

# REPORT

## CHILDREN'S CONFERENCE

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Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2015

SOS Children's Village Kakiri, Wakiso District

**“Leave No Child Behind for Uganda's Development”**

Organized by



in partnership  
with

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Children's Conference is a commemoration of the Day of the African Child organized by African Women and Girls Organization for Total Knowledge in partnership with SOS Children's Village Kakiri-Wakiso District. Day of the African Child is celebrated every year on 16<sup>th</sup> June by all African Union States to honor the Children who participated in the Soweto uprising in 1976. However as African Women and Girls Organization we take opportunity of this day together with different partners that work directly with children through the Children's Conference to create and provide a platform for Children to express their views and discontentment on different issues to the Policy makers, Government, Parents and teachers.

## **2.0 CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS**

### **Message from the host**

The programmes Director at SOS Children's Village, Mr. Paul Bwamiki said when Children gather together and speak out their minds, it helps the parents and the local leaders to find better ways of improving Child rights.

### **Message from the Organizer**

Ms. Judith Nassali the National Director of African Women and Girls Organization for Total Knowledge commended parents who care and support their children at all levels most especially with education, she however warned parents that have neglected their children to wake up and take responsibility before they are dealt with by the law.

### **2.1 Children**

African Women and Girls Organization for Total Knowledge Uganda is very appreciative to the Children participants who physically participated at the Children's Conference on the 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2018 at SOS Children's Village Kakiri.

### **2.2 The Government and Ministry of Education and Sports**

We thank the State Minister for Primary Education Hon. Minister Rosemary Nansubuga Seninde for honoring our invitation as the Guest of honor at the Conference. In her remarks she urged Children to always speak out their views and she promised to lead them to the Speaker of Parliament to present and take note of their view once contacted. She asked Parents to provide basic needs, necessities and scholastic materials to their Children to enable them complete and have powerful Education. She said that Government introduced education for all at Primary and Secondary level to allow all Children access Education and therefore it is a responsibility of all parents to ensure that all Children in their communities go to school.

**“Parents have not played their role in raising Children, leading them to run to the streets. Children have their homes but they left because their parents never listened to them” she said.**

She also urged parents to always be part of such conferences whenever they are organized so that they can hear their children’s voices regarding their Rights and whatever is going on in their lives.



*Hon.Minister Rosemary Nansubuga Sennide giving her speech during the Conference*



Guest of Honor Hon. Minister Rosemary Nansubuga Seninde State Minister for Primary Education poses for a Photo with the National Director African Women and Girls Organization Ms. Judith Nassali, Head of Schools SOS Children Villages Mr. Paul Bwamiki and some of the Children.

## 2.3 District Officials

**2.3.1 Senior Probation and Welfare Officer Ms. Mary Nakazibwe** said that in Wakiso District they love to meaningfully engage Children and have their views captured, this helps them to do proper planning and implementation on the subsequent levels.



**2.3.2 Mayor Wakiso District Kiseka Mohammed** thanked the organizers of the conference and pledged to go with the Children as they present their action paper to the Rt Hon Speaker of Parliament of Uganda. He said he did it last year and he is more than ready to go with them again this year because he understands that the problems and issues of Children are very vital and need to be acted on for the betterment of our Country

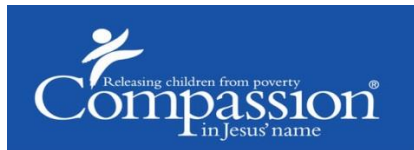


**2.3.3 Minister of Gender and Children Affairs Wakiso Council Hajjat Hadiijja Kawooya** expressed her discontent with children who spend a lot of time on smart phones and internet cafes instead of reading their books. She advised them to first concentrate on their books then the rest will follow.



## 2.4 Organizations

We are also appreciative to the following organizational participants that partnered with us at the Conference. Your participation made the Conference successful beyond target.



## 2.5 Schools;

We are very thankful to the schools listed below for entrusting us and allow their Children participate at the Children's Conference.

