



# Strengthening Community Based Child Rights Protection in Lyantonde District



## NEWS LETTER 5th EDITION

August 2017

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## DIRECTOR'S WORD



I wish to welcome you to the 5th edition of Newsletter for the project code-named Strengthening Child Rights Protection in Lyantonde District. I also thank you for taking your valuable time to read the earlier editions of our news letters which I think have kept you abreast of RACOB AO's child focused interventions.

*Just a simple reflection: This project is being implemented by RACOB AO in Lyakajura and Lyantonde Town Council of Lyantonde District with support from the Independent Development Fund (IDF). It is intended to replicate the best practices seen in implementation of a similar project in the rest of the Sub Counties of Lyantonde District.*

*The previous project phases revitalized the weak community child rights protection systems and structures including the probation and social welfare office, police family and Child Protection Unit, local council Vice chairpersons (in charge of children affairs). Other structures include cultural and religious leaders and schools.*

RACOB AO trained child rights Actors including; CDOs, child and family protection unit, religious leaders Vice chairpersons to enable them meaningfully intervene into child abuse cases in a manner that conforms to the national OVC quality standards.

Some changes have been brought about by this project. These include reduced cases of early marriages, and property grabbing which were very common in Lyantonde Rural and Kasagama Sub Counties.

Community vigilance in child rights monitoring has increased and stakeholders are now working as a team .

During this period, quite a number of activities have been carried out to ensure a friendly and protective environment for children before the project comes to an end by 30th September 2017.

The unique aspect of this issue is the fact that it covers some of the project success stories from the testimonies of the beneficiaries. I believe that such stories will enable you assess the extent to which this project has transformed the lives of children.

Much thanks to all stakeholders who have in various capacities participated in this project and RACOB AO looks forward to sustainability of the registered achievements

Finally, on behalf of the RACOB AO board of Directors and Staff, I would like to thank IDF for the financial support .

Community vigilance in child rights monitoring has increased and stakeholders are now working as a team .

**Haq Makumbi Bugembe**

CAO: Chief Administrative Officer

CDOs: Community Development Officers

CHAU: Child Aid Uganda

HIV: Human Immune Virus

IDF: Independent Development Fund

LC: Local Council

MDD: Music, Dance and Drama

NGO: Non-Governmental Organisation

O.C: Officer in Charge

OVC: Orphans and other vulnerable children

PSWO: Probation and Social Welfare Officer

RACOBABO: Rural Action Community Based Organisation

UNICEF: United Nations Children Emergency Fund

CID: Criminal Investigation Department

PTA : Parents Teachers Association

# ABOUT RACOBABO

## Vision.

A Uganda where all people's rights are respected.

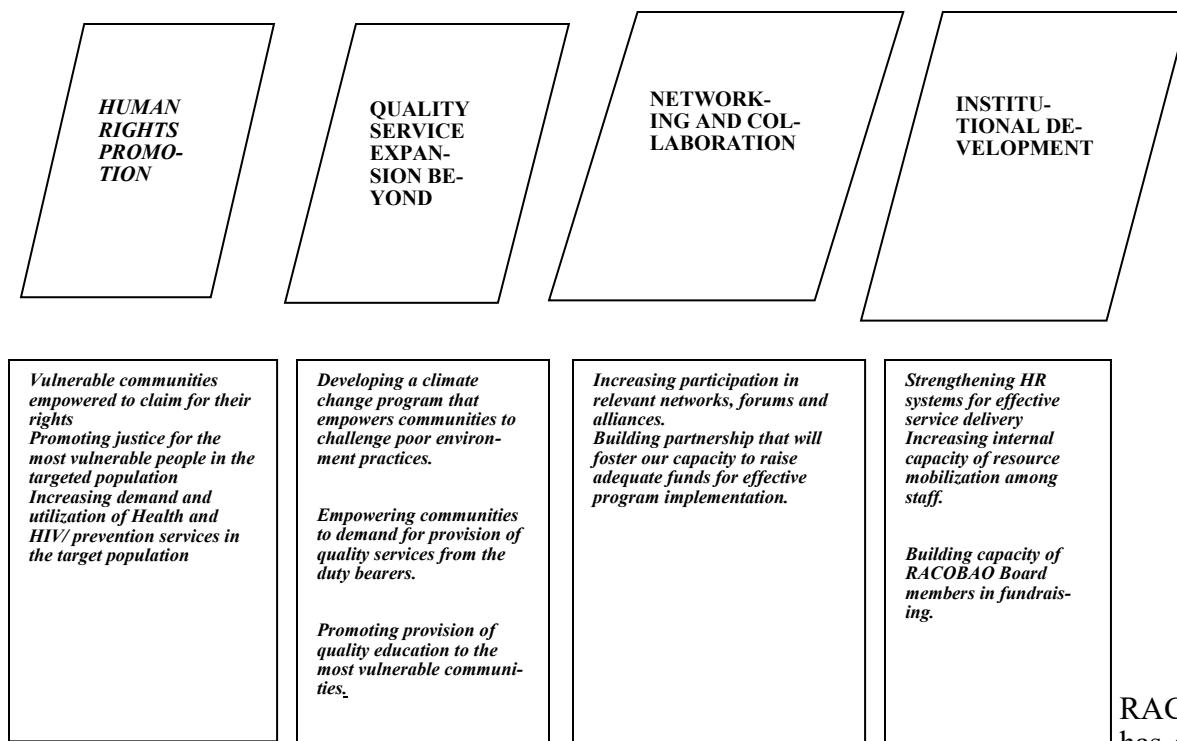
## Goal.

