



International Labour Organisation marks 90 years

Using radio to impart business skills

Monitor Reporter
Kampala

A leader of women operating in Laliya Market in Gulu District, Ms Nighy Arach did not know what to do when faced with the problem of poor sanitation in the market.

It was not until she was interviewed by Radio King, a radio station that had been trained by International Labour Organisation (ILO) - Small Enterprise Media in Africa (SEMA) in business programming that the sanitation problem was addressed.

"I used to voice this [poor sanitation] on a regular basis on Radio King. For instance, the absence of a pit latrine almost caused the closure of this market by the Gulu District Health Authorities. Some vendors used to go back home while others resorted to the bushes for short and long calls, which was very inconvenient and embarrassing

especially for us women," she said.

Her efforts resulted into the municipal authorities constructing a pit latrine and providing a rubbish pit for the market vendors, which improved the hygiene at the market and attracted more customers. A borehole was also constructed to provide safe drinking water to the population.

In addition, the Mayor of Gulu Municipality, Mr Christopher Achire provided a soft loan facility from which Ms Arach and her colleagues could borrow at 3 per cent interest rate. In a country where the average interest rate by commercial banks is 25 per cent, 3 per cent gave Ms Arach access to affordable credit. And from the profits of a micro produce business, the 50-year old mother of five has been able to see her children through school. Ms Arach ran from her village to Gulu town 12 years ago while fleeing from the Lords Resistance Army



National Programme Coordinator of the ILO WEDGE Project Mr Stephen Opio hands over copies of ILO's tools and guides on Women's Entrepreneurship Development to the Minister of Gender Labour and Social Development, Mr Gabriel Opio on April 24. COURTESY PHOTO

rebels.

The armed conflict has affected significant parts of northern Uganda for over two decades, leading to loss of human security, destroying vital infrastructure and productive assets. For example, between 2002 and 2004, almost two million people were living in crowded Internally Displaced Peoples

(IDPs) camps. And in many areas, over 90 per cent of the population was displaced and largely surviving on humanitarian aid.

As peace started to return to the region in 2006, the ILO scaled up its work, using radio to support the growth of micro and small entrepreneurs so that formerly displaced people could start

engaging in productive work again.

Through the ILO-SEMA, the Sida-funded second phase of the project has trained radio stations in the region to provide business information, a platform for dialogue on business issues, a voice to influence policy processes and a channel for business advisory services.

Radio journalists are trained to identify businesses in their area, conduct field-based interviews, carry out investigations and mix script with sound in business reporting.

The use of radio is premised on the fact that it remains the major source of information for most people in rural areas in Uganda as in much the rest of sub-Saharan Africa. With over 170 radio stations operational in the country today, of which 17 are in the LRA affected northern Uganda and 98 per cent of the population with access to a radio set, radio is the true mass medium for Uganda. It is this power of radio to reach the majority of Ugandans that ILO-SEMA has utilised to contribute to social justice. As a private sector development project, ILO-SEMA has worked with radio to enable the flow of information for Private Sector Development, targeting rural-based micro and small enterprises, both on and off farm.



NATIONAL ORGANISATION OF TRADE UNIONS (NOTU)

Now Ready to Bite and Cause Impact

National Organisation of Trade Unions (NOTU) established by the Decree no.29 of 1973 is the only principal organisation of employees (workers) in Uganda and all registered trade unions must affiliate. NOTU is the National Centre coordinating the Uganda Labour Movements and the activities of all registered trade unions affiliated to it

Trade Unions emerged in the early 1820 by the exploited workers in England. This was as a result of exploitation of the workers by their employers.

