

# The Monthly Digest

## THE COP28 PERSPECTIVES: NAVIGATING CHALLENGES AND CELEBRATING MILESTONES



*Cotilda Nakyeeyune, CARE Uganda's Climate Justice Program Manager (first from the left) participates in a Panel discussion side event organized by the Pan Africa Climate Justice Alliance on: "Advancing Locally-Led Adaptation in Africa and Beyond".*

**By Cotilda Nakyeeyune**

The global endeavor to combat climate change reached a significant milestone with the conclusion of the 28th Conference of Parties (COP28) held in Dubai, UAE, from November 30th to December 13th, 2023, under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

COP28 was marked by a significant dispute revolving around the host country, the United Arab Emirates, which is a prominent producer of oil and gas. The UAE took a firm stance against the gradual elimination of fossil fuels (including oil, gas, and coal) and did not consider it crucial to prevent the global temperature from exceeding a 1.5°C increase. However, despite this controversy, the conference managed to achieve groundbreaking agreements that held great importance for CARE. Here, I present three noteworthy highlights from the event.

The COP28 agreement introduced the appointment of a youth climate champion (aged 18-35) to represent the COP presidency, fostering meaningful youth engagement in climate action. This two-year role not only spotlights youth climate work globally but may also unlock funding for youth initiatives. For a country like Uganda, chances to occupy this role are quite remote (but not impossible) as it's tagged to hosting of COP (for now, Uganda's chances would increase if we hosted COP). The climate youth fraternity can however advocate for nominations outside the COP host country, which would increase chances for non-COP host countries to present a candidate. But also, it's now incumbent on youth organizations to strategize and get their demands on the agenda of the climate

youth champion. CARE and similar organizations have a crucial role in enhancing the capabilities, particularly the agency, of young individuals, enabling them to actively participate in the global platforms with ease.

The COP28 agreement established a fund to address the losses and damages caused by climate-related disasters. Countries that are frequently impacted by extreme weather events, such as floods, wildfires, and landslides, suffer significant losses in terms of infrastructure, lives, and financial resources. The purpose of this fund is to provide support to these countries in rebuilding and restoring what has been destroyed or lost. Uganda, for instance, will have the opportunity to access this fund to reconstruct areas that have consistently been affected by disasters. Although there has been a pledge of approximately \$656 million to the fund, it is crucial to acknowledge that this amount is insufficient given the magnitude of climate-related losses and damages.

The inclusion of language addressing the phasing out of fossil fuels in the COP agreement marks a significant milestone. Despite the presence of oil producing companies, including the host country UAE, the agreement



sends a strong message to nations heavily reliant on oil and gas. However, this poses a dilemma for poorer oil and gas producing nations like Nigeria, Ghana, Angola, Congo, and Uganda, whose economic growth depends on fossil fuel production. To ensure a just transition away from fossil fuels, wealthier nations must support the development of alternative sectors in these countries.

There are three aspects that did not receive much attention but are of interest to CARE. These include gender equality and climate finance, particularly financing for climate change adaptation. These issues are expected to be prioritized at COP29 in Azerbaijan. On a positive note, the organizing committee for COP28 consisted of 63% women, indicating progress in women's representation. However, advocacy efforts must continue to prevent setbacks in future COPs. For instance, the initial committee for COP29 consisted of only men, but this decision was revised to include 12 women.

A CARE delegation comprising 20 members from Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Bangladesh, France, Nepal, Jordan, Peru, Niger, Core D'Ivoire, Zimbabwe, UK, Denmark, USA, Netherlands, Germany, and Egypt participated in the event.

### My personal reflections on COP

The type of accreditation to attend COP matters. Getting accredited by your country means that you attend COP as a delegate (as opposed to observer), which affords you access to some meetings, that are closed to observers.

Apart from the main negotiations, COP provides an excellent platform for learning, networking, and showcasing. These annual events bring together key stakeholders in the field of Climate Change, including representatives from our own country, Uganda. It presents opportunities to connect with individuals who are difficult to meet back home and to learn about or present new climate initiatives. Therefore, it is crucial to allocate time equally between following the main negotiations and engaging in networking, learning, and showcasing activities.