By 2019, RACOBABO, is a vibrant organization with functional systems effectively promoting human rights and delivering other development programs for vulnerable communities

## Mission.

To promote human rights of the most vulnerable people through community empowerment by engaging duty bearers;+- advocacy for accountability and quality services in the targeted districts.

## Thematic focus



RACOBABO has a mandate to work nationally. However; currently RACOBABO programs are concentrated in the districts of Lyantonde, Rakai, Sembabule, Mityana and Kamwenge.

IDF is a key partner in supporting human rights promotion programmes. Others are PATH/USAID, FuG Sweden, Finn Church Aid, Evangelical Lutheran Churches in America and Icelandic Church Aid, Children in Africa and Mild May.

## Description of the outcome and degree of change in citizens' ability to effectively monitor human rights violations and good governance in Lyantonde District

By Lubega Douglas Project coordinator  
RACOBAAO



The project has created vibrant community structures that take actions on child rights abuses resulting into reduced under-age and forced marriages and property grabbing for OVC in the sub counties of Lyakajjura, and Lyantonde Town council district.

Similarly the rights holders in the targeted sub counties have the skills and competencies to organize platforms through their leadership where they invite duty bearers especially those at village and Sub-county levels and pupils during PTA meetings pupils have exercised their rights through music dance and drama and put forward questions to which duty bearers will provide answers.

These platforms are also used by right holders to find solution to their own problems and make community action plans to address the community problems to dialogue with and ask their leaders questions as to why there is poor delivery of social services. For instance local leaders in Lyakajjura Sub county and Lyantonde Town council have come up with drafts of child rights protection Byelaw to address the issue of child rights violations.

On several occasions, rights holders have questioned the police's practice of asking complainants to buy fuel before their intervention i.e to investigate and arrest the suspects. Similarly the duty bearers, are shift in responding to community concerns, for example the community services depart-

ment in Lyantonde has responded to 116 child help line calls from the villages in a swiftly manner on several child neglect and attempted under-age cases.

On several occasions, rights holders have questioned the police's practice of asking complainants to buy fuel before their intervention

I hereby thank RACOBAAO for introducing the project in our school. This project has created a great impact in our school towards learning and social well being of our children.

The project has provided us with music instruments which has helped to develop the talents of learners through MDD and this has made us to excel in competitions of education week and MDD for the district. This attracted some of the children who had dropped out of school but were talented in MDD to come back to school. Through sensitizing pupils about their rights they can now demand for their rights.

On top of that through parliamentary debates they can easily freely express themselves in front of their fellow peoples and even make their presentations during parents day.

It has not only influenced learners but also teachers behavior towards responding to learners' responses. Before we used not to listen to pupils' concerns but now we do .

Therefore I recommend this project to continue visiting schools because it has contributed a great impact towards teaching and learning behaviors.

