

IMAGINE UGANDA

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Advance Afrika Ventures into Moringa Farming

as a Social Enterprise
to Address Organisation's
Sustainability



EUROPEAN UNION

CARITAS

Schweiz
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Svizzera
Svizzera



Where Dignity Matters



Note from the Country Director

Dear Reader

We have come to the end of year two of our SREE Project, which means we have only one more year left to complete it. This project saw us spread our services to inmates and ex-inmates all over northern Uganda and I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you who has in one way or another contributed to the success

of this intervention so far. When we launched this project in April 2016 we did not imagine that we would be where we are now and achieve what we have been able to achieve by now, but your tireless effort, dedication and commitment have been the extra push that enabled us to surpass our expectations and achieve this milestone that we celebrate today. We have not only been able to expand from 26 to 28 prison units in northern Uganda, but also other interventions, such as the Victim Offender Relationship Project (VORP), performing arts, day care centre services for children of inmates and, most recently, the Empowering Local Communities to Prevent Violence against Women and Children in West Nile Project, which is also supported by the European Union. All these resulted from the good work that we started in 2016.

In this issue of **Imagine Uganda Magazine**, we share with you all the milestones we have achieved so far against what we set out to achieve at the beginning of this project. Also in this issue, we bring you the opinions of several people (ex-prison inmates inclusive) regarding our work, especially the reintegration of ex-prison inmates. As a learning organisation, we came to the realisation that for our work to be effective and yield the desired results in the communities we work in, we have to be inclusive, which meant working with people at the grass roots. This has since changed our approach, as you can see in our **Strategic Plan 2018 – 2023**, which is accessible on our website www.advanceafrika.org under the publications section.

Another key question for us has also been on the sustainability of the organisation. As a result, we have ventured into moringa farming as a social enterprise. This will further see us engage the community first by empowering them to join moringa farming and, later on, they will be out-growers who will supply us with moringa tree products, thereby earning income for themselves.

Don't forget to give us feedback on the stories we share here as you enjoy reading this issue.

Be blessed.

Advance Afrika, where dignity matters!

RWANKANGI RONALD
C.E.O | CO-FOUNDER

IMAGINEUGANDA

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UPCOMING ACTIVITIES/EVENTS

- Advance Afrika launches a new project in West Nile
- Welcome our new staff members
- New partnerships
- Training of Prison Social Workers

This issue is for March 2018.

We love to hear from you, send us your favorite story/comment or opinion about life after prison to info@advanceafrika.org and we will feature them. Help us become better with each issue.

Disclaimer:

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Contents



4 People's Responses

10 Civil Society Organisations Working with Uganda Prisons Service to form a Coalition for Better Service Delivery

9 Former death-row inmates graduate with law degrees after studying behind bars

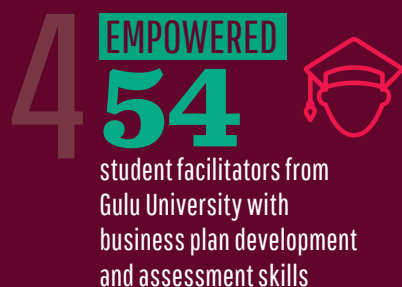
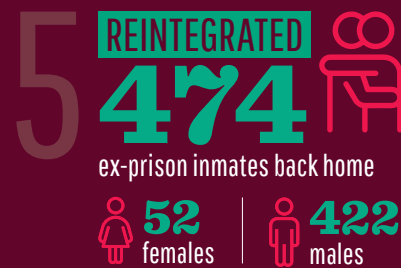
SREE Project Progress UPDATE

In April 2016, we launched the Economic Empowerment and Social Reintegration of Ex-Prison Inmates in Northern Uganda Project implemented by Advance Afrika in partnership with the Uganda Prisons

Service and funded by the European Union and Caritas Switzerland. This three-year action, which focused on the socio-economic rehabilitation and reintegration of 1,200 youth prisoners in 28 prison units in the

Acholi and Lango sub-regions, is now entering the third year and we would like to update you all on its progress as envisaged in the beginning.

