

## Peace A Video Game To Mitigate Child Marriages



Minister Peace Mutuuzo, Prof. Bernabas Nawangwe and lecturers from the department of social science and administration during the None in Three project Dissemination At Hotel Africana on 30<sup>th</sup> Nov, 2021.

Makerere Department of social works and social administration have employed a video game dubbed “:peace” to help mitigate early childhood marriages in Uganda.

During a None in Three research Project National Dissemination held at Hotel Africana on the 30<sup>th</sup> of November 2021, one of the project spear headers Dr. Esther Nanfuka pointed out a video game dubbed “PEACE” a pro-social game as one of the interventionist strategies to address the

issue of child marriages in Uganda. The game is meant to make the participants engage emotionally with the Gender Based Violence Victims, it was derived from a story of one of the research participants named Dembe.

Uganda ranks number 16 in the world in the prevalence of gender based violence. During a research on gender based violence , a total of 11,171 children was reached countrywide. The project was implemented in October 2017 and September 2021, was funded by U K Research and Innovation on a total budget of 2billion Uganda Shillings with a total of 11,171 children reached.

The research into GBV involved several Universities that include, Huddersfield, UTEC in Jamaica, Greenwich University, University of Toronto and other institutions like Kampala Capital City Authority ,The Directorate of Education and Social Services, National Child Authority.

The department of social works and social administration presented a Research survey spearheaded by Doctor Esther Nanfuka, Prof. Eric Awich Ochen, Florence Turyomurugyendo, Adele, Nadia Wager and Rosyln Cumming.

According to Doctor Esther Nanfuka, most of the children that were involved in the survey were not even aware that at some point they were sexually abused. She advised that schools and institutions should employ social workers to help in this field not just senior men and women.

While opening the project dissemination, Professor Bernabas Nawangwe the vice chancellor of Makerere University said,

“Gender based violence is the most primitive form of violence and has no place in society” and emphasized that if it is not addressed then it is directly affecting the progress of our society but this can be achieved through providing researched information that aids in proper implementation.

The research was done under the global Centre called None in Three that derives its name from the fact one in three women worldwide is a victim of gender based violence, and uses emergent technology to change attitudes among the young that fuel the social and cultural drivers of violence against women and girls.

The Centre involved several countries that include Jamaica, United Kingdom and Brazil as well as Uganda to address the issues of Gender Based violence of which Uganda specialized in Early childhood marriages.

The research according to Prof. Eric Awich Ochen the principal investigator found out that in the central region districts of Wakiso and Kampala, the highest number of children experiencing gender based violence are from low income earning families.

According to the national survey of violence against women and children 2021, the rate of violence against children is quite high where by 71% encounter physical violence, 69% are suffering emotional violence, 62% are facing Online harrasment, 89% harsh parenting, 46% are sexual victims, and 59% of these cases prevail in homes.

The guest of honour, Honorable Peace Mutuuzo, the state Minister for Gender, labor and social development says the ministry together with the government of Uganda in the third national plan is committed to develop and implement programs to curb down violence against women, girls and children in general, we have pillar 13 which addresses itself to mindset change and this will be addressed in the next five years.

“If we are still having children being abused in these big multibillion buildings, on those major roads, on the planes, on the roads, we would have worked for nothing.”

According to the research report presented by Prof. Eric Awich, the comparison of experiences of underage marriage by gender and region, the boys are more likely to experience more child marriage than the girls at 29.6% and 6.7% for boys and girls respectively.

Compared to children from the central region, children from the northern region were statistically significantly more likely to have experienced child marriage or perceived pressure to marry.

In regard to the invention of the PEACE video game and its accessibility, the minister said that they as the government are putting measures to help curb poverty so that children from low income earning families can access the services with ease through building strong family structures.

In attendance was the vice chancellor of Makerere university Prof. Bernabas Nawangwe, State Minister for Gender Hon. Peace Mutuuzo, civil society organisations , from schools that were used in the survey, and lecturers from Makerere University.