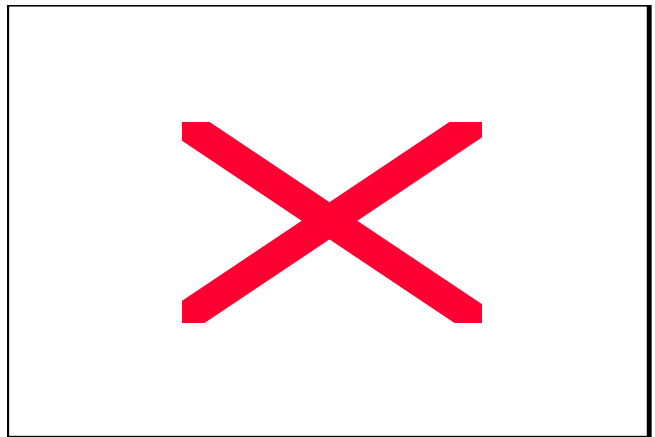
**Ainemani Denis**

**Lyakajura Sub County leaders reach out to communities to share child protection Bye-law.**

RACOBABO with support from IDF initiated the idea of making child protection bye-laws in Lyakajura and Lyantonde town council. This was in response to the different forms of child abuse in the area. The most common forms were defilement, early marriages ,child labour and education neglect.

RACOBABO facilitated the CDOs to have separate meetings with duty bearers and rights holders in order to identify the specific child rights abuse for particular areas. The evidence gathered enabled RACOBABO to justify the Bye-law making.

The CDOs developed the draft Bye-laws supported by the collected evidence that were later presented to the councils. The idea was vehemently supported and the

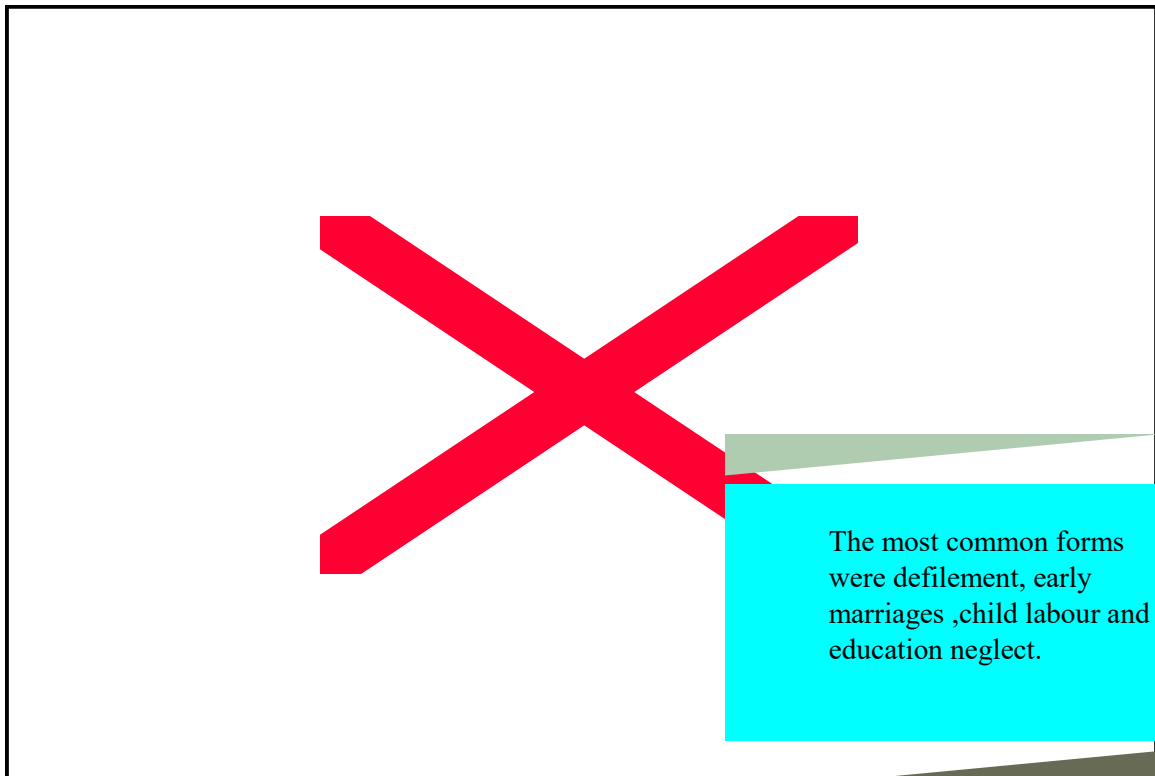


pass them. In August the leadership of Lyakajura therefore presented the draft to the community members whereby the idea was highly welcomed.