1. SOS Herman's Gmeiner Secondary School
2. SOS Herman Gmainer primary school.
3. Peace High School.
4. Exodus College.
5. Mt. Olives College Kakiri.
6. Mama Ngina primary school
7. Kids pioneer school
8. Henry kasule Memorial college
9. Wakiso classic school
10. St Ann primary school
11. Child care nursery and primary school
12. St Kizito Lwanga Secondary School

### 3.0 OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Children's Conference is Child participation which asserts that children have the right to freely express their views and there is an obligation to listen to their views and facilitate their participation in all matters affecting them within their families, communities, public conventions and policy making. This was achieved through three strategies of;

1. Group Dialogues
2. Children's Parliament
3. Press Conference

**3.1 Group Dialogues:** The 750 Children participants were grouped in the groups of five according to their age groups with different topics to discuss about. They were allocated facilitators to guide them in their discussions and come up with a paper which they will later present at the parliament session.

Table1: Topics discussed at the Children's Conference

<b>GROUP</b>	<b>TOPIC OF DISCUSSION</b>
African Women and Girls Organization	Children Rights and Responsibilities
Samaritan's Purse International Relief	Child Trafficking
Compassion International	Teenage Pregnancy
Dwelling Places	How Children end up on the Streets
SOS Children's Villages	Participation of Male caregivers at family level

### 3.1.1 Group: African Women and Girls Organization for Total Knowledge



The group was facilitated by Ms. Sarah Acom, A teacher at African Women and Girls Organization and they discussed "Children's Rights"

**Children's Rights** are opportunities that all children below the age of eighteen must receive regardless who they are or where they come from.

1. Right to Education
2. Right to Speak out their views
3. Right to Medical Care
4. Right to be loved and protected
5. Right to a peaceful home
6. Right to association to both parents
7. Right to be adequately fed
8. Right to Care and Nurturing
9. Right to religion

**Children Responsibilities** are the duties that Children have to perform to allow their rights to be supported. Children have the responsibility;

1. To study and excel
2. To hear and respect other people's views
3. To take care of them selves
4. To show love and caring to others



5. To do domestic work at home
6. To respect and love their parents
7. Not waste food
8. To report to the authorities when their rights are violated

### **How Children Rights are Violated**

1. Over Beating
2. Corporal punishments
3. Denial of food
4. Kidnaping Children
5. Child Labor

### **Recommendations from the Children**

1. Parents should stop over beating them
2. Teachers should stop corporal punishments at School
3. The government should enforce strict laws on those who abuse Children's rights.
- 4.

### **3.1.2 Group: Samaritan's Purse International Relief**



The group was facilitated by Ms. Anna Thakkar, Project Manager ATREFF at Samaritan's Purse International Relief and they discussed "Child Trafficking"

**Child Trafficking** is the action of transportation, recruitment, harboring and receipt of a Child for the purpose of forced labor and exploitation.

### **How are Children Trafficked?**

1. Through tricks and persuasions to leave their homes
2. Through grooming(building an emotional connection with a Child to gain their trust)
3. Promises to Children and their parents for better Education in other places or countries
4. Through force and Violence

### **Why are Children Trafficked**

1. For sex exploitation / Sex workers
2. Forced marriages
3. Domestic workers
4. Forced labor in factories or agricultural farms
5. For Criminal activities such as pick pocketing, begging on streets, Drug smuggling
6. Recruitment in rebel armed groups as child soldiers

### **How do we protect ourselves from being trafficked?**

1. If someone is trying to befriend us and we don't know them we tell our parents and teachers
2. If someone tries to take you away by force yell and scream for help
3. Do not accept gifts and eats from strangers
4. Do not move alone at night
5. Do not move alone in lonely place or places where there are few people

### **Recommendations from the Children**

1. To the Parents always take your children to school don't let them move alone very early in the morning
2. To the parents create a friendship with your children so that they tell you their friends and the people they spend time with when they are not with you.
3. To the government put very strict laws and punishments to all found trafficking Children.

