

**TESTIMONIES OF WOMEN WORKERS ON HOW THEY MADE IT TO THE
TOP AT DIFFERENT WORK SECTORS AND IN SOCIETY**

DAY 1: 12/08/2010

THE THEATRICAL AND ENTERTAINMENT SECTOR

1. MANDELA NATIONAL STADIUM

MRS. JOYCE EKUSAI

I started working as a Human Resource Officer but I was recently promoted to the post of personal Assistant to the Managing Director as in charge of Finance. This was due to my hard work and honesty.

MISS NAMUGERWA HASIFA

I work as a Procurement Assistant and am a union member.

MRS. SHAKIRA LWANGA

I am an Electrical Engineer. I have worked here for a long time now. My work entails maintaining electrical fittings and general supervision of my area of work. It is not easy doing supervisory work as a woman, I have had to stand my ground and execute my authority as a leader. I want to encourage other women to be bold, stand firm and be focused when confronted with any challenge.

MRS. DAPHINE ALOBO ENGWAU

I started working as a Human Resource Officer and now am a field technician. My work entails management of the sports ground and its maintenance. I have over 10 workers under my command and I enjoy my work. Recently I and my team were openly commended by the Managing Director for the excellent job we did on the sports ground.

SARAH NANTEZA

I am a supervisor housekeeping and maintenance. I enjoy my work. I like getting involved with those I supervise in the work they do.

“My advise to fellow women is that; we should aim higher and assert ourselves incase of any challenge”..

FLORENCE ABURU

I am a receptionist attached to security. My work is to maintain security and I have to check specifically women as they come into the stadium. I love my job and am a union member but, we need training in union affairs.

KUGONZA MAUREEN

I am the Deputy General Secretary of National Union of Theatrical Entertainment Crafts and Allied Workers (NUTECAWU). Our union is still young and I am yet to learn more about the Union.

2.WORKPLACE II NAKIVUBO WAR MEMORIAL STADIUM**MRS. FLORENCE NSUBUGA**

I work in this stadium as an accountant and am the branch union treasurer. Accounting used to be men's domain but today we women can do it and even better than men.

MRS. AHEIRWE ANNET

I work here in Nakivubo War Memorial Stadium as a Marketing Officer. Marketing is interesting especially when you have discovered your clientele and are able to master their interests. I always make sure there are many game teams attracted to play in our stadium. I also work as a Branch Secretary for my Union and am the women's representative at National level.

DAY II :13/08/2010**1. XCLUSIVE CUTTINGS LTD**

Workers Handing over Harvest in green House to the green House supervisor.

MUKAMNDIGO GRACE

I am a Harvester in this green House number 21.

NATYABA FLORENCE

Supervisor green House NO.21

A group photo of women harvesters

PROSSY NALUBWAMA

I work as an Office attendant and my work involves Printing labels and stickers for use in green Houses besides running office errands.

PAULINE AYIKO

I work as a Master roll administrator.

2. UGANDA NURSES AND MIDWIVES UNION**MRS. JANET OBUNI**

I am the President of the Uganda Nurses and Midwives Union. It was a challenge to form this Union. There were many forces against its

formation. We as vision bearers have stood our ground until we got registered as a union with the Ministry of Labour. We have also secured partnership at international level and now we are working on many programmes which include; education of our members, production of educational materials and we are already planning to build our own union Headquarters.

Many years ago we were not allowed to join University to further our career as nurses. The reason was that nursing work is simple and practical and did not need a degree to perform it. We were never satisfied with such reasoning. We continued the struggle by lobbying through government until we were given a slot in Makerere University for a degree in Nursing. Now nurses can pursue a degree in Nursing at University level.

M/S JOYCE LUCY ATIM

I work as a nurse in Mbale Regional Referral Hospital and I have worked for 25 years now in various capacities as a medical personnel. I started working as an enrolled Midwife and later upgraded as a registered Nurse and now I hold a Bachelors Degree in nursing which I obtained in 2008 and in the same year I was promoted to senior nursing Officer and now area manager Pediatrics Department. Hard work and commitment pays.