RACOBABO is hopeful that the Bye-law will soon be passed by the council.

**Left: Right:** OC Lyakajura Sub County emphasizing the need for a Bye-law.

leaders undertook to introduce it to community members for their views before the councils could



**Chairperson L.C III Lyakajura Lyantonde district sharing the draft Bye-law**

The most common forms were defilement, early marriages ,child labour and education neglect.

## **Pupils in Lyantonde district join the “no corporal punishment campaign”**

The ministry of education and Sports has taken a clear stance against corporal punishment in Ugandan schools.

On 10th June 1997 the first circular was issued by the commissioner for education and copied to all District Education Officers, Inspectors of schools, Head Teachers and Principals to communicate temporarily ban on the use of corporal punishment in schools and colleges.

The 2nd circular was issued on 10th September 2001, and the third one issued on 7th August 2006 to guide discipline in schools.

The study by ANPPCAN and Save the children shows that Uganda still lags behind in addressing corporal punishment which is at 84% (Daily monitor Jan 9 2014)

- The effects of corporal punishment include:
- Lifelong psychological damage manifested as depression, inhibition, rigidity, heightened anxiety and suicidal thoughts.
  - Children lose interest, resent the learning experience and as a result do not value edu-

cation.

- Children learn to hate a subject or teacher because education does not thrive when children live in fear of those who teach them.
- Being absent from school and the risk of school drop out increases.
- Children who experience corporal punishment develop feelings of low self esteem and as a result can become unproductive adults.

RACOBABO trained children about their rights and supported 5 schools with music instruments to enable them express their opinions through edutainment activities.

Children have joined the efforts to put an end to corporal punishments by demonstrating the effects of corporal punishment through drama during their child rights Clubs.

Corporal punishments have reduced as teachers have recognized the role of positive discipline. Schools report increment in enrollment and retention yet pupils are now proud of the friendly school environment.





## **Child rights and education policy awareness stimulates school performance and parents' involvement in education**

RACOBABO through the child protection project funded by IDF, popularized the children's Act and education Act in Kempega Primary school. Enrollment had declined due to unfriendly school environment yet parents were reluctant to provide scholastic materials and lunch to their children. Parents were also not supporting school development programs. On the other hand, children were not fulfilling their responsibilities leading to high cases of corporal punishments.

The project raised awareness among pupils about their rights and responsibilities through Child Rights clubs and drama activities and also oriented teachers and parents on the children and education Acts so that they could each fulfill their respective roles.

