embracing sports. Additional sports like basketball, football females, and Omweso were added.

The School's MEMPROW club planted trees that were donated by MEMPROW and the National Water and Sewerage as a means of preserving the environment. However, Due to the prolonged dry weather, the club was only able to salvage nine trees; the rest were destroyed by termites and the intense heat of the sun.

After MEMPROW introduced

TOWARDS A BETTER TOMORROW: My Business Journey of Dependence to Independence



Athieno supporting the money with household work

I started from very far ends of life with only one business of selling Mandazi. My daily fetch was not enough to bail me out of the dependence circle.

Immediately after I had a training which covered Costing and pricing / business idea generation and selection training with MEMPROW, which became my recall moment. From then on I shifted to Firewood and charcoal business which is somewhat costly in terms of transport (300k to transport). To curb this, I decided to open up a one acre land to plant cassava.

"I am really proud of myself for running so many businesses and, more significantly, for managing them with my mother's help."
~ Athieno Joy Christine

Kwiocwiny Margret is becoming a renowned hairdresser among her colleagues as she is now taking in trainees. Her salon business was majorly home based, and she didn't think of coming out to own her own space.

Kwiocwiny says, ***"I used to run a small home business with no products and few clients. But now I can bring in new merchandise, serve a lot of people (on average 4), work weekends for at least 25,000 to 30,000, and even train other girls—I'm presently working with a***



16-year-old girl, I wouldn't have moved this far if it were not for MEMPROW".

I am Not a Victim, But a Survivor With a Story



"After the COVID-19 lockdown, life became difficult, even after lifting of Ban. Being in a polygamous marriage, I have four biological children and three orphans to care for; sadly, my husband only helped one of them with their education, leaving the other three to be taken care of by me.

Life as a full-time peasant farmer was challenging, but after completing my initial training with MEMPROW and assuming the role of community counselor, I resolutely refused to let my husband seize our family property along with other of his wives since I was aware of my legal rights at this point.

After obtaining all I required for farming, I took the blow of the breakup and made the decision that I must strengthen my relationship with my children, provide for them well, and produce enough food to support them without making demands of him.

I can honestly state that MEMPROW's trainings have changed my life. My kids and the people in my neighborhood now highly respect me, and I made the decision to construct two "Mabati" houses to give my family a comfortable place to live. I am now a much better person as a result of the one training session, which altered my path of movement"

Florence, a Pakwach native

The Strength in My Social Capital and Networking Through MEMPROW training ~Roseline



"Anyone who knew me before to MEMPROW's involvement will attest to the fact that I never had friends, had terrible communication skills even when I was approached in a kind manner, and that I caused fear in others.

However, thanks to Madame Lois's (MEMPROW) discussion of counseling, I was able to relax, and even when my in-laws referred to me as a witch after my husband's passing, I remained unmoved. Even though it was difficult for me to get to my daughter's school, I managed to be stronger than before. I even let people talk to me, especially my daughter, who is now my best friend.

It shocked them to see me "the witch" supporting them even though they weren't there for me after I opted to give part of my pension to my in-laws. I am happy to report that I now own land and have improved my interpersonal skills"



My self-esteem realization Journey with MEMPROW
—Ayiorwoth Patience Angal SS

MEMPROW has built my self-esteem. Before I joined the MEMPROW Club, I used to fear talking to people one-on-one, but with MEMPROW trainings, I have gotten to know who I am and have developed my self-esteem.

To add on to that, I used to fear my teachers, which made life harder for me, but now I have a very good relationship with them, which has helped me and improved my performance.

In our school, MEMPROW has helped redesign our school by embracing tree planting that has made our school beautiful, and with all these efforts, we have managed to engage other students through peer-peer talks and training so that they become like us.



MEMPROW has done many things in my life —Munguriek Justine Daphine.

First of all, I used to be very shy, but after the training, I became courageous and gained confidence during public speeches.

I used to have no friends; in fact, all of my friends were negative influences, but with the training I've received, I know I'm capable of achieving my goals, but I also know it's my responsibility to do so.

But most importantly, I have learned to engage with my teachers' friends when I have difficult moments and problems that I can't solve.



I used to be very shy and could not talk in public
—Ayiorwoth Peace

I used to be very shy and could not talk in public because I feared looking into people's eyes. It was worse at school; I feared to lead people who were older and bigger than me.

I used to believe that because boys are stronger than girls, girls cannot lead. But through MEMPROW trainings, I developed confidence and took a leadership position.



Sustaining Women's leadership

COLLABORATIONS and *NETWORKING*

Our efforts in creating a safe space, promoting equality and sustaining women in better positions have been made stronger through joint collaborations.



**MEMPROW staff members
guiding children and
partners in a discussion of
the National Strategy**

NORTHERN UGANDA PRE-GIRL SUMMIT

Children need a society free from child marriage and teen pregnancy, thus MEMPROW, together with members of the Girls Not Bride partnership, organized a Northern Region Pre-Girl Summit on November 18.

Adolescent girls and boys, parents, religious and cultural leaders, political and government officials, young mothers, Girls Not Brides activists, and other development partners came together for the National Girl Pre-Summit (Northern Region Summit) Event in Arua City to discuss the opportunities, difficulties, and recommendations of the "2022/2023 - 2026/202 National Strategy To End Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy" in Northern Uganda.