"My advise to fellow nurses is that never settle for less always aim higher and do your best in whatever you have been assigned to do".

ENTEBBE HOSPITAL 13/8/2010

M/S. KAGOYA MONICA

I am a Theater Assistant in Entebbe General Hospital. I was trained as a Theatre Assistant at the National Referral Hospital Mulago.

"My advice to young women is that commitment and hard work pays."

M/S IRENE MPAMULUNGI

I work here in Entebbe General Hospital as the Human Resources Manager. Entebbe General Hospital is a District Hospital. It was not an easy task coming up to the level where I am today.

I first worked as a volunteer in this hospital for 2 years right from the time I left school. During the years of my voluntary work I did District interviews for the post of human resources Manager. I was the only woman among many men. People were very skeptical about a woman being a Personnel officer especially when competing with men who had worked in the same field for a long time.

The male counterparts who sat the same interviews with me were later posted to other hospitals in the district but the Entebbe Human

Resource post remained vacant for a long time. The hospital bosses thought they did not need a Human Resources Manager at that time and definitely not a woman for that matter. They needed a man in that position. However my work was exemplary and eventually they appointed me to take the post of Human Resource manager in February 2010. This is my seventh month in the post.

“My advice to women is that; never worry about the negative criticism or comments people make about you. Those are their opinions. Stand on the right cause, be focused and do your best and you will see success roll onto your life”.

Day III: 14/8/2010

NATIONAL UNION OF PLANTATION AND AGRICULTURAL WORKERS (NUPAW)

FLORENCE MBALIRWA

I am the chairperson of the National women Committee of my union (NUPAW). I work as a nurse at the Sugar Cooperation Uganda Ltd (SCOUL) factory hospital. In the early nineties I was a union member but very passive. I did not know the role of a union in my life as a worker and even how I could participate in it.

I always thought leadership was for men but through trade union education organized by my union I came to know my rights and became active in union affairs. When branch elections were held at our branch I was elected as chairperson of the branch, and later became the National Chairperson of NUPAW Women’s Committee. At a later stage I was elected as Vice Chairperson of National Organization of Trade Unions (NOTU) Women’s Committee. It was interest, commitment and trade union education that propelled me to take up the various positions I have so far held. I have also been a leader at church and politically am now the NRM Mukono District Chairperson Workers’ League.

SAIDA BIDI

I am the Director Women affairs in my union- NUPAW. I got a chance in the late 1980s to be trained in basic trade union education at grass root level. After knowing what a union is I became active in the union. Later management did some staff appraisal and I was promoted to a higher post. This meant that I would not again be a union member because at that time the law prohibited certain cadre of officers to join the union. I thought twice and turned down the offer and continued with the union instead. In 1989 I was trained as a woman TOT and coordinator under the IUF women’s project. This project helped us women to recruit more

women into the union and many women gained leadership positions in the union. We formed women committees at all branches.

Later on I went for further studies in trade union training after which I was elected as a National Women Coordinator for my union. I was then appointed Director of Women Affairs. ***“In a nutshell hard work and interest propelled me to the top”.***

JOYCE TUMWESIGWA

In 1987 I started working as a clerk in Lugazi Sugar Cooperation and had the chance to attend trade union training. 1989 I was involved in the IFPAW project on intergrating women into trade union structures. In 1995 I was among the 10 women who were identified for training at Zimbabwe after which I worked as a woman coordinator of my union branch (Lugazi). I was again trained in South Africa in 1998 though the project ended I continued in my post as a women coordinator Lugazi branch. I later went for a three year degree course at Makerere University and I trained in Adult and Community Education for a bachelor's degree and graduated in 2006. I was then appointed a Deputy Director Education in my union (NUPAW) a post I am holding to date.

