

GBV PREVENTION FORUM (GBVPF)



Annual Forum Report 2020



CUSTODIAN'S MESSAGE:



structures to work since they are the most affected and at-risk group. The 16 Days of Activism is the flagship platform for women and girls' rights and fighting GBV from an international perspective, aiming at ending gender inequalities and achieving the Sustainable Development Goal number 5. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a heavy effect on access to justice and the enjoyment of human rights for both women and girls, since studies and reports have identified them as vulnerable groups. Above all, social isolation led to the escalation of violence against women, especially in rural communities. The effects of COVID-19 prompted WDF and the membership of GBV Prevention Forum to conduct analysis and basic research to inform policy and other mechanisms that affect the wellbeing of women and girls in our communities.

We hope our readers of this report will be inspired and that we will collectively and continuously work together to make Uganda a country fit for all women and girls.

Thank you for walking this journey with the #ButterflyTeam to make our dreams a reality for the GBV Prevention Forum!

With heartfelt gratitude,

Jockas Matte
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Dear Reader,

The year 2020 had us face numerous challenges, especially in relation to the right of women and young girls in Uganda and the world at large. Wilmat Development Foundation, being the lead partner and custodian of this report, puts us at a mileage to acknowledge the tremendous work by the research team for the leadership and the support from partners towards this assessment survey.

2020 is a milestone year, as it is both the 25-year commemoration of the ICPD25 and the International Community campaign on "Accelerating the promise". It also had some key anniversaries, among them: the 75th anniversary of establishment of the UN, the 25th anniversary since the Beijing Declaration, the 10th Anniversary for UN Women and the 5th Anniversary since the adoption of SDGs. Yet, young people have not really received any support beyond paper commitments, and not much has been done to concretely position them on the world stage. This research highlights the need to support structural mechanisms, such as sexual reproductive health rights awareness, as an opportunity for women and girls to work together in setting



CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS:

Youth needs and their vulnerability are becoming an African crisis: according to the UNDP report, Sub Saharan Africa has the most socially and economically challenged youths in the world. This was also reflected by the National Housing and Population Report of 2016, that pointed out an increase in youth social-economic vulnerability from 25% to 32.5%. This percentage will triple with the increase of the population.

The report also indicated that, as the vulnerability gap widens, there is the likelihood of a high exposure of women and young girls to the manifestation of Gender Based Violence related issues. Such a crisis is characterized by rampant recidivism, unemployment, lawlessness among other issues.

Nowadays, the Ugandan population is composed by 75% of youth, among which the 65% is below the social-economic vulnerability gap (below poverty line). We can assist to a real socio-economic crisis. Moreover, it should be noted that almost a quarter of the youth population is made of young women, that have been exposed to all forms of violence.

The government and other international actors have embarked on policies and mechanisms to address these challenges; nevertheless, their logical conclusion is still wanting.







INTRODUCTION:

The year 2020 has witnessed a lot of challenges in the line of empowerment of women and young girls. At the beginning of the year, the world anticipated milestones towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals as well as the other global agenda towards women and young girls' resilience and equality.

The Gender Based Violence (GBV) Prevention Forum is an annual activity undertaken by Wilmat Development Foundation in conjunction with Rescue Women Foundation, Anthill Foundation and Einstein Rising Uganda.

It represents an opportunity for women and young girls to evaluate and address the challenges they are facing on the social, economic, political and cultural level, and that that have for long affected their development and livelihood.

In 2020 the GBV prevention forum established the need to intensify classical and elementary strategies to advance practices in advocacy, and to strengthen the legal and institutional framework towards the prevention of GBV in communities.

In the outbreak of a global pandemic, women faced a lot of segregation and discrimination: in the 2020 GBV Assessment report for Uganda, it was underlined that policies and legislations, as well as other factors, were hampering women and girls' empowerment. Moreover, in 2020 the forum aimed to equip stakeholders, within Uganda and beyond, towards GBV prevention policy advocacy, gender rights and fast-tracking of CEDAW, Maputo Protocol and the Beijing Plan of Action.

To make it more meaningful and engaging, the forum was held during the commemoration of the 16 Days of Activism, in December 2020, in Kampala.