The attendance at COPs is steadily increasing, with COP28 attracting nearly 100,000 participants while COP27 had around 50,000 and COP26 had approximately 38,000 attendees. Navigating through such a large crowd to locate specific rooms and individuals can be quite challenging. It is advisable to arrive a day or two before the official event to familiarize oneself with the surroundings and identify venues for planned engagements. This will ensure that the official COP weeks are utilized to their fullest.

Addressing climate change's causes is progressing, but reversing its effects will take time. Developing countries like Uganda should actively participate in climate change negotiations and seize funding opportunities to enhance resilience. Uganda, however, needs to enhance political representation to attract potential donors and secure funding from COP engagements.

## MULTISTAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE: THE NEXUS BETWEEN GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND WOMEN'S NUTRITION

By Angella Mirembe

**CARE International in Uganda, under the "Catalyzing Strengthened Policy Action for Health Diets and Resilience- (CASC-DE)" Project, partnered with the Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development to organize a high-Level multi-stakeholder dialogue on Gender-Based Violence and Women's Nutrition. The event, held on December 7, 2023, at the Sheraton Hotel, Kampala, brought together 38 stakeholders representing diverse sectors, to discuss the crucial intersection of gender-based violence (GBV) and women's nutrition.**

This discussion aims to underscore the intersectionality influenced by adverse gender, cultural, and social norms.

Speaking on behalf of religious leaders, Bishop Andrew Lugolobi, acknowledged the knowledge gap in nutrition, as theological training primarily focuses on the arts, while nutrition is a scientific field.

**|| Religious institutions in the country have structures, avenues at different levels with trained clergy that handle GBV however, we have been having a little knowledge gap on nutrition. We shall need training for our leaders"**

According to Ms. Perry Aritua, Women Rights Organizations (WRO) have played a significant role in advocating for and influencing key policies such as the Succession bill



**Stakeholders representing various sectors at the event.**

and Employment Act. Additionally, the WROs have collaborated with the government to establish GBV shelters in various areas, particularly in refugee hosting communities.

Iddi Mubaraka Mayanja Principal Women and Development Officer, Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development highlighted the negative impact of GBV on women's nutritional status, emphasizing its exacerbation in economically vulnerable households.



**|| We must address women's access to land since they do most of the farming that feeds families" said Idi Mubarak Mayanja.**

Yossa Daisy, the CASCADE Consortium Manager, emphasized the project's goal of reducing malnutrition among women and children through effective policy implementation, especially the Uganda Nutrition Action Plan II 2020-2025. She said; "an enabling environment to tackle the underlying drivers of violence against women in all its forms and consequently women's nutrition is critical for sustained actions across the board".

Hon. Ssebikali Joel from the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development expressed the government's appreciation for non-government actors' contributions in reducing GBV, while the parliamentary forum pledged to follow up on aspects related to the presentation of the food and nutrition bill and the enactment of the succession act.

Dr. Peterson Kato Kikomoko of Kyambogo University, a CASCADE partner, presented key findings from the gender analysis research in 15 districts in Uganda.

The study revealed that GBV affects both men and women, with common forms including beating and denial of food. Social norms and myths, such as considering wife beating as a sign of love, were identified as factors influencing GBV. Approximately 86% of respondents in Karamoja region believed that GBV negatively affected nutrition.

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a sign of love, were identified as factors influencing GBV. Approximately 86% of respondents in Karamoja region believed that GBV negatively affected nutrition.

The study recommended multisectoral actions and capacity building for political, religious, and cultural leaders to address GBV and malnutrition.

**|| Cultural leaders have a key role to play in influencing the cultural norms, hence fighting against GBV requires engagement of cultural leaders. Do not leave men behind ... so that they can understand the impact of their patriarchal behavior on GBV and poor nutrition, some men do not have that understanding." Commented Edward Kabongoya, the representative from Tooro Kingdom.**

Participants acknowledged the intersectionality between nutrition and gender-based violence, emphasizing the importance of a multisectoral approach. "GBV has affected the girl child and the woman more; however, to mitigate it, we have to involve men 100%. We need to engage together ...complementarity is the answer". Commented one participant.

In commemorating this international moment, the dialogue illuminated the critical linkages between GBV and women's nutrition, underscoring the urgency of collaborative, multi-sectoral efforts to address these intertwined challenges. The event showcased the commitment of various stakeholders, setting the stage for continued advocacy and action in the pursuit of healthier, more resilient communities.