“I advise women to attend /participate in trade union education, it inspires”.

Day IV: 16/08/2010

UGANDA HORTICULTURAL AND ALLIED WORKERS UNION

REBBECA ADONG

I am the National Treasurer for my union, Uganda Horticultural and Allied Workers' Union (UHAWU)

In the beginning the employers did not understand the law on unionization. They gave us hard time. They did not allow us to talk to workers about the union. In the struggle for unionization I was given forced leave for 34 days and I was not allowed to plead my case.

Uganda Workers' Education Association (UWEA) together with the General Secretary of my union advocated for my reinstatement and I was allowed back to work. The struggle for workers rights gave me the push to become a union leader and that is how I became the National Treasurer of UHAWU. ***“Women we should know and stand up for our rights.”***

AMOIT CHRISTINE

I work with Ugarose flowers Ltd. as a green house supervisor. Before the union came to our farm we used to work without offs, no leave and no

PPEs. When we joined the union we started getting offs at least one day off every week. Then also PPEs were provided at least to the sprayers.

UWEA came and trained us on our rights at work. We can now stand up for our rights. Right now we are demanding for employment letters and already management has agreed to this.

It was after I saw the work of the union and the education we received that I stood to be elected as branch secretary for my union. I can now attend workshops and we also have paid leave now.

“My fellow women let us stand up and fight for our rights”

Day V: 17/8/2010

NATIONAL WATER AND SEWERAGE CORPORATION

STELLA AMUGE

In 1988 I qualified as a bio-chemist but couldn't get a job. I joined cooperatives and the union there was a closed shop by then. I had a chance then to undergo trade union education. The trade union training revived the leadership ego in me because throughout my school life I was either class prefect or head girl. I never liked the idea that women are weak. I learnt a lot from trade union training especially the fact that trade unions seek justice for the workers' cause and the fact that even people of low status are heard.

In 1995 I joined National Water and Sewerage Corporation and took up a position of Occupational Health and Safety representative at branch level. My aim of taking up this position was to teach others how to protect themselves at work. I later went for further studies at University level and graduated with a bachelors degree as a Biomedical lab technician but still continued with my post of OHS representative to date. I also trained as a study circle leader under the Public Services International (PSI) programme coordinated by Sister Flavia Amoding and later as an instructor in National Organisation of Trade Unions (NOTU). I endeavour to bring out the potential in those I teach.

I still continue recruiting others into the union and at the moment am undertaking a masters' degree in environment.

KIM AGNES ATWOOKI

I am married with 5 children 2 girls 3 boys. I started working in National Water and Sewerage Corporation Jinja branch as an accounts assistant in 1983 and National Water and Sewerage Corporation was male dominated at that time. I did not know what union is but it was a closed

shop. We were only three women in the Jinja area office. When branch elections were held I stood for the post of treasurer and won it. In 1992 I was trained as a study circle leader and later as a trade union Instructor under the Public Services International Programme coordinated by Sister Flavia Amoding and we were given certificates. I taught many women in my branch through study circles and later at national level I trained Trainers. Many women joined the union and gained leadership positions as a result of trade union education. I too rose up from branch leadership to national level first as Chairperson of My union's women Committee and later won the post of chairperson women committee of the national center NOTU a post I still hold to date.

In 2002 I was elected as a titular member to the ICFTU- Afro Africa Women's Committee where I participated in developing a gender sensitive constitution for ICFTU. I later joined University for a bachelors degree in Business Administration and now pursuing a maters degree in the same field.

Through hard work and commitment I was promoted to the post of Senior Accounts Officer at my workplace.

"I love God and encourage others to love God. I encourage women to stand up for leadership positions wherever you are without fear".

Day VI: 18/08/2010

ROYAL VAN ZANTEN LTD

NANSUBUGA AGNES

I work in Royal Van zanten as Executive Secretary to the Managing Director. My first challenge was working with people of low education but finally I found the job exciting and they're very good people to work with.