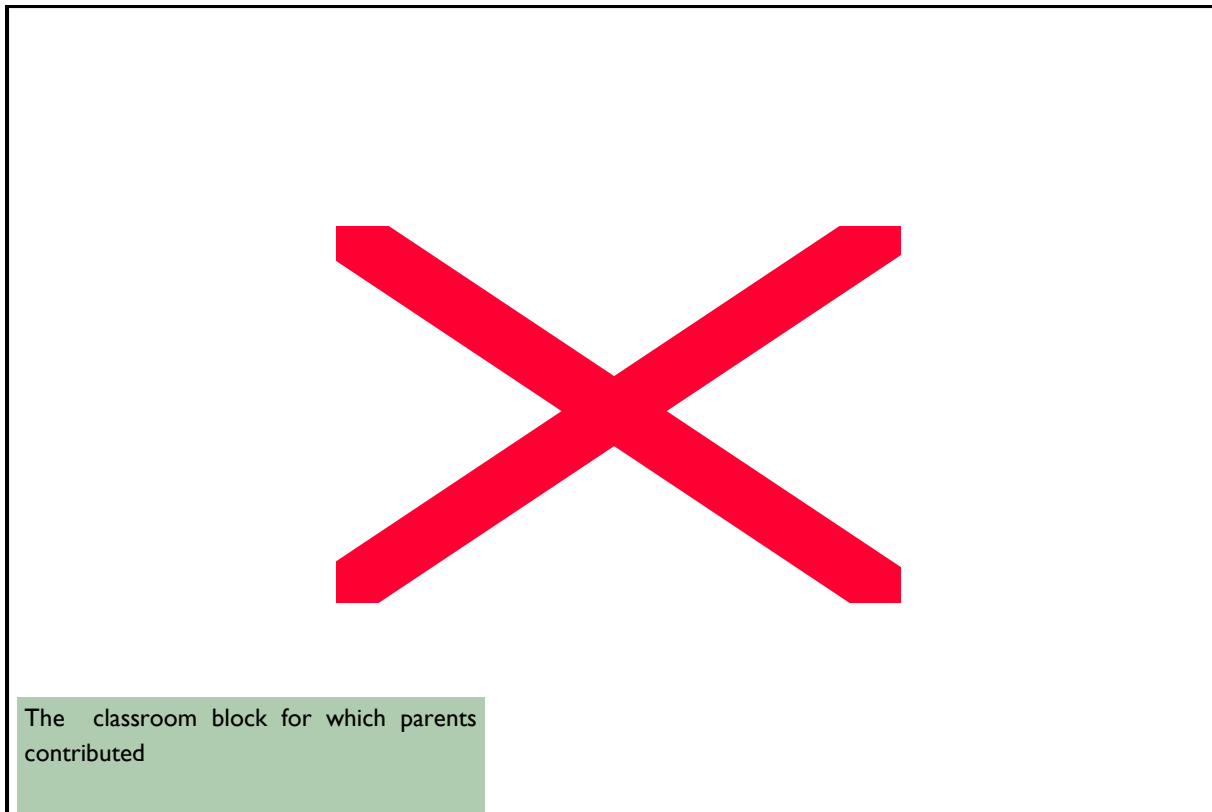
Parents are now providing scholastic materials to their children, teachers have resorted to positive

children.

Community involvement in education is also visible as demonstrated by the high turn up for school meetings and the parents' generous contribution towards the completion of a 5 class room block.

The classroom block which was constructed with support from Masaka Diocese for a long time remained in semi-finished state and children were affected with jiggers, coldness since there were no window shutters and doors. When parents were sensitized on their role in education they resolved to contribute towards its completion. The parents fulfilled their commitment and all doors and shutters for that building have been fixed.

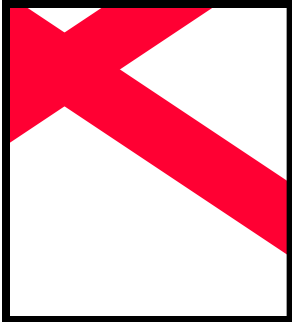
By the close of 2nd term 2017, parents expressed happiness about the changes. Nankunda Joan and other parents said that their children are performing well and they are well behaved.



discipline and parents contribute lunch for their

## BENEFICIARIES' TESTIMONIES

**My name is Namutaawe Veneranda.**



I am proud of RACOBABO because I am one of the pupils that attended the sensitization session on children rights and responsibilities. I learnt that our parents must provide us with food, clothes and medication. Initially my parents rarely bought for me clothes but when I asked them for new clothes they started buying for me .

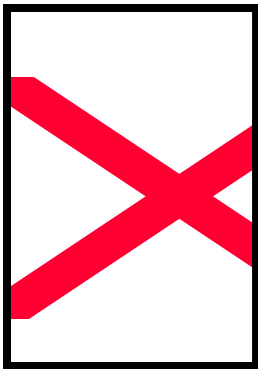
At school, we started demanding for our rights thus changes at our school. Teachers for example provide us with water for drinking and corporal punishments are no more.

**Nshemereirwe Babra**



I had my friend who is called Teo (not real name), She got a problem when she was going home in late evening. She met 2 men on her way . They did 2 things, they kid-napped her and she was defiled. She came to my home crying and she told me that she had been de-

filed. I advised her to report the matter to authorities. Following my advice she shared her sad story with one elder at the village who in turn assisted her to record the case to police. My friend was taken to the hospital for psycho-social and medical support and the suspected defilers were arrested.