## CARE'S COMMITMENT TO ENSURING THE SAFETY OF DRIVERS AND THE COMMUNITY

By David Walugunga

**CARE International Uganda, in partnership with FMS Africa a leading company in vehicle tracking and safety, arranged an extensive road safety workshop for CARE International on December 22, 2023. This training session conducted by Mr. Isaac Sekatanza, the Senior Superintendent of Traffic Police and the visionary behind the Centre for Accident Prevention and Road Safety Education had 11 drivers participating.**

The training equipped the drivers with essential road safety skills and motor vehicle maintenance knowledge revolving reinforcing common road rules, emphasizing traffic and road

safety regulations, and instilling defensive driving skills. Additionally, the training focused on reducing road accidents, improving fuel efficiency, and lowering maintenance costs for CARE vehicles.

Participants had the opportunity to ask questions to the facilitator to gain a deeper understanding of topics that were not fully covered during the presentation. The questions mainly revolved around road safety, vehicle maintenance, and fuel-efficient driving. One of the participants, Mr Sem-pala Moses, inquired about the procedure a Traffic Officer

should follow when charging a driver suspected of breaking traffic rules. The facilitator explained that the officer has the authority to stop the driver at any safe location.



**Senior Superitendant of Traffic Police, Mr Isaac Sekatanza facilitating the workshop.**

The decision to charge the driver will depend on factors such as compliance, approach, attitude, and the driver's explana-



tion after committing the offense. Additionally, the officer will inspect the vehicle to ensure it is safe and properly licensed to be on the road.

Another participant, Twaha, asked if hazard lights could be used in such situations. The facilitator clarified that hazard

lights should only be used as an emergency signal, indicating to other motorists that there is a problem or an emergency.

This road safety training not only enhanced the skills and knowledge of CARE International drivers but also contributed to fostering a safer road environment for all.

## EMPOWERING AFRICAN YOUTH AT YOUTHCONNEKT AFRICA SUMMIT 2023

By Charlene Kanyali

The vibrant city of Nairobi, Kenya, recently hosted the 2023 YouthConnekt Africa Summit under the theme "Youth Innovating a Borderless African Renaissance".



A panel discussion during the summit.

Presiding over the event at the prestigious Kenyatta International Convention Centre, H.E William Samoei Ruto said Innovation is critical to achieving Africa's development goals.

**// To realize growth, we must deliberately focus on innovation to create fresh opportunities through the creation of new products, models and partnerships. We must also foster a conducive environment for entrepreneurship by providing youth with access to capital, mentorship, and opportunities to transform their ideas into thriving cross border businesses". Explained H.E William Ruto to over 20,000 participants attending the conference.**

A central focus of the summit was the "1 Million Next Level" initiative, a bold endeavor with the ambitious goal of impacting at least 300 million young Africans. The initiative spans diverse areas such as health, education, entrepreneurship, employment, and engagement, presenting a transformative approach to uplift the continent's youth.

The discussions delved into pivotal topics, envisioning a borderless Africa, advocating for increased youth representation in government bodies, nurturing soft skills and financial capabilities, fostering innovation and development, and

championing youth-led climate change initiatives. The summit also highlighted digital innovations, notably featuring the impactful "1 Million Next Level" Initiative spearheaded by the African Union.

A significant facet of the YouthConnekt Africa event was the active participation of 30 Ministers representing youth from 30 out of 32 member states. Uganda played a pivotal role, with the Ministry of Gender, Labor, and Social Development joining hands with representatives from CARE International in Uganda, UNDP, BRAC, AVSI Foundation, and the National Council, collectively contributing to Uganda's robust representation.

**// Uganda being one of the first countries to launch the 1 million next level initiative is a sign of our commitment to get our youth to the next level. Uganda is willing to go to any lengths to see the youth succeed. We will not leave any of our youth behind". Affirmed Hon. Nyirabashitsi Sarah Mateke.**

The youth made their voices heard, emphasizing the need for inclusivity in discussions and urging decision-makers to actively involve them in the decision-making process. They stressed their role as the future architects of the continent, actively shaping their destiny.

