

KASESE PLATFORM ADVOCACY NETWORK (KAPLANET)



RWENZORI REGION CONVENING 2024

THEME: PROMOTING INCLUSIVE CONVENING AGAINST MODERN SLAVERY IN RWENZORI REGION.

“Empowering survivors, Amplifying voices, catalyzing change”

VENUE: RWENZORI INTERNATIONAL HOTEL-KASESE

DATE: 2ND – 5TH SEPTEMBER, 2024

Introduction:

Founded in 2019, Kasese Platform Advocacy Network (KAPLANET) is an umbrella survivor led and focused non-profit community based organisations that exist to strengthen community support structures through enhancement of social justice, good health and empowerment of vulnerable survivors and marginalized groups in Kasese district and Rwenzori region at large. It envisions “An empowered, healthy and just free society”. Its mission is “To build and empower vibrant women and youth movements contributing to achieving sustainable development”.

Modern Slavery / Exploitation:

Modern slavery is when an individual is exploited by others for personal or commercial gain.

Modern slavery/ exploitation can take many forms i.e. forced marriages, child labour, forced labour and human trafficking including commercial sexual exploitation of children. According to ILO 2022, an estimated 50 million people are in modern slavery including 28 million in forced labour and 22 million in forced marriage. Almost one in eight of those in forced labour are children. More than half of these children are in commercial sexual exploitation. Most cases of forced labour (86%) are found in the private sector. Forced labour accounts for 27.6 million of those in modern

slavery and forced marriage for 22 million, or nearly one of every 150 people in the world. An estimated 5.4 out of every 1,000 people are enslaved in the world. (A21.org)

Slavery is more stoppable than ever before and that is why we are need to stand as a shield, rallying around the world and doing the work together against all forms of exploitation in Rwenzori Region and Uganda at large.

The 1995 Constitution of Uganda (as amended) provides for respect for human dignity and protection from inhumane treatment; Protection from slavery, servitude and forced labour and protection of children from any form of exploitation. In order to operationalize the aspirations of the Uganda Constitution and the commitment to the various International protocols and conventions, the Government of Uganda enacted a specific domestic counter human trafficking law called the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons (PTIP) Act 2009; backed up with the Prevention of Trafficking in persons Regulations 2019.

MODERN SLAVERY/EXPLOITATION FORMS

FORCED MARRIAGE

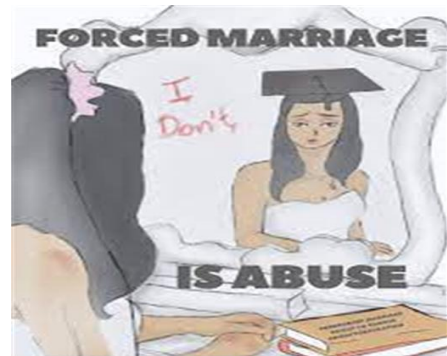
A forced marriage is where one or both people do not, or cannot consent (agree) to the marriage. Forced marriages can happen to anyone from any background and nationality and can affect both males and females. It doesn't only happen to young people; it can happen to adults too.



The Uganda National Strategy to End Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy 2022/2023 – 2026/2027 indicates that on a global scale, Uganda is ranked 16th among 25 countries with the highest rates of child marriage (UNFPA–UNICEF 2019). Although the legal age of consent to marriage in Uganda is set at 18 years, getting married formally or informally before this age is a common practice in the country. Both girls and boys are married off as children, however girls are disproportionately

affected by this harmful practice (**UNFPA 2020**).

Progress has been made to end child marriage, but its prevalence remains high at 34 per cent (UDHS 2016). One out of five women in Uganda engage in sexual activity before 15 years, 64 per cent have sex before age 18 while 34 per cent of women aged 25-49 are married before the age of 18 and 7.3 per cent before the age of 15 (**UDHS 2016; UNICEF 2020**).



Causes of forced marriage

Poverty levels, peer pressure from parents and religion are among the main causes of forced marriage.

Effects of forced marriage

Common psychological effects of forced marriage are feelings of depressed mood, low self-esteem, rage and frustration, sleep problems, difficulty in forming relationships and difficulty trusting.

Consequences of forced marriage:

- Increased likelihood of domestic and sexual abuses.
- Increased risk of rape and sexual abuse as they may not wish to consent, or may not be the legal age to consent to a sexual relationship.

Warning signs of forced marriage?

- Running away from home.
- Self-harming or attempted suicide.
- Depression or becoming worried or withdrawn.
- Poor performance at work, school or college or unexplained absence.
- A surprise engagement to a stranger you have not heard of before.

Who is affected by forced marriage?

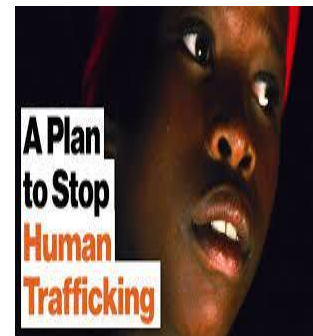
Forced marriage is a crime which disproportionately affects women, but that men can also be victims. The legal age of marriage is **18 years** which is considered adult age according to the Ugandan constitution.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

It's the illegal trade of human beings or the recruitment, control, and use of people for their bodies and for their labor. or the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation." The world day against trafficking in person is held every year on **July 30** to foster the worldwide movement against human trafficking in all forms



According to The National coordinator for prevention of trafficking in persons at ministry of internal affairs, Uganda, during a two-day engagement meeting in Kasese on 5th June,2023, he reported human trafficking is on a raise due to porous borders. He stated that Between 2022- 2022, 421 cases were registered and 2022-2023 report, the cases skyrocketed to 1200 cases.



According to UNODC data 2020, women and girls make up 65% of trafficking victims. 90% of them are trafficked for commercial sex. Children are also especially vulnerable to exploitation like forced labour, forced marriage, armed conflict and commercial sex as they are easier to manipulate abuse.



In 2009, a national legislation referred to as the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act 2009 (PTIP Act) was enacted and subsequently, its regulations were adopted in 2019 (PTIP Regulations). Section 21 of the PTIP Act and regulation 7 of the PTIP Regulations mandate the Coordination Office for Prevention of Trafficking in Persons to develop a National Action Plan (NAP) on prohibition of trafficking in persons, among others. (**National Action Plan for Prevention of Trafficking in Persons in Uganda 2019-2024**)

In 2022, the government reported investigating 1,200 incidents of human trafficking, a significant increase compared with 421 incidents in 2021. Of the 1,200 reported incidents of human trafficking, at least 526 involved exploitation in Uganda and at least 63 involved exploitation abroad; the remaining incidents involved unspecified forms of trafficking.

Major forms of human trafficking or trafficking in persons

- Labour Trafficking: Forcing a person to work in captivity for little or no pay
- Sex trafficking: Forcing, deceiving, or coercing a person to perform a commercial sex act.

Fueling / contributing factors to human trafficking

- Violence -Many women have been left stranded, vulnerable and exposed to traffickers.
- Peer pressure to adventure especially among the youth
- Increasing demand for commercial sex
- Deceptive recruitments of children and adults for use in illegal activities.
- Persistent rebel activities in the region leading to forced
- Poor parenting –This has pushed many children to the streets.
- Unemployment-The high level of unemployment has left many people desperate for jobs, something traffickers take advantage of.
- Growing demand for cheap labour in urban centers and in some foreign countries
- Poverty-Poverty has made it harder for people to meet their daily needs like food, clothing and shelter

How human trafficking occur:

Human trafficking occurs when an offender, often referred as a trafficker, takes an Action, and then employs the means of fraud, force or coercion for the purpose of compelling the victim to get involve in slavery, commercial sex acts and other kind of exploitation against him or her.

Common methods of human trafficking.

- Seduction and romance.
- False job advertisements.
- Lies about educational or travel opportunities.

- Sale by family.
- Recruitment through former slaves.
- Abuse of religious beliefs.
- Abduction.
- Forced pregnancy or sale.

Stages of human trafficking:

- Human trafficking usually consists of three stages. In the first stage, the victims are **Recruited**; in the second, they are **Transported**; and in the third, they are **Exploited**. At the recruitment stage, criminals use many methods to force or trick people into being trafficked.

Human Trafficking Indicators

- **Controlled by another person:** Victims are controlled by another person, and do not speak on his or her own behalf, but instead defer to another person.
- **Lack of earnings:** The victim is unable to keep his or her earnings: In many cases, the person owes a debt they are working to pay off.
- **Frightened:** Victims are frightened to talk to outsiders and authorities since they are closely monitored and controlled by their traffickers.
- **Lack of official identification:** victims are not in possession of their passports, identification, or legal documents.
- **Substance abuse** - Victims may show signs of drug use or drug addiction.
- **Lack of personal Belongings:** Victims may have few or no personal possessions.
- **Deceived by a false job offer:** Their actual job is different from the advertised job they had accepted.
- **Controlled Movement:** Victims are transported to or from work, or live and work and show signs that their movements are being controlled.