WOMEN MOVEMENT BUILDING

Street Dialogue in Anua



This exercise raised awareness and enhanced knowledge of grassroots movements by focusing on market vendors who shared their insights into the best ways to mobilize village savings associations and the advantages of creating cooperatives for group strong voices that influence information flow and the modification of local policies that directly affect them.



Our involvement in the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence was accomplished through a launch day and online activism. The annual global campaign begins on November 25, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and lasts until December 10, Human Rights Day.



“ Keeping quiet about cases of violence and abuse only fuels and exposes more girls to be abused by the same perpetrators. Let’s join hands together with all actors and speak about it to promote a violence free society for women and girls. ”

#UNITE #16DaysofGBV

Stella Oyungrowth
Programme Officer



Sustaining Women's leadership



LEADERSHIP STRENGTHENING

Debating competitions are not just fun activities but also create a platform for girls to exercise their public speaking and issue articulation skills for improved public speaking confidence.





NELSON EDEMA



JOVANILE WADRIA

BODA BODA ENGAGEMENT

Promotion of a violence-free society needs a joint effort of all stakeholders. As part of this commitment, boda-boda riders, who make up a substantial number of road users, were trained to identify, respond, report, and prevent violence.

"As Boda-boda, we appreciate being considered for this training because we, too, are valuable assets in advocating for change and this will help us dispel negative stereotypes about our work that are prevalent in the community." *Nelson Edema, participant from Arua.*

Jovanile Wadria, chairperson of the Triangle Stage Boda-Boda Association in Terego Alengo Pajulu, pledges to disseminate the knowledge he acquired at the training to his fellows and the entire community in his surroundings.



GIRLS SAFE SPACES

Recognizing that Ugandan teenage mothers face enormous burdens from economic hardship, including stigma, neglect, a lack of livelihood opportunities, illiteracy, and so on. There can be no better way for us than to promote skill learning. Child mothers from West Nile Districts, especially from Zombo to Arua, have been involved in economic, self-care, hygiene, and social survival skills training.

"We shall continue to acknowledge that these young women have a mind, talents, and creativity that, when enhanced, bring life to them and the people they live with."



FEMINIST SPACES

While breaking the narrative, it is our joy to keep creating safe spaces for women to reveal the best about themselves, starting from our self-care to storytelling and counseling sessions. Women advisors and mentors continue to create stronger networks and approaches to address violence.

INTRA-SCHOOL SPORTS GALA



The 2022 intra-school sports gala organized in Nebbi was graced by 4 schools, including Angal SS, Nebbi SS, Afere Primary School, and Oturgang. Central to promoting positive change and encouraging girls to be themselves, this tournament creates the space required by girls to freely express themselves, network, and socialize while developing their skills in the sports industry.

IN THE KNOW

- In 2020, the Uganda Bureau of statistics [UBOS] conducted a national survey on violence in Uganda and it was discovered that out of 2,683 women aged 15-59, who were interviewed from all regions of Uganda; and of whom 34 percent were aged 15-24 years 640 women and girls [97 percent of those UBOS surveyed] of greater Northern Uganda confirmed that they had experienced physical sexual violence or sexual violence from their partner or a non-partner or both since 15. The highest prevalence being in Bukedi and west Nile sub region.
- Gaslighting is a form of psychological abuse used by perpetrators to control & manipulate victims into believing their own thoughts & feelings are wrong. This can be incredibly damaging to victims' mental health. Gaslighting is domestic abuse
- UNFPA 2020, Teenage Pregnancy is responsible for nearly 1/5 (one-fifth) of Annual Births in Uganda. Further still, 25% of girls between the ages 15 & 19 have given birth or are pregnant, 34% are married by 18; a problem that was exacerbated by COVID19.





Sustaining Women's leadership

VIDEOS, STORIES PUBLICATION LINKS

Youtube Videos:

OLAMA FLORENCE
As for me, the training has taught me how to love children, especially girls.

Responses to Escalating Violence against women and girls

MEMPROW LIMITED **Subscribe**

CLIMATE CHANGE RESPONSE IN WESTNILE SUB-REGION
MEMPROW LIMITED
2:08

MEMPROW PARTNERS SPOTLIGHT: THE STRUGGLE TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST GIRLS AND WOMEN
MEMPROW LIMITED
2:16

LIVE: Women in Rugby Leadership Workshop 2022, Uganda
Rugby Afrique

News articles:

Boda Bodas empowered on Sexual GBV & Human Rights

■ <https://www.dailywestnile.info/news-now/boda-bodas-empowered-on-sexual-gbv-human-rights>

Arua district officials join MEMPROW, Action Aid in tree planting campaign

■ <https://redpepper.co.ug/arua-district-officials-join-memprow-action-aid-in-tree-planting-campaign/124580/>

Photo Gallery



Sustaining Women's leadership



Join the Conversation

On Women and Girls' Empowerment



This Newsletter is a publication by Mentoring and Empowerment Programme for Young Women (MEMPROW)



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