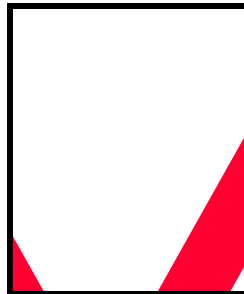
**Nanjovu Prossy** a pupil at Kempega primary school.

I was taught about children rights and responsibilities by RACOBABO. The knowledge acquired inspired me in a way that I changed my behavior for I was too stubborn and punished now and again by my parents. I hated my parents for punishing me regularly, but later realized

that they were fulfilling their role of protecting me from becoming immoral.

I am now loyal to my parents and teachers which has enabled me to perform better academically and my parents are now very happy about me. My mother for example bought for me a new dress for the good performance.

**Mwesigwa Frank –St Martin Kijukizo Primary school**



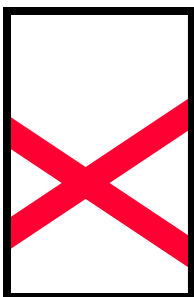
I was being beaten by my mother. She used to beat me right, left and center. I suffered bruises and burns but I feared reporting her. On one sports day, the teacher asked us to put off our shirts. My

friend was shocked to see the bruises on my back and consequently sought teachers' attention.

The teacher asked me of what had happened but I declined to reveal for fear of consequences. The teacher forced to tell the truth which I did.

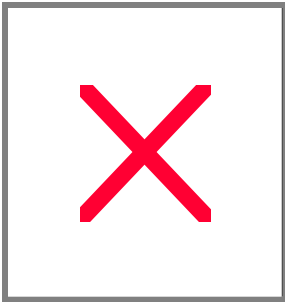
My mother was invited at school over that matter and teachers talked to her.

The home is now safer for me as she has resorted to counseling me in case of making a mistake. I now have time to concentrate on my studies and proud of the teachers' intervention.



**Naluyima Stella** I learnt how to do house work and learnt good behaviors because I was badly behaved, I also learnt helping my parents with house work . I used to quarrel and abuse my elders but they taught me how to respect my elders and now respect them. My parents also give me time to play with my friends.

**WE ALL HAVE A DUTY TO DEFEND CHILDREN AGAINST ABUSE AND NEGLECT.**



It is generally perceived that the child rights defenders/activists must be with unique intellectual abilities such as lawyers; but that is wrong.

Any individual or institution who appreciates the need to prevent

and protect children from abuse and neglect qualifies to be a defender.

The defenders therefore comprise of the families, community based structures and Government institutions that are mandated to ensure that all children enjoy their survival, development, protection and participation rights.

Responsible parents struggle to raise their children into healthy and responsible citizens by providing them with food, clothes, medical care; taking them to school and ensuring their safety i.e protecting them from harm such as sacrifice, labor and defilement.

Civil society organizations like Rural Action Community Based organization (RACOB AO), Child Aid Uganda (CHAU) and Salama Shield Foundation have done a lot to promote the rights of children.

RACOB AO has for example sensitized communities on children rights and their role in prevention of child abuse by working closely with the available support service providers such as CDOS, & Probation.

Local Councils (I-III), police's child and family protection Unit, CDOS and Probation officers are also readily available to support camapaig ns to prevent child abuse and to provide support to the victims.

There is however a need to further create community awareness in order for community members to challenge

the harmful cultural practices such as "Okukwatira Orugo"(where young girls are booked for future marriages) common among the Bahima tribal communities. Once awareness is created, communities become vigilant to report cases to the relevant authorities.

The media houses, religious and cultural leaders who regularly communicate to the public should also join the struggle by sensitizing the public about the existing child protection laws and policies and bringing child abuse cases in the lime light for dialogue and appropriate interventions.

I strongly believe that the National OVC policy institutional framework is enough to create a safer and enabling environment for children if all actors could get involved in planning, implementation and evaluation of the interventions.