The forum highlighted key interventions to address the main challenges highlighted by the report. The 2020 GVB prevention forum campaign led to the introduction of GBV Prevention Dialogues across Uganda, GBV Caravans in the region and GBV-Prevention Advocacy Ambassadors where trained by key stakeholders and partners.

The Forum focused on reaching out to the youths, particularly young women and girls who have been classified as victims of GBV, and for doing so it used the various media platforms.





DESCRIPTIONS AND JUSTIFICATION

From the discussions with the key affected persons in communities, 50% of the respondents and participants stated that Gender-Based Violence is a term used to refer to any harmful act perpetrated against someone's will, based on the gender differences between females and males. The forum campaign found out that in contemporary African societies, and all over the world, GBV continues to be of great concern with challenges emanating from various factors, such as the predominance of patriarchal mindsets, policy and legal frameworks, cultural practices, and poverty.

Considering the global estimates of Africa having the youngest population, Ugandan youths (especially young women and girls) are considered to be the most at cross roads, a condition that instigates their susceptibility to violence.

According to the 2020 GBV Assessment Report, the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the various forms of vulnerability of women and young girls. The report also accounts for an escalation in GBV cases experienced by young women and girls during the lockdown. The campaign also found out that while several factors could be attributed to the socio-economic vulnerability of the aforementioned violence, the high-level exclusion in decision and policy-making processes hinders the effective participation and contribution of women and girls towards GBV prevention processes.

The forum campaign also worked closely with key stakeholders to address the current wide knowledge gaps: the existing programs and instruments at the national, continental or international levels are barely known or appreciated. This leaves key stakeholders and victims of GBV less informed.

Considering such background, the forum provided young women and girls, as well as Governments, Civil Society Organizations and other key stakeholders, with a space for effective engagement and consultation for youth inclusion in all processes at all levels.

The forum campaign also created a platform for the cross-fertilization of ideas between the youths and the relevant national government and regional leaders, in an effort to establish Gender Based Violence Prevention mechanisms and strategies.





WORKING TO ADDRESS GBV AMIDST COVID-19:

According to the findings of the forum partners, GBV cases increase during every type of emergency, be it in this year the COVID-19 pandemic. The forum noted the need to develop response programs that can support women and girls, often disrupted during public health emergencies – although their needs may in fact be amplified.

The campaign also found out that the pre-existing as well as predominant toxic social norms and gender inequalities, economic and social stress caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with restricted movement and social isolation measures, led to an exponential increase in GBV.

The forum also noted that there is a consensus among GBV experts that essential forms of GBV response services must continue to be provided to ensure that affected survivors with urgent concerns are able to access care providers. In 2020 in particular women and girls faced several challenges: personal protective equipment (PPE) and other essential supplies were often in short supply, or not even prioritized to GBV response or any elements of sensitivity; moreover, while certain activities can be adapted using the internet, cell phones or other remote means, this cannot be done in many settings with limited connectivity or access to these forms of technology.

This unique context then called for a flexible, adaptive and layered approach, to ensure that life-saving services continue to be made available without compromising the safety of GBV caseworkers and that of GBV victims.





KATWE SKILLS CENTER

*PROVIDING POSITIVE ALTERNATIVES TO
AT RISK YOUTH POPULATIONS*



AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

The main objective of the 2020 forum campaign was to advance youth participation in both formulation and implementation of Gender Based Violence Prevention initiatives at an international, regional and national level, through the following targets:

- Providing a platform for all stakeholders to deliberate on gender-strategic measures for the promotion of sustainable GBV prevention mechanisms;
- Establishing GBV prevention evidence research and baseline information on the most impactful and sustainable GBV prevention and advocacy initiatives;
- Creating output documents for policy formulation on GBV Prevention;
- Engaging policy makers, opinion leaders and experts from governments and regional bodies on measures to effectively promote consultation and inclusion.

CAMPAIGN ACTIVATIONS AND METHODOLOGY:

The GBV Prevention Forum was organized around the theme of Enhancing a substantial strategy towards sustainable GBV prevention mechanisms.

Ahead of the Forum, a series of mobilization activities were conducted in different parts of Uganda: Community GBV Prevention Dialogues championed by local leaders, Online opinion poll and a baseline survey on GBV-prevention strategies, GBV prevention Caravans, Partnership Meetings, GBV Prevention Forum and lobby meetings with policy makers with the aim of spurring and enriching discussions at the annual forum itself.