We have so far:



People's RESPONSES

Don't see someone who has been to prison like a person who cannot change. If someone has offended you, please try to resolve it if you can. **OLEL AMBROSE**

When I returned home after serving my sentence in prison, my family slaughtered for me a goat to welcome me back home and that made all the difference in my life because I felt loved.
ERAYO FRANCIS

A prison is not a place of punishment, but rather a place of correction. When court sentences you to imprisonment, our work is simply to keep you and ensure you finish your sentence and go out a rehabilitated person. **BAGONZA SAM, OFFICER IN CHARGE OF DOKOLO PRISON**

When someone is released from prison and they don't get support from home (family and friends), they can easily revert to crime.
AJOK NANCY

Those who return from prison should have the desire to be welcomed back home. The mentality of revenge should be dealt with within prison. Ex-prison inmates should also desist from keeping bad company, especially the kind that led them into crime and prison, thereafter. People in the community should also stop pointing fingers at ex-inmates because it makes it very difficult for them to live a happy and free life in the community. **SYLVIA EKOLA**

Sometimes, we as parents lead our children or the people under our care into crime if we don't treat them well, send them to school and punish them when they go astray. What we do in our homes matters a lot in raising children and preventing crime. For instance, do we talk to them about right/wrong and advise them on what to do or how to live? **ODONGO FREDRICK DICKENS - LC V CHAIRMAN, DOKOLO DISTRICT**

My husband was in prison and I used almost all my little savings to support him through court and that depleted our resources and made it very difficult to pay our children's school fees. While he was there, I also felt like I was in prison because my heart was there with him all the time. **DOROTHY OLWA**

People in society should devise better means of solving problems among themselves or even utilise local and clan leaders for alternative dispute resolution measures. We should stay away from grabbing properties such as land and houses left behind for youth by their deceased parents because that can drive them into crime. **AKENA SIMON**



PARALEGAL OFFICER DURING A DIALOGUE IN MUCWINI, KITGUM DISTRICT

Usually when an inmate is released, most complainants, especially from the rural areas, think that the jail terms given to people who have offended against them are very short or that the law has been lenient on the offenders. However, it is important for local leaders to sit them down and have all of them understand what happened and how the person was able to be released at that time. **PARALEGAL OFFICER, KITGUM MAIN PRISON**



BETTY, A VICTIM OF CRIME OF THE PERSON WHO CUT OFF HER FINGER

Today, I have wholeheartedly forgiven you, Lamunu, for cutting off my finger. We are both married in the same family, live in the same home and our children play together. Let us put what happened between us behind us and move on with life freely as it used to be before the incident. I pray that you forgive me, too, for all the harsh words I have previously said to you.



AROP MARTIN, LOCAL LEADER IN MUCWINI

▶ As a responsible person in this community, I opened a case of vandalism against Okonya Moses and went ahead to testify as a witness when he was in court. A few months after his imprisonment I felt a little guilty, because I could have talked to him and given him a chance to change his ways. But all that guilt went away when Moses was released from prison. Moses searched for me after he was released from prison, but I was always busy owing to campaigns for the local area elections, so I didn't give him my time. However, I was extremely astonished to learn that he was campaigning for me without my knowledge. He told his fellow youth and everybody who cared to listen that I am the right man for the job because I stand for truth, justice and the community is better off under my leadership. To be honest, I always thought he was back to seek revenge.

When I met him, he narrated to me how his stay in prison had changed his life. He said after accepting his fate and new home, he got involved in farming (not that he had a choice) and was also trained to become a businessman by an NGO known as Advance Afrika while serving his sentence at Orom Tikao Farm Prison. He further thanked me for being truthful and taking him to the police on that fateful day, because his life was on the wrong path. He said that being in prison did not only help him learn new skills, but he also got to appreciate the worth of freedom that life outside affords people and, therefore, he decided to turn his life around for the better. Moses joined my campaign as an agent. When it came time for voting, we won with an overwhelming majority.