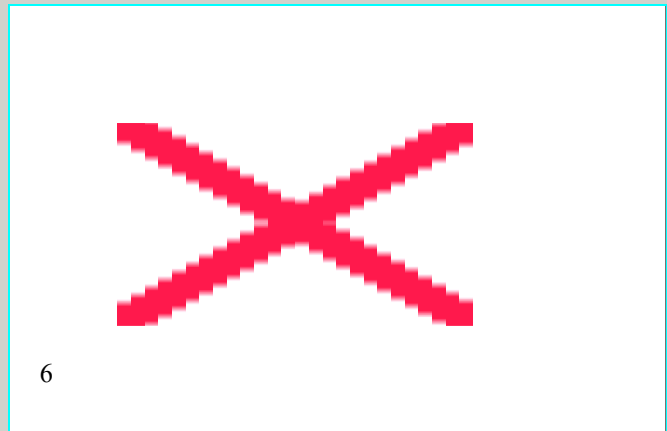
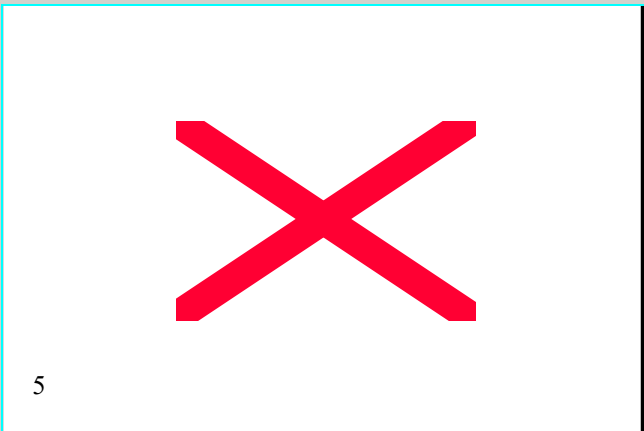
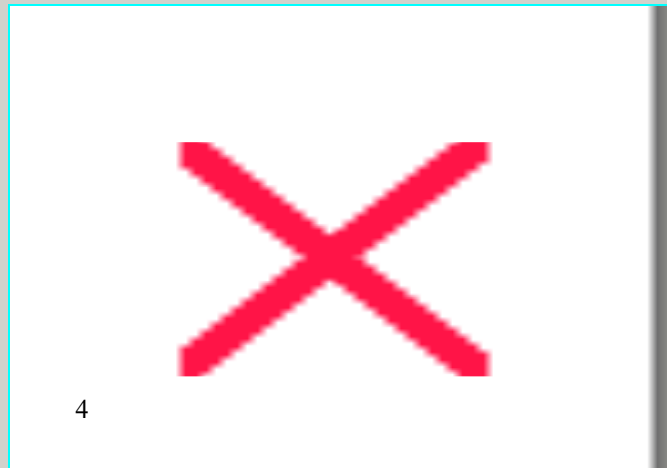
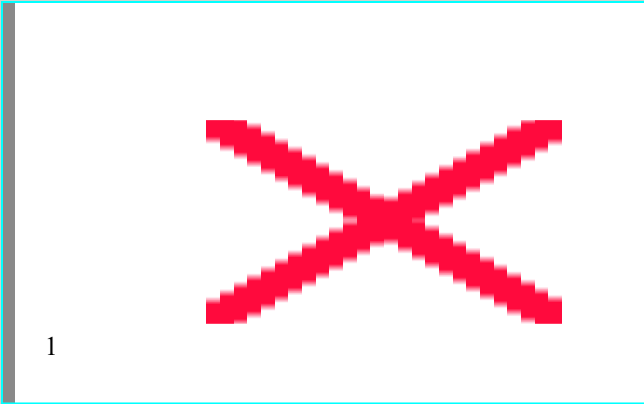
Lets join hands, for a better Lyantonde and a better Uganda.

**Once awareness is created, communities become vigilant to report cases to the relevant**

For God and my Country.

**JONATHAN TUMWEBAZE  
PARISH CHIEF KATOVU  
LYANTONDE RURAL S/C  
TEL 0772 729956/ 0702967506/**

## Some of the pictures for our project activities



ABOUT THE PICTURE	PICTURE NUMBER
Drama performance at Kicwamba church of Uganda Primary school Lyantonde district	1
Baraza (Community accountability forum) at Kicwamba Lyakajura Sub County	2
Lyakajura duty bearers visiting Kinuuka Sub county for learning on best practices in child protection	3
A police officer sensitizing the community on children rights	4
Radio talk show at KAARO Fm on status of child rights protection in Lyantonde district	5
Planning and review meeting at Lyantonde Town Council	6

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