

2015

DELAY MARRIAGE,
PROMOTE SCHOOLING
FOR UGANDAN GIRLS
PROJECT REPORT

JOY FOR CHILDREN
UGANDA



Sylvia, the project officer from Joy for Children speaking with participants

Introduction

Since the beginning of the year, with your support we went ahead to prevent girls from becoming victims of child marriages as a result of customs prevalent in the rural area of Karangura sub county, Kabarole district. We held bought and gave out text books to girls in Kibwa and Mahyoro primary schools and held a planning meeting with community local

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leaders, police, and other key stakeholders in order to raise awareness and bring child marriage to an end. One of the key strategies was coming up a bi-law against child marriage.

We utilized the little resources, to buy books for children in two primary schools, created awareness, held meetings with local leaders and carried out follow up meeting with local leaders to end child marriages in Karangura Sub County. We also held radio talk shows on three fm radio stations of Jubilee fm, Hits fm, and Life fm to raise mass awareness throughout the district and beyond. Before this project, child marriage was considered a source of income to many families of girls, but the bi-law against marriage has created a lot of impact to girls. After being sensitized, we have received requests from other sub counties and neighbouring districts of Kyenjojo and Bundibugyo to scale up our activities to those places. The police, who otherwise looked the other way due lack of information, also took action, setting an example for those parents who despite receiving information insisted to allow marriages for their daughters. Since our involvement, the child marriages in the sub county have decreased.

This report highlights activities carried under the project entitled “*Delay marriage, promote schooling for Ugandan girls*” which is funded by Global Giving UK through the online fundraising. The activities included a follow meeting with the community leaders held at Karangura Sub county, Kabarole district.

Follow up meeting to end child marriage with the community leaders of Karagura Sub County.





Participants at the follow up meeting

The follow up meeting for the local leaders was held on 21st /05/2015 and facilitated by John Aturinde from Joy for children Uganda. It was attended by 23 participants who included the Sub County chief, community development officer, district counsellors, women counsellors at the sub county level, LC 2 and LC 1 chairpersons, and the officer in Charge of Sub county police. The discussion reviewed the progress regarding ending child marriages following the discussions held in February 2015.

There is increased realization that child marriage is a harmful practice and needs to stop. Due to our continued engagements with the local leaders, a bi-law against child marriage was formulated in Karangura Sub County by local leaders. The bi-law has made a significant impact in the community, in Karangura sub county unlike before there were only two cases of child marriage since our engagement with the local leaders in February 2015 and because of the fear to be imprisoned two couples involved in child marriage escaped their villages and went to live in the neighboring district of Bundibugyo.

Reviewing progress on the actions carried out by local leaders since our meeting in February 2015

- The local leaders went into communities to meet and discuss the issue of child marriages with parents. Many people were not aware of the effects child marriages

have on their children. Communities were sensitised on the detrimental effects on children that come about as a result of child marriages. These were carried out using platforms such as burial ceremonies, parties, in churches, community saving groups, as well as community meetings.

- The leaders also informed communities were also informed about the bi-law that was put in place to end child marriage
- Parish level meetings were held in which community members and other local leaders were informed about the effects of child marriages to children and the measures that have been put in place to end child marriage in the sub county of Karangura
- Three radio talk shows were held and so many people responded by calling and asking questions, appreciating and giving suggestions on how to end child marriage. The talk show received so many calls, people called from other districts asking Joy for children to extend their services so that their daughters can be saved, there were also requests from other sub counties to assist local leaders to replicate these measures in other sub counties.

Way forward

- The leaders in the community agreed to set more strict measures to ensure child marriages come to an end. They resolved that a penalty of 500,000 shillings will be paid by the parents of the boy whether the married couples escape to other districts or not.
- The bi-law will be presented to the council in June meeting for formal approval
- Mobilise parents for sensitization about the dangers of child marriage and the bi-law against child marriages.
- Joy for children to extend their services to other schools in the sub county so that all schools can benefit from the project.
- Provide families with self sustaining income generating activities such as mushroom growing, goat keeping, poultry, and piggery projects.
- Involve Lc1 chairperson in the registration of newborns.
- All children of school going age should be in schools with the help of the local leaders.
- Continue to conduct radio talk shows every at least one every month about child marriages
- Present birth certificates for every child joining primary one.

- Print and disseminate IEC materials on Child marriage to the local leaders and community members.

Lessons learned

During our work we discovered that we need to expand our outreach activities to cover more communities and schools. Besides our work at the sub county level, there is need scale up our activities to cover all sub counties and the district. In the future, we will like to expand our work to more provinces, create awareness on the newly passed law, and mobilize top level officials.