National Organization of Trade Unions (NOTU) is currently having 20 total affiliated trade unions, namely

- 1) Amalgamation Transport and General Workers Union
- 2) Uganda Public Employers' Union
- 3) National Union of Co-Operative Movement Workers
- 4) Uganda Government Allied Workers' Union
- 5) Uganda Mine, Metal and Allied Workers' Union
- 6) National Union of Educational Institutions
- 7) Uganda Fisheries and Allied Workers' Union
- 8) Uganda Hospitality, Leisure and Allied Workers' Union
- 9) Uganda Communication Employees, Union
- 10) Uganda Railways Workers' Union
- 11) Uganda Nurses and Midwives Union
- 12) National Union of Plantation and Agricultural Workers
- 13) Uganda Horticulture and Allied Workers' Union
- 14) Uganda Beverages, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Union
- 15) Uganda National Teachers' Union
- 16) Uganda Media Union
- 17) Uganda Electricity and Allied Workers' Union
- 18) National Union of Clerical, Commercial, Professional and Technical Employees
- 19) Uganda Building, Construction, Civil Engineering, Cement and Allied Workers Union
- 20) National Union of Theatrical, Entertainment, Art, Culture, Craft Manufacturers and Allied workers

Mission

To help build a strong, service-oriented self sustaining labour organisation through the management of viable affiliated labour unions and to achieve a dynamic employment environment facilitating the enactment and surveillance of acceptable labour laws/standards and employment policies for sustainable human and trade union rights of all working people in Uganda

Vision

A leading trade union National Center with capacity to promote and defend workers' interests in the country

Our constitutional objectives are also very clear and they run as follows;

- 1) To promote and safeguard the interest of all registered labour unions affiliated to it and the welfare of workers in Uganda
- 2) To assist such labour union to find practical solutions to problems of organisation and administration



Owens Usher Wilson
CHAIRMAN GENERAL

- 3) To settle disputes concerning representation and demarcation matters
- 4) To encourage the development of strong unified and viable unions in Uganda and to establish sound industrial relations
- 5) To give legal advice and assistance to its affiliates
- 6) To promote social and economic benefits to its members
- 7) To operate and promote, aid and encourage the establishment of cooperative and the economic institutions owned wholly or partly by workers, affiliated unions or NOTU on their benefit
- 8) To secure adequate representation on government and industrial bodies, committees or any other such bodies that deal with labour legislation or any other matter affecting labour

Democracy in NOTU

NOTU is democratic organisation which conducts elections every after five years, as we talk now we have just concluded elections in December 2008. This brought in new leaders to the offices who are supposed to serve a term of five years.

Challenges

There is no need to be alarmists where nobody will take you serious. In this regard we ask Government to listen to us on matters of making new laws namely: the Draft Pension Regulatory Authority bill, the Draft National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) Bill, Social Security Reforms, the NSSF reforms or amendments and the minimum and living wage reform, plus negotiations with multinational corporations who employ high casual labour force and industrial relations system. Other challenges are the collapsing buildings in Uganda, escalating human sacri-

ifice, the existing gap between the employees and the government ministries and the most serious one being the hostile managers who want to replace the industrial relations system with police.

Achievements

In the 3 months the new secretariat has been in the office, NOTU in coordination with its donors has managed to organize three workshops. NOTU has also managed to negotiate on behalf of employees in Bujagali with Salin and it is currently in negotiations with Tororo Cement factory on issues concerning employee remunerations.

NATIONAL ORGANISATION OF TRADE UNIONS (NOTU) UGANDA

The National Organisation of Trade unions (NOTU) was established by Decree No. 29 of 1973 as amended by the labour union's Act 6, 2006. It is currently the most representative Labour Center in Uganda with 20 Labour Union Affiliates. NOTU is a non-profit labour organisation that represents millions of Uganda workers. We work with labour unions and community groups in all districts of Uganda.

As we celebrate the international Labour Day, the theme for this year is "Promotion of Local Investment for Increased Employment".

The workers of this country through their Umbrella Organisation wish to commend your H.E President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni and the Government through the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development for its work of promoting the Decent Work Agenda as per the Memorandum of understanding signed with the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

However, the workers of this country still demand the following from this government

- Poverty Reduction through creation of Decent Work Opportunities with a focus on young workers.
- Improved Industrial Relations through the Promotion of Rights at Work
- Incidence of child labour and its worst forms reduced.
- Mitigation of Socio-Economic impact of HIV/AIDS at work place.
- A minimum wage should be set and employment policy protect the citizens of this country from exploitation
- Indirect taxation as a way of raising revenue for Local Government

We wish all the employees if our affiliated trade unions a happy labour day and we encourage all the employees in Uganda to join the labour movements.

United we stand divided we fall

Happy Labour Day celebrations 2009

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