As we speak now, he is a very calm, reserved and respectful young man who is concentrating on rebuilding his life and taking care of his young family. He is also a farmer and looks after goats and chickens as well. Moses has become an exemplary youth in our community, and if you don't know his story, you won't believe he is a former inmate.



LAKER SARAH IN AN ORANGE KITENGE DRESS IN FRONT OF HER STORE IN CERELENO MARKET WITH VISITORS FROM EUROPEAN UNION IN UGANDA, CARITAS SWITZERLAND AND ADVANCE AFRIKA DURING A MONITORING VISIT

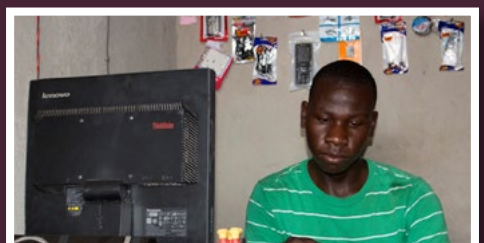
▶ I was released from prison on 8 December 2016. Life was not easy when I had just returned. I used to stay indoors all the time, but I had to eventually adjust to life at home. My family members advised me to stay home until I was settled.

I had learnt a lot while inside prison and when they asked me for what I could do, I immediately chose the produce business. My brothers contributed 200,000/= for me and I started buying maize and beans. It did not take long after that for some people from Advance Afrika to visit. They mentored me and offered me more support in terms of a weighing scale, a sack of maize, tarpaulin and nylon ropes, among other things. Now my business has stabilised, I can even afford to go to the nearby villages, buy produce cheaply and come back to town and retail it. Sarah Laker



OKUMU SIMON

▶ When I returned home from prison, I found a lot of unutilised land at home and I requested my father for permission to use it. I started growing vegetables on a small piece of land near my house during the dry season and later, I opened up more near the swamp. Together with my wife, I joined three Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) – one for me and two for her – where we contribute monthly. They are all aware of my status as an ex-prison inmate. On my own, I have so far saved 178,000/= in the past seven months. I have decided to make my life very busy and always occupy my mind with developmental matters and work. No crime follows me to my garden or tempts me while I'm digging.



OPIO COLBERT AT HIS WORKSHOP IN ACET TRADING CENTER, OMORO DISTRICT

▶ When I returned from prison my brother and former workmates helped me get back on my feet. Advance Afrika then supported me with some tools for repairing phones and watches. Right now my small business has expanded and I have included computer repair as well as burning songs on to DVDs. I don't hold any grudges against my complainant for sending me to prison. I have asked for forgiveness and he said he has forgiven me. I am in a way also grateful for my life in prison because I got to learn new skills. COLBERT OPIO

Advance Afrika Receives €315,000 from European Commission to SUPPORT Women and Children in West Nile

Advance Afrika won a new grant worth €315,000 from the European Commission under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights Country.

This is a contribution to the Empowering Local Communities to Prevent Violence against Women and Children in West Nile Project, a two-and-a-half year action which seeks to empower women and children in Koboko and Arua districts to live peaceful and dignified lives as they enjoy their economic, social and cultural rights. It is implemented by Advance Afrika and Partners in Community Transformation (PICOT) in partnership with the Uganda Prisons Service. The project will be launched in April 2018.

West Nile is one of the regions witnessing an increase in cases of violence against women. One-fifth of all women in West Nile suffer from sexual violence (DHS 2016), without taking into consideration that such cases are largely underreported. According to the UDHS, 56% of women in Uganda aged 15-49 have experienced physical violence at least once since age 15 (UBOS and ICF 2012). One of the factors behind these high prevalence rates is the widespread cultural acceptance of such violence.