JULIET KABAIRA

I work as a Human Resource Manager in this farm. I hold a postgraduate Diploma in Human Resource Management and a Bachelors Degree in Development Studies. My first challenge was managing people whose language I did not understand and they too did not understand English. There was a communication barrier at the beginning. I have now learnt the language and I relate with the workers very well.

AYOO JOYCE

I work as Assistant Accountant in this farm Royal Van zanten. I hold a Diploma in Purchasing and Supplies Management. I also have a certificate in Cost Accounting.

Before joining this farm I worked as a cashier in a petrol station and Later joined St. Kizito counselling center Gulu as an accountant.

I am still aiming higher in the advancement of my career.
“Advice to women; hard work and commitment pays”.

HARRIET NAMPEWO NALONGO

I work as a Disease and Quality Officer. I started working as a picker (harvester) in 1996 and later promoted as a supervisor. In 2000 I was promoted to Assistant Manager cold room but because of pregnancy I couldn't continue to work in Cold Room. After my maternity leave I was appointed as Assistant Harvest Manager. Later in 2006 I was made Assistant Scouting Manager and in the same year I was appointed as Assistant Disease and Quality control officer a post I am holding to date. The challenge I faced was being Assistant to men. They are difficult to work with especially when they know you can be better than them. They also wouldn't listen to my concerns as a woman. ***“As a manager, managing people is not easy. You make a lot of enemies but at the same time, you can also make friends”.***

FARIDAH (in Green Uniform)

I work in this green house as quality checker. I supervise a team of between 5-18 people.

AISHA NANYONJO

I work in Royal Van zanten as Supervisor in the green house. I supervise between 5-18 people who mainly pick flower cuttings.

FLORENCE NAGINDA

I work as a supervisor Chrysanthemums (Mums) which entails Quality Control and making sure the right cuttings are made.

Women in maintenance Department wearing blue overalls:

We do the same work as men.

WOMEN WORKERS MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

MARY MARION TUUNDE

I started working as a clerk in Makerere University. At school I liked debating very much. When I started working one of my managers who was a Trade Union leader was impressed by my debating ability and encouraged me to join the union. I became a shop steward in 1986 and later became the Organising Secretary of my Union - National Union of Educational Institutions(NUEI). The Union became a closed shop after PSI funded our union's organizing Drive. Because of the improved financial status of the Union the union managed to buy a House which is now its national Headquarters.

In 2003 I became the Deputy Secretary General NOTU and in 2005 I was elected Deputy General secretary to my Union(NUEI)

In 2006, I became Member of Parliament for women workers to date. In 2009 I relinquished the NOTU post of Deputy Secretary General.

2008-June-2010, I was the vice chair person to the parliamentary committee on Gender Labour and now vice Chairperson Parliamentary committee of Tourism and Industry.

HARRIET MUGAMBWA

I work as a political Assistant to all the five workers members of parliament and in the union I work as Education Secretary. My union is Uganda Mines Metal and Allied Workers Union (UMMAW)

I was a teacher by profession before I joined the Labour Movement.

I worked with Kilembe mines primary school as a teacher. When I joined the union, I was trained as a study circle leader and later was elected on the Branch Committee as a committee member, I was later trained as an Educator by IMF and NOTU under the ILO programme. After I was elected as Education Secretary for my Union I couldn't balance teaching in the primary school with union work, so I left teaching and concentrated on Union work.

I was appointed as a political Assistant by the 5 MPs through their chairperson who is now the Hon. Charles Bakabulindi the State Minister for Education and Sports.

Day VII: 19/08/2010

MAIRYE ESTATES LTD

Women committee Elections

A women's committee comprising of nine posts was put in place through free and fair elections. the nine posts include:

- Chairperson
- Vice Chairperson
- Secretary
- Assistant Secretary
- Treasurer
- Organizing Secretary
- Three Committee Members