Membership and collaboration emerged as key themes, with 32 member states joining YouthConnekt to foster knowledge-based cooperation and collaboration on youth development in Africa. In essence, the YouthConnekt Africa event provided a dynamic platform where African youth engaged in crucial discussions, advocated for their representation and participation in decision-making, and actively contributed to shaping the future of the continent. Uganda's significant role in this initiative reflects a commitment to empowering the youth and fostering positive change across the region.

## INTEGRATED COMMUNITY-BASED AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION (ICBAE) PAVING THE WAY FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

CARE acknowledges that the integration of the Farmer Field and Business School (FFBS) model for 1.8 million individuals cannot be achieved in isolation. Various factors, such as policy frameworks, guidelines, and systemic coordination, require a unified effort. This is where dialogue and collaboration become crucial. The government, represented by institutions like the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, the Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture, and public universities, plays a vital role in this endeavor. These entities are responsible for coordinating and collaborating effectively to promote the FFBS



approach among farmers. Universities, as centers of knowledge and skill development, produce graduates who can contribute valuable resources to communities. Similarly, the Ministry requires extension personnel with grassroots expertise to effectively engage with communities.



**Godfrey Omony the SUFFBS Senior Initiative Manager facilitates a session at the dialogue.**

“Challenges such as limited access to information, limited income sources, and patriarchal systems that hinder women’s participation and ownership of agricultural resources further exacerbate the situation”. Godfrey Omony Senior Initiative Manager SUFFBS Project.

On 7th December, CARE organized a high-level dialogue to garner support from stakeholders in order to ensure that policy frameworks, guidelines, and systems work together to integrate the FFBS approach. Some of the commitments made during the dialogue include:

- Busitema University has pledged to review its curriculum to incorporate the Farmer Field and Business School model.

- CARE will host Members of Parliament (MPs) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) for a learning and experience-sharing visit to Kyejonjo and Kyegegwa, where CARE and JESE are actively implementing this model.
- Busitema University is currently developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with CARE to adopt and scale up the FFBS approach.
- CARE is taking proactive steps by training government extension staff on the FFBS model.

“Mindset change of our farmers in marketing with support from CARE will be helpful in creating ownership of projects in Uganda which is still low. We have finished the Veterinary Practitioners Bill for our products to meet global standards for instance the issue of aflatoxins. As the parliamentary committee on Agriculture, we are honored to be part of this dialogue because Agriculture is the backbone of our Country.” Said Hon. Auma Linda Agnes - Woman Member of Parliament Lira & Vice Chair Parliamentary forum for Food and Nutrition

These collaborative efforts and commitments highlight the significance of dialogue, collaboration, and cooperation in achieving the integration of the FFBS model.

## 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM 2023: FOSTERING A COMMON VOICE AGAINST GBV

By Lillian M Ssengooba

In 2023, CARE adopted a deliberate and systematic approach to ensure a unified voice during the 16 Days of Activism (16DoA), aligning with the national theme: "Unite! Invest to prevent and respond to violence against GBV." The concerted efforts spanned community, district, national, and even international levels. Gratitude is extended to various stakeholders, including MGLSD, the Country Director, Senior Management Team, partners, CMPs, and donors for their unwavering support and guidance. Special appreciation is reserved for the prep committee and managers for their instrumental role in coordinating and accomplishing the set objectives.

### Key Achievements:

#### 1 National Level Commitments:

- Attained commitment from cultural and religious leaders on GBV and its intersection with food and nutrition at the national level.
- Renewed participation in national coalitions and networks, such as the Domestic Violence Act Coalition, fostering joint planning, and distribution of GBV resource materials.
- Active involvement in NAWOU and UWONET events on GBV reflection, garnering recognition for CARE's work on gender equality and localization efforts.

#### 2 Collaboration with Like-minded Organizations:

- Engaged with like-minded organizations and institutions, including FOWODE, Plan International, and the Great Lakes Region Training Centre.
- Participation in events such as the male engagement event organized by the Uganda Police Force and various webinars on GBV, amplifying opportunities for future collaboration.