The Forum highlighted interests and submissions from various international, regional and domestic actors in the GBV Prevention sector and stakeholders from Governments, regional bodies, Civil Society Organizations, private sector and academia. These included students and the Human rights department of St. Luis University of Spain (Madrid).

This created vigilant, concerned and actively engaged participation in the promoting sustainable GBV prevention mechanisms and advocacy platforms.





NARRATIVE OF THE METHODOLOGY:

i) Community GBV Prevention Dialogues:

As the way of reaching out and involving local community people, the forum’s approach was to hold community dialogues from the local council level to the district level, as well as to hold regional discussion in various parts of Uganda, in order to discuss issues of Gender Based Violence within their localities. In this aspect, the forum team introduced neighborhood assemblies in various regions of Uganda as a system towards early warning and early response to GBV threats and its escalation at the grassroots level.



ii) Opinion poll and baseline survey on GBV Prevention strategies:

The forum conducted evidence-based research, virtual and on the field, on matters of Gender Based Violence in the most at-risk districts of Uganda. The forum subsequently provided a report which was presented to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Uganda. Report findings were also discussed with the Human Rights Department of St. Louis University of Spain (Madrid). The report highlighted key areas of intervention and bottlenecks and gave some recommendations.



iii) GBV Prevention Caravans:

The forum will conduct regional GBV prevention Caravans in 3 (three) regions of Uganda (Central, West, East and North), with the aid of our partners. The aim is to stimulate local community discussions about the relevance of GBV prevention policies, programs and issues (also with a cultural perspective) within the respective regions and to find out appropriate and specific solutions. The forum team used the local leadership to support interventions and mobilize participants in the various campaign engagements. These caravans were very instrumental and used as a basis for aiding research on policies and programs as well as mechanism towards GBV prevention within the country.



WILMAT DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION
Enriching Communities

iv) Stakeholders' Meetings:

The forum team had various platforms tailored to involve the relevant stakeholders, all of them potential funders and supporters to the 2020 GBV prevention campaign. Due to the spread of COVID-19, some meetings were held online. Some noteworthy stakeholders included the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Austrian Embassy (via online correspondence), the Anthill Foundation, the Rescue Women Foundation, Enable Uganda (via online correspondence) and the Human Rights Department of St. Louis University of Spain (Madrid).





FOUNDATION
Communities



MAISHA MZURI PROGRAM
Travel. Train. Transform

PARTICIPANTS OF THE YEAR:

The forum campaign had a participation of 80% women and 20% young girls and men from different regions of Uganda. They joined our discussions held in an online (ZOOM) platform, that provided a bi-weekly dialogue with the Human Rights Department of St. Louis University of Spain (Madrid), domestically with University students from Kyambogo University, Makerere University, Gulu University and Uganda Christian University from Northern, Eastern, Western and Central Uganda.

SUB-REGIONS IN UGANDA



- SUB-REGIONS**
- ACHOLI
 - CENTRAL
 - EAST CENTRAL
 - ELGON
 - KARAMOJA
 - LANGO
 - SOUTH WESTERN
 - TESO
 - WEST NILE
 - WESTERN

Credits: UBOS



APPENDIX:

1. REPORT LINKS

- <https://wdfug.org/Publications/Reports/GBV-Prevention-Forum-Baseline-Findings-2020.pdf>
- <https://wdfug.org/Publications/Reports/GB-VPF-Presser-and-Position-Paper-Finale-2020.pdf>
- <https://wdfug.org/Publications/Reports/Youth4Investment-University-Workshops-Report-2019.pdf>
- <https://wdfug.org/Publications/Reports/Vocational-Skills-Development-Survey-Report-2019.pdf>

2. VIDEO LINKS

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0mqcYT8r4Vw>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J3ZsERwiKww>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1fQk118Q2FI>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5ZQmulWzU0>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZVLJ8zNdKY>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J3ZsERwiKww>





CONSORTIUM OF THE YEAR 2020:



WILMAT DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION
Enriching Communities



RESCUE WOMEN FOUNDATION




EINSTEIN RISING



**SAINT LOUIS
UNIVERSITY
MADRID**





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