In a survey conducted by the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda, West Nile came in as the third with regard to gender-based violence, at 58%. At the same time, the limited research on female prison inmates in Uganda (PRI/FHRI 2015) shows that the main reasons given by female prison inmates for committing the offence for which they were incarcerated range from the urge to protect their children, poverty and self-defence to domestic violence. Hence the project identifies women (and their children) in prison and the communities at large as vulnerable partly because the majority of them have been victims of domestic or gender-based violence. Thus it seeks to create a link between rehabilitation services and later reintegration of women inmates into their community while, at the same time, engaging larger community structures.

Through the project, female (ex-) inmates will have access to improved and impactful rehabilitation and reintegration services and community structures will actively engage in

changing attitudes, perceptions and practices regarding respect for women's and children's rights. The action is hereby two-fold, as it seeks to support vulnerable women in and after prison as well as those in the community at large.

Advance Afrika's experience of working with young people and women behind bars in Uganda demonstrates the will and power of restoring social functionalities for a better and improved life after incarceration by empowering prison inmates with entrepreneurship and life skills as well as supporting them with start-up kits to start their own enterprises after release from prison.

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CIVIL SOCIETY Organisations Working with Uganda Prisons Service to Form a COALITION for Better SERVICE DELIVERY



Advance Afrika, together with the Uganda Prisons Service, convened a meeting of civil society organisations working with the Uganda Prisons Service on social rehabilitation and the reintegration of prison inmates. The meeting, which attracted 24 participants from not-for-profit organisations, donor agencies and the Uganda Prisons Service, took place on 5 March 2018 at the Uganda Prisons Service headquarters in Kampala.

Premised on sharing experiences and good practices of not-for-profit actors, the purpose of the meeting was to explore synergies for the effective delivery of social rehabilitation and reintegration services. The meeting also sought to establish a coalition that will develop a joint advocacy strategy to lobby for reforms to the current inmate rehabilitation and reintegration system in Uganda. Ideas generated during the meeting will be tabled at a breakfast

meeting with Members of Parliament for consultation, action and possible policy influence.

The following recommendations came out as responses to challenges that were identified by partners:

1. *The need for civil society organisations to liaise with the Uganda Prisons Service to ascertain gaps where civil society intervention would maximise results. The collaboration between the Uganda Prisons Service and civil society should proceed on the basis of clear diagnosis of a challenge, proposed intervention and the capacity to effectively execute implementation.*
2. *Conducting mapping of actors and the development of a matrix to be shared among partners for ease of reference.*
3. *Identification of and drawing on the specialist expertise of partners to deal with emerging needs of inmates.*
4. *Standardisation of the content of modules for the skilling interventions across implementing partners.*
5. *Identification of specific areas of research interest and working with the Uganda Prisons Service to conduct research studies which address the identified gaps.*
6. *The need for partners to invest in documenting and publicising the successes, impact and challenges of their interventions.*
7. *Proactive and continuous engagement with communities to promote mindset change from the punitive to the corrective approach to rehabilitation.*

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT Appreciate Advance Afrika's Unique Contribution to the JUSTICE SYSTEM in Uganda

Members of Parliament highly appreciated Advance Afrika for her unique contribution to the Justice Law and Order Sector (JLOS) through the Uganda Prisons Service in the socio-economic rehabilitation and reintegration of prison and ex-prison inmates during a consultative meeting the organisation held with the Members of Parliament on 29 March 2018. They urged the organisation's executives to further arrange and share their experiences with the Parliamentary Committee on Defence and Internal Affairs as well as all the legislators on the floor of Parliament. Advance Afrika has been working in partnership with the Uganda Prisons Service to prepare youth ex-offenders for life after imprisonment since 2014 in northern Uganda after signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Lawmakers, both from the government and opposition sides, expressed gratitude as well as noted that the sector in which the organisation has built expertise is often forgotten when priority areas for funding are being considered by both the government and development partners, which means that all the good work being done is just a drop in the ocean compared to what is required to be done to reintegrate ex-offenders countrywide.