### 3.1.3 Group: Compassion International



The group was facilitated by Ms. Hope Masika of Compassion International the topic of discussion was "Teenage pregnancy and its effects"

**Teenage Pregnancy** is when a girl between the age of 13 years and 18 years gets pregnant. She hasn't completed her core education (secondary education) is mentally immature and financially dependent on her parents or guardians.

#### **Causes of Teenage pregnancy**

1. Pornography being a major factor as children get easy access to the internet and misuse it to watch some bad acts.
2. Some parents don't give good examples to their children as many dresses indecently and use immoral abusive language.
3. Some children are not supervised as many parents tend to be so busy to have time with their children so they end up doing what they please good or bad.
4. Poverty (some parents can't afford necessities for their children so they go out to look for them in a bad way).
5. Peer pressure to make friends and fit among their peers.
6. Lack of attention and affection from parents causes the girls to go seek love and support from the wrong people.
7. Lack of sex knowledge, some teens do not really understand the consequences of having unprotected sex
8. Sexual abuse like Rape by the people they trust or stay with

## Effects of Teenage Pregnancy

1. School dropouts.
2. Conflicts at home between Children and Parents.
3. Contraction of STDS.
4. Stigma and Isolation from Family ,Friends and Community
5. Single parenting when the responsible man is not ready for a family
6. Being parents with low educational levels
7. It may result into death during birth
8. Depression and stress

## Recommendations from the Teenagers

1. To the Parents spend more time with your children, let them share their experience with you and advise them accordingly
2. To the government provide educational sponsorships to girls from poor families
3. To the Government create teenage centers where they can learn more on Reproductive health knowledge and counselling

### 3.1.4 Group: Dwelling Places



Ms.Faith Atwine Deputy Director for Communications Strategy and impact at Dwelling Places.  
Topic discussed was Street Children.

**Street Children** are boys or girls under the age of 18 years who are poor, homeless and live on the streets of a city, town or village. They survive by stealing or begging and have no protection or supervision from adults.

### **Why Children End up on the Streets?**

1. Death of both parents
2. Poverty where children don't have food to eat
3. Severe punishments at home
4. Neglect of Children by their parents or care takers
5. Culture and norms like marrying off young girls for money
6. Some of the Children don't remember their way home so they stay on the streets

### **Dangers Faced by Street Children**

1. Children risk falling sick
2. Children are kidnapped
3. Children are attacked and abused physically and Sexually

### **Recommendations**

1. The Children stay in schools and homes
2. Report and child abuse to the police
3. The government should put strict laws to prevent children from going to the streets

**3.2 Children's Parliament:** After the discussions in the different groups, The children all converged again in the main hall for the Parliament session. Two Children representatives from each group presented their action paper on different topics before the Speaker who was also a child.

Different topics were debated upon and a general action paper was developed to be presented at the district and later to the speaker of parliament on date that will be communicated.



The speaker of parliament and her deputy during the Parliament session

**3.2 Press Conference:** Ten Children were chosen to participate at the press Conference, they introduced themselves and the schools they had come from. They expressed their views and they wanted to see changes in the following areas;

#### **At home**

- Parents should reduce on the anger, they do something small and the parents over beat them
- Parents should buy their children scholastic materials to help them perform better in class, for example text books and revision books
- Parents should spend more time with their children

#### **At School**

- The teachers should reduce the anger and give them punishments that fit their age
- Teachers should stop corporal punishments

#### **In our Country**

- The government should build more schools so that the children don't have to move long journeys
- The government should put heavy punishments on those who kidnap and kill children
- The government should sanitize parents on Children rights and how to handle them
- The government and ngos should sanitize parents to invest more in their children than marrying many women and alcohol
- More education scholarships should be provided to poor children
- Put a ban to film houses (ebibanda) where children instead of going to school go there to watch movies



Some of the participants expressing their views and the changes they want to see.

#### **4.0 Meal session**

All Participants received free meals and drinks



*Children receiving food and drinks.*

### **5.0 The 2019 Children's Conference Plan**

The 2018 Children Conference second edition will be on 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2019 at a venue yet to be announced. Please plan to participate with us.

For more information, please contact  
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