



Uganda's Statement

Uganda became a pathfinding country in September of 2016. As part of the Together to #EndViolence Solutions Summit series, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development of Uganda has made commitments to end violence against children and issued the *Leaders Statement*.

Key highlights from the Leaders statement are as follows:

1. Promote positive/responsible parenting.
2. Eliminate all forms of violence against children in all settings.
3. Make schools safe, non-violent and inclusive.





Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development

**UGANDA GOVERNMENT'S STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO
ENDING ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN**

**BY HON BETTY AMONGI ONGOM, MINISTER GENDER, LABOUR
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**PRESENTED TO THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO END
VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN.**



The Government of the Republic of Uganda remains committed to the Global Partnership on ending all forms of Violence Against Children (VAC). Such commitment includes those made at the 2018 Solutions Summit held in Stockholm, Sweden. In November, 2021 and using our own lenses and contexts of the prevailing situation of VAC in the country, we re-assessed the magnitude of the challenge, what is working and where improvement is needed. This was done in collaboration with key stakeholders (Children, Parents and Caregivers, Religious and Cultural Institutions, Civil Society Organizations, Development Partners and Government Ministries, Agencies and Departments).

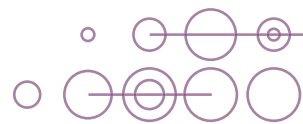
We remain cognisant of the fact that that COVID-19 has exacerbated the already fragile VAC situation across all settings. Data from the national child protection systems, notably Uganda Police and Uganda Child Helpline indicate an upward trend in all types of VAC.

Children of all age ranges have suffered and continue to face multiple types of violence, disturbingly in home settings (violence, ‘hot spot’) where they have been confined for the last 15 months following the shutdown of schools as the country grappled with containment of COVID-19 Pandemic. Moreover, e-learning adopted by a cross section of parents as a stop gap measure to sustain children learning has also presented an increase in online violence to learners.

A recent study by a Civil Society Organization estimates that a significant 53% of learners go online weekly. Parenting has become even more difficult in the changed context of juggling work for family livelihood and at the same time assuring children’s safety in all spaces including online. An estimated 51% of caregivers in Uganda have themselves never used the internet.

In this myriad of complexities though, there is hope for protection of children in Uganda from violence. The existing broad-based system (multi-sector; multi -level, multi -actor) for prevention and response to VAC is accommodative of all interested and passionate stakeholders willing to partner with Government on ending all forms of violence against children. While findings of the national VAC Survey Report (2018) remain a key source of baseline information for





VAC prevention programming, new commitments have been made by different stakeholders who are ready to join efforts with Government towards ending all forms of VAC.

Children have committed to fulfilling their responsibilities, including among others, actively participating in established structures notably school clubs where life skills education is imparted, exercising peer support, and voicing their concerns.

Parents and Caregivers have pledged to adopt positive and responsible parenting practices, and form peer-to-peer parent support groups.

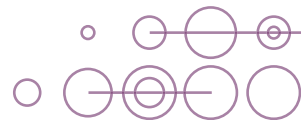
Religious and Cultural Leaders have committed to reposition their institutions as safe spaces for children's empowerment. Positive spiritual and moral values as well as culture necessary that promote peaceful co-existence, as well as offer protection to child survivors of violence, are accordingly propagated.

The media fraternity recognized their pivotal role in the fight against VAC underpinned by the high level of influence they hold in society and the wide audience they command. Media professionals are committed to expand media access channels for children's voices with safety at the forefront and to amplify advocacy for protection of children from all forms of VAC.

The Civil Society in complimenting Government efforts has pledged continued collaboration and partnership with Government in implementation of child protection laws and policies for greater appreciation by the public including citizens at community level. In addition, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are committed to prioritizing evidence-based VAC programming geared towards generation of additional data and information on what is working.

Positive and responsible parenting, making schools safe, making use of internet safe, access to Sexual and Reproductive Health Information and Services; Protection of children in Humanitarian settings among others will constitute the core of VAC prevention





programming as a critical step in contribution to strengthening existing systems and services on VAC.

Government as the primary duty bearer of the mandate for Care and protection of children will continue to provide leadership on the elimination of all forms of VAC in the Country. The implementation framework for the National Child Policy (2020) is its attendant Five Year Implementation Plan (2020/2021-2024/5) that provides for an institutionalised coordination structure. The structure comprises a Child Well-being Steering Committee at all levels (National, District, Lower Local Government, Community) with the responsibility to collate synergy across Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). These structures exercise a child protection mandate, necessary to guide and monitor progress on delivery of commitments made by various stakeholders.

In summary, Uganda commits to the following:

- I. Promote positive/responsible parenting;
- II. Equip parents and caregivers with appropriate information to keep children safe at home, and within the community;
- III. Eliminate all forms of violence against children in all settings;
- IV. Make the internet safe for children;
- V. Make schools safe, non-violent and inclusive;
- VI. Protect children from all forms of violence in humanitarian settings;
- VII. Strengthen systems, services and networks to prevent and respond to violence against children;
- VIII. Increase access to age appropriate information on Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights;
- IX. Increase investment in research to generate data on violence against children in Uganda to inform policy and legal reforms and programming; and
- X. Build the capacity of the media to prevent and respond to violence against children.

I call upon all Ugandans to work tirelessly to make violence against children a matter of history in our country.

FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY

