



# Strengthening Community level **Child** **Protection** Systems and Structures



**Reaching the Most Vulnerable Children  
in East Africa Region**

by Advocacy Learning Center

September 2013



WorldVision International is a Christian relief, development and advocacy organization dedicated to working with children, families and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the root causes of poverty and injustice.

## OUR MISSION

Our mission is to follow our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in working with the poor and oppressed to promote human transformation, seek justice and bear witness to the good news of the Kingdom of God.

## VISION

Our Vision for every child, life in all its fullness; Our prayer for every heart, the will to make it so.

## CORE VALUES

**We are Christian.**

● In the Abundance of God's love, we find our call to serve others

**We are committed to the poor.**

● We are called to relieve their need and suffering, engaging a relationship between the poor and the affluent.

**We value people**

● We regard all people as created and loved by God, each with a unique claim to dignity, respect and intrinsic worth.

**We are stewards.**

● We are faithful to the purpose for which we receive resources and manage them in a manner that brings maximum benefits to the poor.

**We are partners**

● As members of the WorldVision Partnership, we are accepting the obligations of joint participation, shared goals, and mutual accountability.

**We are responsive**

● We are responsive to life – threatening emergencies as well as to complex socio-economic situations requiring long-term development

## CHILD WELLBEING OUTCOMES

WorldVision recognises children as a gift and a heritage of communities. Children, however, are the most vulnerable victims of underdevelopment, conflicts and disasters.

We therefore strive to ensure that children;-

1. **Enjoy good health** – Children are well nourished, are protected from infectious diseases and injury.
2. **Are educated for life** – Children read, write and use numeracy skills. Children make good judgements, can protect themselves, manage emotions and communicate ideas. Adolescents are ready for economic opportunity. Children access and complete basic education.
3. **Love God and their neighbours and environment**– Children become aware of and experience God's love, children enjoy positive relationships with peers, family and community members. Children value and care for others and their environment, have hope and vision for the future.
4. **Are cared for, protected and participate**– children care for in a loving, safe, family and community environment with safe place to play. Parents or caregivers provide well for their children. Children are celebrated and registered at birth. Children are respected participants in decisions that affect their lives

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# Foreword

The Advocacy Learning Centre (ALC) is pleased to share short stories that have been compiled by the Child Protection and Advocacy (CPA) project being implemented in Uganda and Tanzania. The significant momentum gained by CPA approach particularly in Uganda and East Africa region in general in the last 2 years has led to effective brands of local-level change agents for child rights advocacy within communities that are designed to influence policies and citizen empowerment for child-protection. The approach was able to sensitize and empower local communities to protect children from abuse, neglect, exploitation and other forms of violence. Furthermore, the project supported children, their families and communities to access protective services as well as work towards creating safer environments within families to realize children's rights to protection. This has fostered positive social change.

The multi-country Child Protection and Advocacy (CPA) Project, which is implemented by the Advocacy Learning Centre of the East African Region Office (EARO) and based in Uganda, has made tremendous strides in supporting and increasing local community and civil society participation at both the local and national levels. The project has influenced policy formulation and implementation of programmes that protect children from abuse, neglect, exploitation and all other forms of violence. The project works closely

with World Vision Uganda to achieve the latter's long-term commitment to child protection, as reflected in the current FY 2013-15 National Strategy. The national programme seeks to scale up protection of girls and boys from neglect, exploitation and other forms of abuse by strategically contributing to functional formal and informal community-based child protection systems by strengthening them through capability building, technical support and support linkages.

In this edition, we showcase how community child protection volunteers in partnership with civil society organizations in Bugiri, Uganda - collected and presented evidence of child abuse in their communities to district policy-makers who in turn committed to legislate and pass laws that protect children from abuse. This publication further shares the launch of End-Child-Marriage-Campaign in Uganda that was held in Hoima, 15 members of parliament committed to supporting national policy and legal framework formulation that would eliminate harmful social and cultural practices against children. We also showcase the challenges children with disabilities face in Tanzania to access education and healthcare services.

We commend communities, children and all child actors who have worked tirelessly to make this world a safe place for children.

Happy reading.

**Njeri Kinyoho**

*Advisor, Advocacy and Justice for children (EARO)*



# Setting a Shared agenda for child protection.

## The case of Mukulat and Nakombo communities in Tanzania

**A**s part of a suggested six-phase process for implementing the Child Protection Advocacy (CPA) project model at community level, the people of Mukulat and Nakombo initiated a process of analysing pertinent child protection issues through child protection dialogues to ascertain the root causes of underlying challenges in the existing systems (using the ADAPT for child protection). The dialogues, which took place in May, 2013 for Mukulat and Nakombo attracted 64 male and female representatives from police, social welfare, the district community development office, CBOs, the health and religious sectors.

The dialogues revealed high incidences of child abuse commonly practiced across all the areas including; child labour, early marriage, female genital mutilation, defilement and sodomy, child trafficking, denial of education, girl child discrimination, child assault and battering.

The dialogues also highlighted further similarities in causes of child abuse across the two districts which in both instances highlighted ignorance and poverty as the highest ranking issues. Others included; divorce and separation of parents, harmful traditional practices, lack of moral values in communities, loss or demise of parents and guardians, unclear and conflicting child protection

laws i.e. Law of Marriage Act, CAP 26. Enticement of easy money in form dowry, rampant corruption by some law enforcement officers promotes impunity around child related offences, polygamy, poor health and prolonged illness of caretakers, physical disabilities of some parents and children, religious conversions that lead to some women being divorced, non-enforceability and application of laws by law enforcement organs, workaholicism among parents who neglect their parental duties of guiding their children.

Both districts list common signs of child abuse that had stood out as beacons of a degraded society throughout the year. Some of the most outstanding signs were the ever increasing number of street children. Maasai community's culture of forcing children into early marriages and boys are charged with herding livestock instead of attending schools.

The issue of child labour is evident on many bus stops and markets in Ngarantoni and Kisongo. The exploitation of children in extracting 'Moramu,' a type of a sticky soil at Kisongo and Oldonyosambu area is a form of child labour. Children also cook and sell food at Ngarantoni, Oldonyosambu and Kisongo. There are "secret brothels" in Mukulat where children are sexually exploited.

The dialogues revealed a high incidence of child abuse commonly practiced

## Evidence of child abuse cases in Nakombo Division and Same District in general

There is a rise in number of domestic child workers in Same town.

A parent in Same town was reported to have committed incest with his younger daughter who was a standard six pupil).

In Ruvu and Kisiwani wards, boys are subjected to child labour and thus being exploited.

In Kisiwani Ward, a little girl of standard 4 was forced into marriage by her father.

There are children at Same bus stop hawking biscuits, bottled water and chewing gums during school time.

A child was severely beaten up by her parents for a minor mistake at Vumari.

A teacher raped a pupil (a girl) at Msindo Primary school.

In Kisiwani and Mwembe wards, eight children were impregnated.

The number of vulnerable children is on the increase, with many heading households.

As a result of the findings throughout the detailed discussions, participants urged community leaders to sensitize community members on children's rights and responsibilities as well as their roles as parents. They also urged leaders to fight harmful traditional practices that affect children within their communities.

They also demanded that the local government authorities update the District Register for most vulnerable children; cooperate with other

stakeholders such as courts, medical doctors and police in taking care of children who seek or are in need of legal redress as a result of child abuse; Train community members on how to prevent and respond to children who have been abused; Provide training for more teachers, starting with primary school teachers since many dropouts are due to

unbalanced teacher-to-pupil ratio; Pass and enforce laws that are relevant for the day-to-day work of ensuring children are protected and maintained. Ensure the District Security Committee of District Council work in the best interest of children, especially the Most Vulnerable Children (MVC) by clearly spelling out their plans to reduce

chances of child abuse viz-aviz their living conditions. This can be done by ensuring that they are issued with birth certificates, have access to education and are guaranteed care and love.

- Through services of Social Welfare Officers and Community Development Officers, the District Council should undertake the role of training District Councillors on most vulnerable children. The Child Act, especially sub-section vii) of section 95, which talks about the duty of local government to create safeguards for children. More so, the Social Welfare Officers need to influence a change of mindset of the community towards child rights. This leads to behavioural change that, in turn, helps improve service provision accountability and coordination among duty bearers.

- Revive Junior Council at the district level to empower children to play an

**participants urged community leaders to sensitize community members on children's rights and responsibilities**



○ active role in their protection, including the duty to report abuses.

- Revive Most Vulnerable Children Committees to be in charged of issues affecting vulnerable children.
- Local government acts should see the need to budget for children's wellbeing using both the internally generated district revenues with assistance from the central government.

In addition, the participants recommended that the Legislature should push for the enactment of laws which criminalize marriage of under-age girls and do away with Marriage Acts whose provisions seem to do just the opposite.

- The government should recruit more Social Welfare Officers and commission them in District Council at ward levels

to deal with child protection issues and follow up cases of child abuse in courts. The government should be willing and committed to pursue policies and enforcement of laws that protect children from abuse.

- The government should establish social welfare departments within each district council to help with budgetary allocations for child protection issues.
- The government should allocate more money to fund child protection budgets and actively participate in enabling children to speak out and demand for their rights. It should also build capacity of government duty bearers as an important step towards changing community mindset on child protection issues.



*District leaders after attending a child protection dialogue*

### Measures to deal with specific child protection issues in Nakombo

1. The head of community development department should make a special presentation at the December 2013 Same District Council Budget Review meeting highlighting ways to fast-track child protection issues for 2013/2014. The Same District Councillors have
2. In collaboration with development partners, the district should establish a district fund for community members to deal with child protection issues. Contributions to the fund shall

unanimously agreed to allocate more funds for child protection.

- Contributions to the fund shall

- also come from fines of child abuse offences.
3. That District Council's State Attorney should draft a by-law on child protection and place an announcement for a 30-day public participation and that by February 2014, the by-law should be published by the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister for enforcement within the district.
  4. That World Vision Tanzania should, in collaboration with other child protection actors, coordinate and lobby for mainstreaming Registration, Insolvency and Trusteeship Agency (RITA) administration at division level

- to enable poor families register their children.
5. That during child protection trainings, birth registration should be emphasized.
6. That the police should sensitize communities on the importance of reporting incidences of child abuse.
7. That the District Council's State Attorney should work with police to educate children in schools on what constitutes criminal offences and steps to follow in preventing, protecting and reporting crimes committed against them.

## Bugiri District Local Government commits to pass a local legislation that **outlaws** children engaging in commercial sex

**B**ugiri District Local Government resolved to draft an ordinance that will see action taken against individuals engaged in promoting child-prostitution and defilement in an effort to scale up presentation of data on child protection and response mechanisms in the district. This followed an Advocacy Learning Centre supported survey that was conducted jointly with Child Protection and Advocacy (CPA) group members of the Nabukalu and Buwunga communities in collaboration with other child actors in the district. According to the findings, 20 out of 40 sex workers in Naluwelele and Busowa townships are girls below 18 years, with 15 of the 40 sampled respondents confessing to have started sex

work when they were below 15 years of age.

Under the guise of providing victims with a base for operation the survey revealed that children are employed as waitresses and cleaners in hotels, bars and lodges. The interviewed children revealed that they pay fees ranging from UGX. 6,000-8,000/= (\$2-3) to the bar/hotel/ lodge owners to use their premises as a base for meeting clients! The interviewed children who engage in commercial sex works expressed a desire to quit this trade if they get an alternative means of livelihood. They also said they needed psychosocial rehabilitation because their work is not only traumatizing but stigmatizing.



***A girl child discussing the survey findings during the child protection dialogue in Bugiri***



According to interviewed children engaged in commercial sex work, they are greatly stigmatized because they are viewed as social misfits and treated as outcasts due to their work. This leaves them socially disadvantaged, which further places them in a precarious position where they are prone to abuse by their clients and “bosses”. Even in cases of abuse, there are limited opportunities for recourse, because of judgmental attitude by communities and service providers.

What seems not to have sunk in is the fact that, besides the dangers that come with sex trade which these children are psychologically unprepared for, having sex at a young age is a form of defilement that is punishable by law. And this cuts across every form of having sex with children, including child marriages that are rampant in especially Nsono and Masita parishes in Nankoma sub-county, Bugiri district in Uganda. Discussions with parents from these two parishes revealed that parents do not value education, particularly for the girl child, which is wrongly perceived to benefit the prospective husband’s family. Their reasoning is that since they managed to keep homes despite their limited or lack of education, it is unnecessary if not wastage of resources to educate girls whose role in marriage would be more or less a replication of theirs.

Another issue we identified is that, parents don’t adequately provide for their children and this extends to school meals at lunch time for mostly the day scholars. This makes especially the girl child easy prey to sexual predators whose timely and much needed offers are irresistible .

In addition, some villages in Uganda like Nawantega in Nankoma sub-county have limited clean water sources and since it is always children travelling long distances to fetch water, they become easy targets for defilers who way lay them on the way to or from water points.

Parents also expose children to more risks of being sexually abused by engaging them in petty trades that extend into the night hours. For instance, it is common to find children hawking food stuffs like groundnuts and maize in bars late in the evening, which greatly exposes them to risks of physical and psychological abuse.

There are also issues of high prevalence rate of domestic violence and of broken homes that force children to run away from home and end up in town centres where they end up engaging in sex work for survival. Idleness and alcoholism have exacerbated issues of child neglect and abuse. Men have become idle and to pass time, they engage in drinking



from morning to evening which is a form of neglect to provide for their children.

Presenting recommendations of the survey to the policy-makers and local district leaders was contained in a statement read by a child on 6<sup>th</sup> September in Bugiri town. In it, the CPA group members called upon the District Local Government to act on the following:

1. Form a vibrant district level child protection advocacy coalition that includes all stakeholders
2. Pass an ordinance prohibiting bars/lodges, video operators and hotel owners from employing under-age children
3. Ensure that intensive awareness and sensitization campaigns are carried by different stakeholders on children's rights and ensure responsible parenting is nurtured.



***A child presenting a statement before the district leadership cadres that included the District Chairperson, Council Speaker, Resident District Commissioner***

While addressing various stakeholders that included children, child actors, sub-county councillors, people with disabilities, District Probation and Social Welfare Officer, the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, the Resident District Commissioner, the Speaker of District Council, the Police, Health Workers, teachers among others, the District Local Council Chairperson, Mr. Azalwa Malijani Baluboleile said,

***“Uganda Children’s Act of 2008, article 8, prohibits the employment of children in harmful employment and stipulates that ‘no child shall be employed or engaged in any activity that may be harmful to his or her health, education or mental, physical or moral development. But, despite the existence of this legal provision, child prostitution (is being blatantly practised at a very high rate in Bugiri district. This has exposed children to one of the most dangerous forms of child labour and abuse that robs them of their childhood. Therefore, as a district council, we are going to come up with an ordinance that shall curb the vice.”***



**Bugiri District Council Chairperson flanked by other District Leaders making a commitment to fight child prostitution in the District.**

*“It is the responsibility of the state, together with parents to care for the children as stipulated in the constitution of the Republic of Uganda in article 36 Clauses 2, 3 and 4.*

*I appeal to all relevant stakeholders, including politicians and government technical officers to join the struggle against child abuse by supporting the welfare of children at all district levels.”*



**The Resident District Commissioner flanked by the Council Speaker making submissions at the child protection dialogue**





# Civil Society Organizations in Uganda launch **End Early Marriage Campaign**

**C**oordinated by Uganda Child Rights NGO Networks (UCRNN) and led by World Vision Uganda, the lead actors of child advocacy and protection launched an End-Child-Marriage-Campaign in the Western district of Hoima on 12th June 2013 at Kakindo Primary School. The launch came at the heart of increasing cases of early marriages in Uganda. According to ANPPCAN Uganda Chapter's situation

analysis report of 2011, child marriages (children below 18 years) was at 46%, with 10% of deliveries in Mbale district alone being by children below 15 years. Further surveys by the World Vision Uganda in the districts of Kiboga, Kyankwanzi, Bundibugyo, Hoima, Oyam, Soroti and Masaka, revealed that child marriage and child neglect were the most rampant forms of child abuse.

**Members of Parliament, civil society leaders, government officials and children marching at the launch of End-Child-Marriage-Campaign in Kakindo**



## Background

World Vision holds the view that it is too early for children below 18 years to be married off .

WorldVision also observes that the practice constitutes one of the most prevalent violations of children's rights. Early marriage is especially more harmful to children under the age of 16. Children married at an early age are denied an opportunity to acquire

education; they also suffer poor health due to life threatening complications that are associated with early pregnancy. The complications arise because their bodies are not yet developed enough to bear children. In addition, if compounded by poor nutrition, it leads to long-term psychological and physical problems, all of which constitute violations of child rights. Early marriages also

entrenches the cycle of poverty as it extends the risk of abuse and violence throughout adult life. Any situation in which boys or girls are forced or coerced, enticed, induced or tricked into marriage is wrong.

CEDAW article 16 states that, 'The betrothal and the marriage of a child shall have no legal effect, and all necessary action, including legislation, shall be taken to specify a minimum age for marriage'. Other international agreements related to child marriage are: the *UN Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages*, the *African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child*, and the *Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa*.

Child marriage is a global problem that cuts across countries, cultures, races, religions and ethnicities. It denies the girl-child her right to health, secure life and choice on when and whom to marry. It cuts short girls' education and traps them, their families and communities in a cycle of poverty.

## Campaign process

The overall goal of the campaign is to contribute to the reduction of all forms of child abuse by strengthening child protection systems, policies and structures. For this to be attained, we shall have to use evidence to mobilize key stakeholders, build coalitions, create and promote institutional partnerships, mount public rallies and media campaigns and come up with outreach programmes as well as support both the local and national level policy engagements.

Through its Advocacy and Justice for Children department, with technical support from the Advocacy Learning Centre, World Vision Uganda collaborated with the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, National Child Protection Working Group to organize a breakfast meeting with Members of Parliament and other stakeholders in child protection. The purpose of the breakfast meeting was to popularize the campaign and enlist support of strategic partners. After the breakfast meeting, UCRNN convened national child rights organizations to draft a civil society statement that was presented at the launch.

**“Men  
have  
become  
idle”**



**Ms. Stella Odong, Executive Director of UCRNN reading a CSO statement during the launch**



In the statement read by the Executive Director of Uganda Child Rights NGO Network, Stella Odong, on behalf of national civil society organizations working for children, demands were made urging the government to ensure the following:

**The government to:**

- Enforce registration of all births and marriages for effective implementation of laws on minimum marriage age.
- Enact by-laws and ordinances at the local government level aimed at alleviating early marriages in the communities.
- Create a clearly coordinated mechanism among key-line ministries to work on child protection issues.
- Enhance recruitment and training of social welfare staff at all levels.
- Empower survivors of child marriage by offering them opportunities to gain skills through education, provide support networks and create 'safe space' where girls can gather or meet away from home.

- Raise stakeholders' awareness on the negative impacts of child marriage.
- Create safety-nets for girls and young women who escape forced marriages, and often find themselves in violent, marriages.

**We call upon the communities to:**

- Encourage reporting of cases of child marriages
- Parents must ensure their children attend and complete school

**Non Governmental Organizations are urged to:**

- Mobilize and educate communities and families on dangers of early marriage
- Conduct community research on the effect of child marriage
- Provide psycho-social support to survivors of child marriage
- Support the implementation and strengthening of child protection mechanisms/structures from community to national level through increased funding and coordination.



**Members of Parliament holding their signed statements at End Early Marriage Campaign Launch.**



15 Members of the Ugandan Parliamentary Forum on children each made a written commitment to support amendments to the current laws, support increased budgetary allocations to children issues, work with other actors in their respective constituencies to raise the profile of child protection and support access to education and health services for children.

The guest of honour and Minister for Gender, Labour and Social Development, Mrs. Mary Okurut emphasized government's commitment to enact by-laws and ordinances that will protect children by reinforcing registration of births and provide psychosocial support to survivors of child marriage.



**Minister for Gender, Labour and Social Development Mrs. Mary Okurut (second left), flanked by WVU Staff and UCRNN Executive Director launch End Child Marriage campaign in Hoima**



# Understanding the challenges facing children with disabilities in Tanzania

## - The case of Nakombo and Mukulat communities

**T**hrough World Vision Tanzania, the Advocacy Learning Centre commissioned a fifteen-day exercise from 15th to 30th July 2013 to assess and evaluate opportunities and available resources and capacity structures for Children with Disabilities (CWDs), the level of participation of CWDs in decision-making and of People with Disabilities Organizations (PDOs) in promoting disability issues in Nakombo and Mukulat communities in Same and Arusha Districts respectively.

### Background

Existing statistics indicate that children with disabilities are among the most vulnerable groups. Often they are excluded in development processes. As a result close to 80 per cent of people with disabilities live in poverty. Data from UNESCO study, *The Flagship on Education for All and the Rights to Education for Persons with Disabilities* further reports that over 90% of children with disabilities do not receive education. The assessment dubbed “**Nothing about us without us**” on the plight of people with disability was also conducted in line with the principle of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The survey sought the opinions and experiences of children with disabilities. It is an integral part of World Vision Tanzania’s advocacy programme initiatives which evidently avails credible factors affecting the CWDs in the country.

### Methodology

During the study, primary and secondary data was collected through literature review, household survey and focus group discussion with key informants. Questionnaires were applied in field visits targeting CWDs and other members of the communities in the two ADPs of Nakombo and Mukulat. A total of 100 respondents participated in the study from both communities in which 16 were children representing 16 percent. Due to institutionalized bias and discrimination among some respondent tribes such as the Maasai community in Mukulat ADP, focused group discussions were conducted by selecting each group based on sex and age. Groups of women, children and men were then interviewed separately to give them an opportunity to voice their opinions on disability issues in their communities.

### Access to education services

The National Disability Policy passed in 2004 six years later enacted into law by the government of the Republic of Tanzania. The *Persons with Disabilities Act 2010* represents a comprehensive legislation on disabilities. The legislation provides for, among other things, establishment of key institutions responsible for disability issues and obligation of the government towards people with disabilities and basic rights of PWDs. Progress has been made to ensure that CWDs have access to education opportunities.

In Nakombo ADP, within Same District in Kilimanjaro Region, there are six centres (government owned primary schools) which cater for special needs education for CWDs. The District currently has over 130 children registered in these centres. There is also one private centre which provides care and services to children with disabilities.

In Mukulat there are five primary schools which enroll children with disabilities. In total, the schools have registered 49 CWDs, out of which 29 are those with albinism and 20 mixed CWDs.

On community perspectives on CWDs, 70 percent of the people interviewed think and believe that CWDs have chances to be enrolled in primary schools.

Although the findings of the assessment demonstrated that there are opportunities for CWDs to be enrolled for formal primary education, the quality of education after enrollment is low due to lack of skilled teachers as some schools do not have the basic equipment and specialized teachers needed to teach the CWDs.

Similarly, the assessment also demonstrated lack of secondary and technical education for children with disabilities which means most of them do not continue with education after primary school. About 80 percent of respondents in the household surveys are not aware of any technical or secondary school for training children with special needs.

### Access to healthcare

In line with government policy on health care, all children below five years are generally accorded free healthcare services and this includes children with disabilities. The government has designated special hospitals for PWDs including CWDs. In Mukulat ADP, there is at Olturumet DDH which has a psychiatric nurse who specializes in mentally challenged cases, although there has been only one recorded case involving

an under 18-year-old patient.

There are some NGOs and FBOs that offer healthcare services for CWDs in two districts. In Arusha district there is Sibusiso at Tengeru Ward which offers healthcare services for mentally challenged children and Community Care Coalition (CCC); at Oldonyosambu and Selian (KKKT) hospitals are all for children with disabilities aged between 0-20 years.

The assessment also observed that there is a gap in social services as most of these services, with an exception of healthcare services, are not provided to CWDs by the government. Furthermore, even in the two ADPs where WVT has a huge presence, the respondents have not been able to easily identify WVT as the key player in dealing with disability issues. It is quite known by its staff that WVT has pioneered at each ADP level the establishment of Community Care Coalition, but its presence is not seen by community members. The assessment has not been able to collect evidence that shows WVT has systematically engaged the communities, local government and other stakeholders in advocating for disability issues. Majority of the Respondents have identified WVT as a key player in livelihood issues, education and income generating activities.

*“there is a gap in social services”*

### Community understanding of disability issues

Some members in the communities showed very negative attitude towards the PWDs, which may be contributing to lack of awareness of the Disability Policy and the law of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2010. The magnitude of awareness in both Nakombo and Mukulat ADPs is still very minimal as large numbers of people do not value people living with disability in their societies. On the other hand, this situation is aggravated by the fact that at the local government level, there are very little resources and low awareness activities about CWDs/PWDs *viz-a-viz* the perception of the community members.



Lack of budget has also contributed to low awareness levels.

An officer in Same District Council asserted,

*“There are little funds allocated for PWDs in the national budget for each financial year. Taking an example of the financial year 2012/2013 our district was allocated Tsh1.9m for the disabled, the most vulnerable and the elderly. This amount cannot suffice to conduct and complete a survey to ascertain the numbers in each of the three groups and support the registered children in schools to get them the basic school needs. Even if we attempt to provide school uniforms and exercise books, these are services ought to be sustainable.”*

The study further discovered that discrimination and denial of social services to CWDs is very common among the

communities. Due to discrimination, stigmatization and cultural stereotypes, some families do not take the required steps to address issues that affect the welfare of CWDs. Only 10 percent of the total respondents mentioned that they would report to relevant legal enforcement institution in case a CWD is abused. This evidently demonstrates the fact that there is lack of strong legal protection mechanism which poses another challenge that the CWDs face. The communities do not feel strongly obliged to take actions to address the violation of CWDs’ rights because they themselves have perhaps violated some of those very rights. Household survey shows that majority of community members prefer not to report child abuse incidences at all.

## Participation of PWDs in decision-making processes

Although participation in decision making is recognised as one of the key indicators of good governance and the fact that children including CWDs need to participate in decision making in order to improve their livelihood and achieving social justice, the assessment discovered low awareness level at the national children forum such as the Junior Council of the United Republic of Tanzania (JCURT) and Tanzania Movement for and with Children (TMC). In Same district, the JCURT was established in 2008 at village, ward and district levels a Save the Children initiative. Nevertheless, the forum did not last long, and now there are no active Junior council forums at village or ward levels. Furthermore, even at the time when they were established, the representation and the voice of CWDs were not forth coming.

On the other hand, the JCURT has not been established in Arusha district. However, there are some other opportunities for CWDs to participate in other forums. In both Same and Arusha districts, there are other children forums such as *Mtoto wa Afrika Mwembe*

*Group, Baraza la Watoto Mashuleni* in Isindu ward, and *Haiba na Michezo* in Arusha District. Despite the existence of these forums, there is no clear data on the percentage of CWDs’ participation. Most people living with disabilities are not fully aware of their rights or opportunities because they are not sensitized. This is why people with disability are notably absent in leadership positions in the surveyed wards when they ought to be among the participants. Some respondents have expressed opinion that the PWDs only need food and shelter in household confines and cannot be trusted with leadership positions in their communities. One woman in Msindo ward in Nakombo ADP was quoted saying’

*“Watu wote wenye ulemavu hawana akili nzuri, hata uongozi hatuwezi kuwapa kwa sababu hawajasoma vizuri”*

Translation “All **people living with disabilities are not clever enough, we cannot elect them to leadership positions because they are not well educated’**



The participation of PWD/CWD is faced with a great challenge due to the fact that most of CWDs lack access to education, in addition to lacking support equipment and materials. The negative attitude is witnessed by one respondent who said,

*“Dhana ya kuwashirikisha watu wenye ulemavu katika maamuzi ni changamoto kubwa, kwani wengine wana matatizo ya akili hivyo hawana mchango wa mawazo, wengine hawasikii wala hawaongei Na wengine kutembea hawawezi, tutawasafirishaje? Hii imetuwia vigumu kwetu kuwaunganisha na kuwashirikisha.”*

Translation *“the aspect of involving people with disabilities in decision making is of a great challenge because some are mentally challenged, so they cannot give ideas. Some have hearing and speaking challenges, and others cannot walk, how can we get them to places of meetings? This has rendered it difficult to unite them and get them involved”*

Although CWDs are not restricted to join the JCURT, they are not empowered to realise their potential and value while participating in council meetings. Parents and guardians have a tendency of hiding their children with disabilities hence they cannot get them engaged in activities as other children.

## Capacity of People with Disability Organizations (PDOs) to promote the Disability Agenda

The study did not find the PDOs in Same District. However, there are organisations dealing with children in general like Save the Children and World Vision but no organisation is specifically established for CWDs. There is a PWDs association but it is dormant. It exists only by name, it has not yet established offices nor are they registered. In this case, very few PWDs know of its existence nor activities.

On the other hand, at Mukulat ADP, there are no organisations which deal with persons/ children with disabilities *per se*. The district however has many organisations providing services to children.

### Assessment, recommendations to promote CWDs situation

(a) The new legislation, the Persons with Disabilities Act, 2010 provides for establishment of disability committees at the Village, Ward and District Levels. Nakombo and Mukulat ADPs have an opportunity to advocate for formation of the disability committees at Mtaa, village and district levels. The committees must be empowered to perform their functions as provided under the disability policies and law.

(b) There is sufficient evidence on the ground that children’s forums such as Junior Council of the United Republic of Tanzania and Tanzania Movement for and with Children do not exist at the district level where Nakombo and Mukulat ADPs are located. It is highly recommended that Nakombo and Mukulat ADPs collaborate with other stakeholders to form one strong forum for children’s grievances that includes CWDs. WVT initiatives on children need to be integrated with government’s and other stakeholders’ initiatives to promote CWDs voices in the country.

(c) There is a need for Nakombo and Mukulat ADPs to find ways under the current programme to address advocacy for improved policy practices on disability issues. The National Disability Policy 2004 and Persons with Disability Act 2010 recognize basic rights for PWDs. Local level advocacy approaches like Citizens and Voice of Action (CVA) and Child Protection and Advocacy committees should also be empowered to advocate for policy change and promotion of disability issues.

- (d) The assessment discovered a big gap in awareness and stereotypes against CWDs. Awareness campaigns for the rights of the CWDs in communities and among decision-makers at village, ward and district levels can help communities and individuals to take positive actions in addressing disability issues.
- (e) There is lack of statistics or data relating to CWDs and PWDs in general. The Persons with Disability Law establishes the National Advisory Council for Persons with Disabilities which is mandated to maintain statistics data or a database and maintain a register of settlements for persons with disabilities. WVT, working with other actors, should advocate for formation of this important institution for promotion of the welfare of PWDs.
- (f) WVT should consider integrating disability issues more while developing project designs than treating CWDs as across cutting issue in the current programme strategy.
- (g) Although there exists at national level a Children Forum, the Junior Council of the

United Republic of Tanzania and Tanzania Movement for and with Children, these forums have not yet trickled down to the district and other lower levels. WVT should consider strengthening its linkages with other stakeholders, especially the local government authorities to form children forum where CWDs will be part of the programme. Furthermore, the strategic engagement is needed for the voices of children in the forums to be included in the national agenda of children.

- (h) Capacity of most of DPOs in the areas where the projects are implemented has been rather weak due to focus on social service provision despite the growing violation trends of CWDs' rights. It is prudent for WVT to consider carrying out organizational and technical capacity building of DPOs to enhance their effectiveness rights. They also need protection from stereotypes, discrimination and other forms of violations or abuse DPOs should be best placed to promote this agenda in a most sustainable way even after WVT has exited from these communities.



*Youth participating in a CWD assessment in Mukulat*





**Key contact:**

**Njeri Kinyoho**

*Advisor, Advocacy and Justice for children (EARO)*

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East Africa Regional Office  
Karen Road, Off Ngong Road  
P.O.BOX 133-00502  
Nairobi, Kenya.