The meeting enabled Advance Afrika to share experiences, best practices and lessons learnt with select Members of Parliament and also seek input from the legislators to advance correctional policy as part of Advance Afrika's initiative to develop an advocacy strategy to influence national correctional policy.

The meeting also elicited suggestions on how to reform the current rehabilitation system in Uganda. Areas for decisive practical action and immediate follow-up for Advance Afrika were also identified.

At the end of the deliberations, it became apparent that the potential of all players, including policymakers, implementing agencies and development partners, must be harnessed to provide coordinated leadership in reforming correctional services. While the meeting did not generate an agenda for policy reform, it provided a starting point for civil society action in shaping policy direction with regard to the rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-prisoners in Uganda.



1

1 Members of Parliament pose for a group picture with Advance Afrika executives



2

2 Hon. Gerald Karuhanga, Advance Afrika Board Chair and Member of Parliament for Ntungamo Municipality



3

3 Members of Parliament in a round table discussion during the Breakfast Meeting

Former **DEATH-ROW** Inmates Graduate with **LAW DEGREES** after Studying **BEHIND BARS**

Former death row inmates graduate with a Bachelor of Laws degree (LLB) from the University of London while serving their sentences at Luzira Women's and Maximum Prison through an African Prisons Project (APP) initiative of empowering people in prisons to drive positive change implemented in partnership with the Uganda Prisons Service. APP organised a thanksgiving celebration inside Luzira Maximum Prisons to honour the graduates (Pascal Kakuru, Susan Kigula and Moses Ekwam). We present their profiles below.

PASCAL KAKURU - INMATE, LAW GRADUATE

Pascal Kakuru remains in Luzira Upper Prison – Uganda's only maximum security facility – and is due for release in 2019. Pascal's commitment and hard work identified him as an ideal candidate for the University of London's (UoL) International Programme.

He became APP's first student to receive a law degree from UoL in September 2017. Pascal now supports others as a Graduate Assistant to the prison-based APP Law Degree Tutors besides being Editor of the Prison Law Journal.



SUSAN KIGULA - LAW GRADUATE

Susan Kigula entered Luzira Women's Prison at the age of 21 in 2000. After participating in APP's Leadership Programme she took the opportunity to study Law, via the UoL International Programme.

Susan was the first female inmate to study and graduate with a Diploma in Common Law, followed by an LLB. In 2009 she led a death penalty petition, in the Ugandan Constitutional Court, with 417 other death row inmates, challenging mandatory death sentences and, as a result, mandatory death sentences were abolished in Uganda. She was released from prison in 2016 and now works with APP as an ambassador.



MOSES EKWAM - LAWYER, LAW GRADUATE

Moses Ekwam was a private in the Ugandan army from Eastern Uganda who was sentenced to a five-year term at Luzira Prison (Boma). Whilst there, he completed his UoL Diploma in Common Law and then embarked on his LLB degree. Four years and 11 months into his sentence Moses' conviction was overturned and he was released. He was re-admitted to the army and posted to the Oliver Tambo School of Leadership whilst he continued his legal studies. He obtained his LLB degree and was promoted to the rank of 2nd lieutenant and transferred to the army's legal services wing where he now serves as a military prosecutor.





Advance Afrika Ventures into Moringa Farming as a Social Enterprise to Address Organisation's Sustainability



Advance Afrika acquired a 50-hectare piece of land in Awach, Gulu district with support from Caritas Switzerland to facilitate its dream of sustaining the organisation beyond donor funding. The land, which has since been tilled and seeds planted, is purely for moringa production as a social enterprise. This is in line with the new five-year organisational strategic plan and it enables the development of a comprehensive business model on *Moringa oleifera* leaf production (growing, harvesting and milling) and oil extraction from the seeds. To ensure and maintain quality, Advance Afrika partnered with Teso Enterprise Consulting and Marketing Association (TECOMA) and Africrops, a global trade enterprise with developmental and socio-ethical goals based in New York.