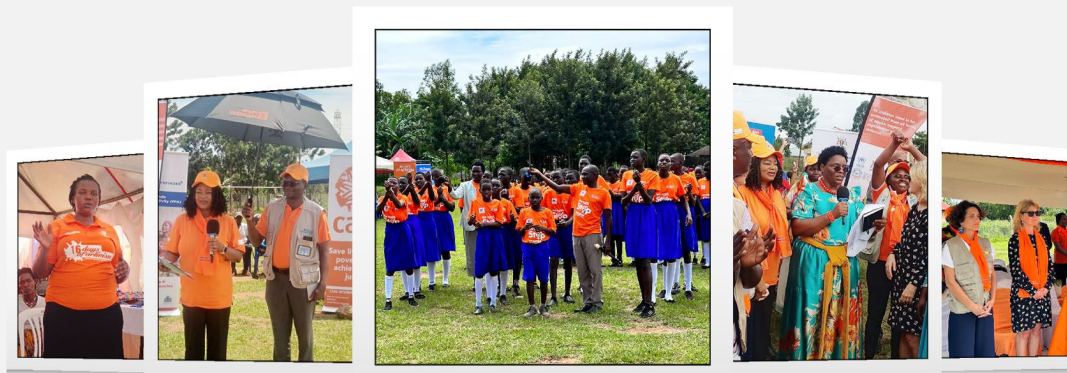
### 3 District and Settlement Level Commitments:

- Received commitment from local government and city authorities, exemplified by the Gulu Deputy Mayor and team recognizing GBV as a significant challenge and actively collaborating with development partners for prevention and response.
- Acknowledgment of CARE's efforts despite evidence of economic violence, particularly among women and youth.

### 4 Increased Participation and Awareness:

- Noteworthy increase in the participation of partners and project participants.
- Linkage of over 25 Women's Rights Organizations/Women Leaders Organizations to events at district and national levels, providing them exposure to unprecedented experiences.
- Successful dissemination of awareness on GBV, its efforts, and results through various radio talk shows and social media channels across the country.

Looking forward to 2024, CARE plans to strengthen collaboration with like-minded organizations during the 16 Days of Activism, continuing the momentum towards a united front against GBV.



## EMPOWERING WOMEN AND COMBATING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN NWOYA AND OMORO DISTRICTS

By Eileen Anecho

CARE International, through the DREAMS initiative, orchestrated a community dialogue with women business leaders in Nwoya District. The activity aimed to deliver economic resilience to women, emphasizing a gender-transformative approach to empower women economically and enhance their resilience to economic shocks. Held on December 7, 2023, at Anaka Town Council, the dialogue brought together district leaders, community members, and representatives from civil society organizations.



*One of the participants makes her submission during the dialogue.*

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2023, at Anaka Town Council, the dialogue brought together district leaders, community members, and representatives from civil society organizations.

The initiative enhanced CARE's visibility in combating gender-based violence (GBV) by engaging communities at the grassroots level and fostered collaboration with government, like-minded organizations, and women's groups, paving the way for further partnerships in addressing GBV.

The event showcased CARE's role in eliminating violence against women, highlighting compelling stories and experiences of community beneficiaries.

**// CARE International taught us VSLA and I am happy to see that it has evolved to support cohesion and unity amongst women. I am happy we are still saving up to now including our younger women". Commented one participant.**



Another participant said; "PDM interventions have helped my home stabilize. We got money which we invested and are now smiling with our harvest. Also the saving groups discipline is helping us a lot to have more stable marriages since we learn so much from each other".

### 16 Days of Activism Against GBV District Launch in Omoro District

On December 5, 2023, in Omoro District, the commencement of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence was marked by the active involvement of over 1000 individuals. This inclusive gathering comprised district leaders, civil society organizations (CSOs), and representatives from the private sector. The event, which took place at Lalogi Primary School, played a crucial role in promoting consciousness and tackling the pressing matter of gender-based violence (GBV).

CSO partners, including CARE International, outlined their roles in reducing GBV, emphasizing the need for coordinated efforts and re

source allocation and petitioned the district for organized coordination among partners to amplify contributions and ensure better resource allocation, addressing pressing community needs effectively.

The District Speaker, representing the District Chairperson, presided over the event which included community dialogues that facilitated open discussions on gender-related issues, giving voice to women's concerns and proposing actionable solutions.

Both activities underscore CARE International's commitment to empowering women economically, combating GBV, and fostering collaborative efforts at the grassroots level. The engagement with businesswomen and the district launch exemplify the organization's dedication to creating lasting impact and building resilient communities.



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