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THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

**Ministry of Gender, Labour
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In any correspondence on

This subject please quote No. **ADM 183/237/02**

31st August, 2016

Susan Bissell
The Director,
Global Partnership and Fund to end violence against children
633 3rd Ave, 25th Floor
New York
secretariat@end-violence.org

Dear Madam,

**RE: EXPRESSION OF INTEREST TO BECOME A PATHFINDER COUNTRY IN
THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN.**

1. In reference to the Global Partnership strategy to end Violence against children, Uganda as a UN member state through the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) would like to become one of the pathfinder countries in the global efforts to end violence against children.
2. The MGLSD is the lead Ministry in the social development sector with an overarching mandate to empower communities to harness their potential through cultural growth, skills development and labour productivity for sustainable and gender responsive development. The Ministry's child protection roles and functions are reflected in the specific mandate of the department of Children and Youth which is to ensure care, protection and empowerment of children and youth. Specifically, the Ministry has the mandate to formulate and review relevant guidelines, programmes, policies and laws for children and youth; to coordinate and network with stakeholders on issues related to children and youth; to promote participation of children and youths in national development programmes; to support training of children and youth service providers; and to ensure that initiatives, programmes, policies and laws address concerns of children and youths.

3. The Government of Uganda under the leadership of the MGLSD plays leadership role in coordinating child protection programming, policy development and legislation and has to this effect put in place programs that will facilitate protection of children as detailed below;

- i. **The National Child Protection Working Group (NCPWG):** the NCPWG is the inter agency working group on child protection at the national level that brings together Ministries, Departments and Agencies, CSO actors and bilateral and UN agencies focusing on issues of child protection with a view to enhance greater coordination and harmonization of interventions to ensure improved effectiveness. NCPWG is coordinated by the MGLSD.
- ii. **The Uganda Child Helpline:** This is a confidential reporting mechanism for children and young people to report all forms of violence. The national child helpline service is now being delivered through a collaborative partnership between government, the private sector and non-governmental organizations. The service builds on existing expertise and serves as a vehicle for coordinated service delivery across sectors due to its emphasis on building a closely tied network of referral partners that remain accountable to each other for service delivery to children in need of care and protection.
- iii. **Violence against Children Study (VAC):** The MGLSD working in close collaboration with UNICEF, Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, the United States Agency for International Development among others is undertaking a National study on Violence against Children (VAC). The overall intention of the study is to understand the magnitude and causal factors for VAC. Additionally, the Uganda VAC study seeks to identify the risk and protective factors in order to inform efforts by stakeholders that are targeted at prevention of Violence against Children.
- iv. **Convening National Convention on Ending Violence Against Children:** The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development in collaboration with Uganda Child Rights NGO Network (UCRNN) this June convened the first National Convention that brought together over 500 different stakeholders who participated in dialogues with children, shared potential

solutions with the media, cultural leaders, private sector, religious leaders and government representatives on ending all forms of violence against children. The representatives discussed options with the children and agreed on joint strategies and programs to end Violence against Children.

- v. **Amendment of the Children's Act cap 59:** Government successfully amended the above Act and has now in place "The Children (Amendment) Act, 2016 -Act No. 9.

The Children (Amendment) Act, 2016 seeks to enhance the protection of children; to strengthen the provision for guardianship of children; to strengthen the conditions for inter-country adoption; to prohibit corporal punishments among others. The amendment Act 2016 is now fully in force.

- vi. **The National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy and Action Plan:** The NIECD policy of Uganda seeks to address multi-dimensional needs of young children through building more effective and coherent efforts among sectors to achieve positive early childhood development outcomes for all children. The NIECD policy Action Plan of Uganda provides guidance and elaborates strategies that government and partners will employ to undertake the execution of the NIECD policy of Uganda.

It is our belief that for violence prevention to take root, national actors, both government and CSOs need to collaborate on a joint strategy. Government already enjoys a cordial working relation with Uganda Child Rights NGO Network (UCRNN) that brings together all child focused civil society organizations in Uganda to advance the rights of children. Through this partnership the Ministry has been able to undertake joint interventions with the network and its membership.

Uganda has therefore demonstrated commitment to end violence against children through the interventions stated. It is in this regard that the MGLSD writes to express our commitment to fulfill all the requirements by the Global Partnership to end violence against children. Uganda is strongly committed to ending violence against children and is prepared to make SDG16.2, and related targets, a priority for delivering Agenda 2030. The MGLSD commits to develop and implement a consolidated national strategy to end all forms of violence against children in Uganda that will link all other Government Ministries and government agencies at national and sub national levels UNICEF, faith groups, the private sector, children and Young people and all the UN Agencies and World Health Organization among others to champion the aspirations of the global strategy on ending violence against children.

The ministry looks forward to furthering this partnership with you

Best regards,



Pius Bigirimana

PERMANENT SECRETARY