



# Strengthening Community Based Child Rights Protection in Lyantonde District



**NEWS** LETTER 4th EDITION

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## DIRECTOR'S WORD



I wish to welcome you to the 4th edition of Newsletter for the project code-named Strengthening Child Rights Protection in Lyantonde District.

This project is being implemented by RACOBABO 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.

This was a deliberate effort to create friendly environment for child growth and development as observed by UNICEF that:

*A protective environment for children boosts development and improves the health, education and wellbeing of children and their evolving capacities to be parents citizens and productive members of society. (UNICEF, 2008a)*

RACOBABO has therefore strengthened the capacity of the duty bearers (CDOs, child and family protection unit, religious leaders Vice chairpersons) through different project activities such as training the targeted duty bearers in child rights and protection to enable them meaningfully intervene into child abuse cases in a manner that conforms to the national OVC quality standards. Other activities carried out included:

- ♦ reproducing and distributing relevant laws,
- ♦ conducting interface meetings, between rights holders and duty bearers.
- ♦ development of community action plans
- ♦ and facilitating learning visits. The learning visits enabled stakeholders from different sub counties

to learn from one another.

- ♦ Commemoration of the Day of African Child (DAC)

The project has seen many changes including reduced cases of early marriages, and property grabbing which were very common in Lyantonde Rural and Kasagama Sub Counties. The positive change is attributed to the active community participation in the prevention, reporting, and follow up of all identified child abuse cases.

Community vigilance in child rights monitoring has increased and stakeholders are now working as a team ; the probation officers, the sub county development officers, and the family and child protection unit of the police, the vice chairpersons of the local councils, religious leaders, cultural and opinion leaders and other civil Society organisations have formed a coalition to combat child abuse in Lyantonde district.

As this project is soon coming to an end, we anticipate strengthened team work and devotion among stakeholders to ensure that society is free from all forms of child abuse and safe for children.

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

**Haq Makumbi Bugembe**

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

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

RACOBAAO: Rural Action Community Based Organisation

UNICEF: United Nations Children Emergency Fund

CID: Criminal Investigation Department



## RACOBEO SPEARHEADS THE BYE-LAW MAKING PROCESS IN LYAKAJURA AND LYANTONDE TOWN COUNCIL

With staff from the Independent Development Fund, RACOBEO spearheaded the Bye-law making process in Lyakajura and Lyantonde Town Council after realizing that much as the national laws are in place, it could not address the specific issues affecting children. The process started with community meetings at village level facilitated by Community Development Officers. The issues generated informed the draft bye-law draft which was later presented to the 2 councils of Lyakajura and Lyantonde Town Council. Honorable councilors applauded RACOBEO's efforts in the protection of the rights of the children in Lyantonde District and made a commitment to finalise and pass the Bye-Laws.



Figure 3 Current and former Mayor Lyantonde TC during the presentation of the Bye-law

## RACOBEO ADOPTS CHILDREN PARLIAMENT TO PROMOTE CHILDREN RIGHTS

In order to give children a chance to express their views to the duty bearers, RACOBEO with support from the Independent Development Fund (IDF) facilitated children parliaments in Kasambya, Kyabuuza, Lyakajura and Kyemamba primary schools. This strategy was adopted to allow children express their the issues affecting them freely and indirectly empowering them.

Children pointed out issues like corporal punishment, early marriages, child labour to be majorly affecting them. They recommended that the duty bearers should address them for their well being.

The head-teachers in response to the children asks promised to change the situation by for example trying to administer positive discipline instead of corporal punishment.



Children parliament at Kyabuuza Primary school

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## RACOB AO CONDUCTS A 1 DAY EX-CHANGE VISIT

RACOB AO conducted a one day exchange visit to Mpumudde Sub County in Lyantonde District in May 2017. The visits were meant for sharing and learning about interventions aimed at promoting and protecting the rights of the children.



Figure 1 CDO Mpumudde S/c facilitating during exchange visit at Mpumudde sub-county Headquarters



Figure 3 Mr. Tukwasibwe Dan from Mpumudde sub-county giving his views in relation to child rights protection to visitors from Lyakajjura and Lyantonde sub-county.

## LYANTONDE DISTRICT COMMEMORATES THE DAY OF AFRICAN CHILD

Lyantonde district local Government in partnership with Civil Society organisations joined the rest of African Countries to commemorate the day of African child. The event was held at Lyantonde district headquarters on 16th June 2017.

This day is commemorated in remembrance of the children massacred in 1976 in Soweto South Africa as they were indiscriminately shot at by the police as they were demonstrating their dissatisfaction with the new law that was banning speaking local languages at public schools.

This day attended by many leaders from both the district and Sub Counties, schools and private sector enabled stakeholders to take stock of their work yet children were able to express their views through music, poems and speeches. RACOB AO hopes to see duty bearers taking serious actions against the most common child rights violations such as early marriages and corporal punishment.