FORCED LABOUR

Forced labor is any work which people are forced to do against their will. Sixteen (16) million, or 64% of people in forced labor are in the private economy exploited by individuals or enterprises. According to the United Nations International Labour Organization (ILO) there are 24,900,000 people in forced labour.

Article 25 of the Constitution of Uganda prohibits forced labour. The Employment Act 2006 also prohibits all forms of forced or bonded labor. In accordance with the Penal Code, any person who unlawfully compels any person to labour against the will of that person commits a misdemeanor. Forced labour exploitation is most often found in industries with informal workers and/or little regulation. These include: Agriculture and fishing, services such as hospitality and transport, Domestic work, construction, mining, quarrying and brick making, manufacturing, processing and packaging, Sex work, including sexual exploitation, Market trading, Illicit trade and illegal activities. Women and girls account for 4.9 million of those in forced commercial sexual exploitation, Children, people living in poverty and unemployed.



Main cause of forced labour

Poverty is one of the main causes of forced labour as well as a lack of labour in the agriculture sectors, decent employment opportunities and discrimination.

Effects of forced labour:

The negative impacts of forced labour on a country's economy are manifold: lack of investment in human capital, lower state revenues, productivity costs, and depletion of natural resources.

CHILD LABOUR

It refers to the exploitation of children through any form of work that deprive them of their childhood, interferes with their ability to attend regular school and is mentally, physically, socially and morally harmful.

According to UNICEF, the activities given to children between 5 to 11 years of age are considered child labour if they work at least 28



hours a week. **“Every child has the right to live free from violence, Exploitation and Abuse”.**

In 2012, Uganda made a minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate worst forms of child labour. The government launched the national action plan (NAP) for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour and created a counter trafficking in persons (CTIP) office and an inter-ministerial task force to coordinate anti-trafficking efforts. The objective of the NAP is to eliminate the worst form of child labour and at the same time lay a firm foundation for children’s rights to be respected, protected and fulfilled.



Ugandan legislation prohibits “the employment of children under the age of 12”. National labour law prohibits the involvement of children 12-13 in any employment except for light work carried out under the supervision of an adult over 18 years that does not affect the children’s education

The world day against child labour is held every year on **June 12** to foster the worldwide movement against child labour in all of its forms.

Child labour is categorized into four sectors.

1. **Industry sector:** Making bricks, quarrying stone and mining.
2. **Service sector:** vending, street work, working as porters, construction, collecting and selling scrap metals.
3. **Agriculture sector:** Coffee, harvesting sugarcane, herding cattle. Nearly 96% of employed children between 6-13 years work in agriculture sector. The remaining 4% are distributed across the other sector.
4. **Commercial sexual business:** Performing sexual acts for money include prostitutes, call girls, escorts, and dominatrices.

Causes of child labour.

The high rate of child labour in Uganda is mainly attributed to poverty, low incomes, culture, weak laws, armed conflict, limited access to education opportunities, employment, gender,



social attitudes and ignorance, irresponsible parenthood, agriculture, orphan hood, sudden illness of a caregiver or job loss of a primary wage earner and other factors include traditional or cultural practices.

Consequences of child labour

- Child labour result in extreme bodily and mental harm and even death.
- It can lead to slavery and sexual or economic exploitation.
- It cuts children off from schooling and health care, restricting their fundamental rights.
- Victims of child labour suffer from depression and anxiety pushing them to destructive habits like smoking, alcoholism or drug abuse
- Child labour compounds social inequality and discrimination.
- Child labour limit access to education and harm a child's physical, mental and social growth.

Responding to forms of modern slavery / exploitation:

- Report any form of modern slavery to the nearest police station and local authorities.
- Implementing laws that criminalize all forms of slavery
- Empowering law enforcement agencies to investigate and prosecute perpetrators
- Providing support and rehabilitation to survivors
- Collaborating and partnership with government agencies, CSOs and other stakeholders from various sectors to address the of the problem.
- Embarking on an awareness program by engaging district leadership and security organs.
- The general public should be cautious with entities that come on board to offer people jobs.
- Increase employment opportunities or combat discrimination in the work place
- Embrasing the 3P's (**Punish** traffickers, **Protect** victims and **Prevent** the problem from occurring)

References:

The National coordinator for prevention of trafficking in persons at ministry of internal affairs, Uganda:

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The Uganda National Strategy to End Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy 2022/2023 – 2026/2027

<https://www.unicef.org/uganda/reports/national-strategy-end-child-marriage-and-teenage-pregnancy-2022/2023-2026/2027>

A21.org

<https://www.a21.org/index.php>

The 1995 Uganda constitution

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