The moringa farm has already created employment opportunities for local people in Awach to promote and increase community development by engaging them in land clearing, planting as well as sensitising them to the benefits of moringa. As a result of this exposure and skills, it is envisaged that the local community will create jobs for themselves through investing in moringa growing and that, in return, we shall purchase the seeds from them.

Moringa oleifera, also known as the magic plant, drumstick tree or horseradish tree, originates from the Himalaya region in northwest India, but is now cultivated in various countries across Asia, South America, Africa and in the Caribbean. It is a fast-growing tree widely appreciated for its high nutritional value, believed to be the highest of any plant in the world. The fact that it is so highly nutritious and able to grow in relatively dry conditions has moved it into the focus of several countries, which have proceeded to formulate their development strategies around this amazing plant.



Moringa oleifera is a plant with many uses. It is not only the highly nutritious leaves which can be utilised. Among the first people to appreciate the plant were the English colonisers in India, who valued the roots of the plant for its spicy flavour, which is reminiscent of horseradish. This is the reason why it is still widely referred to as the horseradish tree today.

Apart from the leaves, the most used part of the plant are the seeds, which can be found in the long, drumstick-like pods, which gave the tree its name of

'drumstick tree'. The seeds can be eaten raw, tasting sweet at first and turning bitter as one chews, and has a range of nutritional benefits of its own and are ascribed strong detoxifying properties.

When grinding up the seeds, this property can even be used to clean polluted water and make it drinkable again, simply by letting it sit in the same water. The seeds are very popular owing to the high-quality oil (ben-oil) which can be extracted by pressing them. This oil is completely without a smell of its own and never coagulates. Ben-oil has also been rediscovered for new uses. It is very popular as a hypo-allergenic skin and hair care product, as well as massage oil, owing to its many vitamins (including vitamin E) and antioxidants. Its mild and slightly nutty taste has also made it very popular for cooking, in particular for making salad dressing.

Another part of the *Moringa oleifera* plant which can be used are the leaves. While they are not as nutrient-rich as the seeds, they still contain various nutrients. This, as well as its cucumber-reminiscent taste and smell, makes this part of the plant very popular for teas. As its taste is very mild, it is also great for mixing with other teas.



Agnes

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I thank everyone who works with Advance Afrika in one way or another because they all do an amazing job in helping prison and ex-prison inmates realise their full potential.

It is a privilege to be part of such an amazing organisation. I thank everyone who works with Advance Afrika in one way or another because they all do an amazing job in helping prison and ex-prison inmates realise their full potential. I know how challenging it is to move from one place to another on a daily basis and I appreciate the enormous effort put in by many people in this organisation countrywide. It takes a lot of effort to engage people to take responsibility for advancing their rights.

I enjoy working with you all and I am very proud to be a part of this team where I am enabled to apply my life skills and knowledge to advance the organisation's culture. Knowing what we achieved in the past year and how many lives have been impacted all over the country, my heart is warmed and I am re-energised to do more whenever I can.

Stepping out of my comfort zone and travelling long distances to contribute to the overall aim of the organisation of promoting relationships between citizens and authorities in order to improve reciprocal understanding and trust and further enhance the principle of transparency, responsibility, accountability and participation will always be my highlight for the past year.

I have immensely benefited through interacting with various people in the course of my work and I am so grateful to Advance Afrika for the knowledge and skills I have acquired through the sublime work of this organisation. This organisation has the potential to do more in supporting marginalised youth and communities to live with dignity. I look forward to seeing what comes in the future and hope I am around long enough to connect with even a small portion of what is yet to come.

AINEMIGISHA AGNES - EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT, ADVANCE AFRIKA

VISION:

A safe and free society where young people live with dignity and realise their full potential

MISSION:

We address the root causes of vulnerability by developing opportunities for economic empowerment and transforming the social functionality of communities

VALUES:

Courageous leadership, Passion, Appreciation and Professionalism