Children marching on streets of Lyantonde District proceeding to the DAC event venue



## LOCAL LEADERS INVOLVED IN PARTICIPATORY PLANNING FOR PROJECT ACTIVITY IMPLEMENTATION

RACOB AO recognizes Participatory planning is very important in community development as a way of allowing the community to reflect on their own problems and identify solutions. Experts are needed, but only as facilitators. Moreover, no one likes to participate in something which is not of his/her own creation. Plans prepared by outside experts, irrespective of their technical soundness, cannot inspire the people to participate in their implementation.

RACOB AO therefore conducted a quarterly planning, coordination and review meeting with sub county and district leaders including the police family protection unit, vice chairpersons of LCI . The meeting was in order to enable stakeholders share information, review the progress of the project plan to mitigate challenges during implementation of activities and get updated on the progress of child rights project.

This planning and coordination meeting attracted an attendance of 20 participants of whom 02 were females. The participants in this meeting include the police family protection unit, vice chairpersons of LCI other key stake holders from the sub counties of Lyakajjura and Lyantonde Town Council sub counties.



Figure 1 ED RACOB AO addressing Participants during the planning and coordination review meeting



Figure 2 Vice chairperson LCV giving opening remarks during the meeting

At the end of the meeting the Action plan was developed

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## RACOBAO CONDUCTS A QUARTERLY INTERFACE MEETING IN LYANTONDE TOWN COUNCIL.

RACOBAO conducted a quarterly interface meeting in Lyantonde Town council, targeting members of community structures. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss service delivery and establish an effective referral system. This meeting attracted an attendance of 20 participants 5 females



Figure 1 Field Officer Salaama Shield foundation outlining some of the OVC work they engage in



Figure 2 Field Officer from CAU outlining services their CSO provides to the children

Participants were able to ask duty holders their roles to protect the rights of the children and why some leaders particularly the vice chairmen LCIs have failed to do their part to protect the rights of the children in their villages and at times connive with perpetrators to violate the rights of the children.

Officer from the Family and child protection Unit clearly highlighted the laws that are well embedded in the child rights Act and his presence stimulated the participant's attention in the meeting.

## IDF SUPPORTS RACOBAO TO POPULARISE CHILDREN ACT IN LYANTONDE DISTRICT

RACOBAO partnered with Kaaro Fm to sensitise the community on children Act in order to scale up awareness . This was after realizing that community awareness on children rights was significantly low thus the high number of child abuse cases. The most notable case is early marriages which is mainly caused by parents and caregivers who less value girl child education . They usually look at girls as a source of wealth therefore not allowing many of them to complete primary seven.

To make the campaign on Airwaves more effective, technical people and political leaders are always hosted on the quarterly radio talk shows to give account of their work and get feedback. The radio programmes have proved to be effective since listeners from different parts of Lyantonde district phone in sharing the status of children rights pro-



Jonathan Tumwebaze Assistant Probation Officer attending the radio talk show at Kaaro Fm



## **BUILDING GATEWAYS TO PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE IN YOUR COMMUNITY – Community**

### **Resource packet 2nd edition developed by Prevent Child Abuse America**

We all have a role to play in building strong communities in which families and children are valued and supported. It is in these kinds of communities that children are safest from abuse and neglect. Here are some things you can do as a concerned individual.

#### **The Five R's**

##### **Raise the issue.**

Call or write your candidates and elected officials to educate them about issues in your community and the need for child abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment programs.

Contact your local school district and faith community to encourage them to sponsor classes and support programs for new parents.

##### **Reach out to kids and parents in your community.**

Anything you do to support kids and parents in your family and extended community helps to reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect.

##### **Remember the risk factors.**

**Child abuse and neglect occur in all segments of our society, but the risk factors are greater in families where parents:**

- Abuse alcohol or drugs
- Are isolated from their families or communities
- Have difficulty controlling their anger or stress
- Appear uninterested in the care, nourishment, or safety of their children
- Seem to be having serious economic, housing, or personal problems

##### **Recognize the warning signs.**

**Some of the warning signs that a child might be abused or neglected include:**

- Nervousness around adults
- Aggression toward adults or other children
- Inability to stay awake or to concentrate for extended periods
- Sudden, dramatic changes in personality or activities
- Acting out sexually or showing interest in sex that is not appropriate for his or her age
- Frequent or unexplained bruises or injuries
- Low self-esteem
- Poor hygiene

##### **Report suspected abuse or neglect.**

- If you suspect abuse or neglect is occurring, report it—and keep reporting it—until something is done.
- Contact child protective services (in your local phone book) or your local police department.

##### **Other Ways You Can Help**

- Build a support network by getting involved in your neighborhood.
- Develop friendly relationships with your neighbors and their children. Problems often seem less overwhelming when you have support nearby.
- Get involved in your child's school. Join the parent-teacher organization and attend school events.
- Talk to your friends and neighbors about child abuse and how to prevent it.

# PHOTO GALLERY



Figure 4 One of the participant from Lyakajjura discussing some of the child rights violation issues in their area



Children marching during the DAC Commemoration on 16th June 2017