



Dear Readers,

Welcome to this edition of our newsletter! As we continue our journey of impact and advocacy, we bring you the latest updates and key highlights from our work. From community-driven initiatives to policy advocacy, every step we take is fueled by our commitment to protecting children's rights and empowering communities.

PROGRAM AREA 1: CHILD RIGHTS ADVOCACY



Advocacy for enactment of the sexual offences bill and the marriage bill

On 11th February 2025, Joy for Children was before the joint committee of the Gender Labour and Social Development and the Legal and Parliamentary Affairs to present the position paper on the justification for the enactment of the Sexual offences Bill and the Marriage Bill , our recommendation to the committee was that the sexual offences Bill will enhance the fight against Gender Based Violence and give effect to the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution A/RES/77/193, titled "Intensification of efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls in the digital environment. This landmark resolution emphasizes the urgency of addressing violence that women and girls face in the digital space a critical frontier in the fight against gender-based violence.

The Marriage Bill will also go a long way in fulfilling Uganda's international obligations imposed Articles 5 & 6 of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Right on the Rights of Women in Africa (The Maputo Protocol) which defines the minimum age for marriage as 18 and enjoins Member States to eliminate all forms of harmful practices against Women.

Meeting with the Parliamentary Committee on Health on HIV/AIDS Financing



Following deliberations, the Parliamentary Committee on Health agreed on the following resolutions:

- Approve a supplementary budget for HIV/AIDS services.
- Revitalize and mainstream the AIDS Trust Fund to ensure its proper functionality.
- Increase budget allocation for HIV prevention and viral load monitoring.
- Conduct assessments across all districts to ensure uninterrupted HIV treatment.

- Collaborate with private sector, religious leaders, and cultural institutions to strengthen HIV response efforts.
- Promote local production of condoms and antiretroviral therapy (ART) to enhance sustainability.

The meeting underscored the urgent need for the Ugandan government to prioritize HIV/AIDS financing, ensuring that the country's progress in the fight against HIV is not reversed due to external funding constraints. The Committee committed to taking necessary legislative and policy actions to safeguard lives and sustain essential HIV services.

PROGRAM AREA 2: CHILD EDUCATION RIGHTS

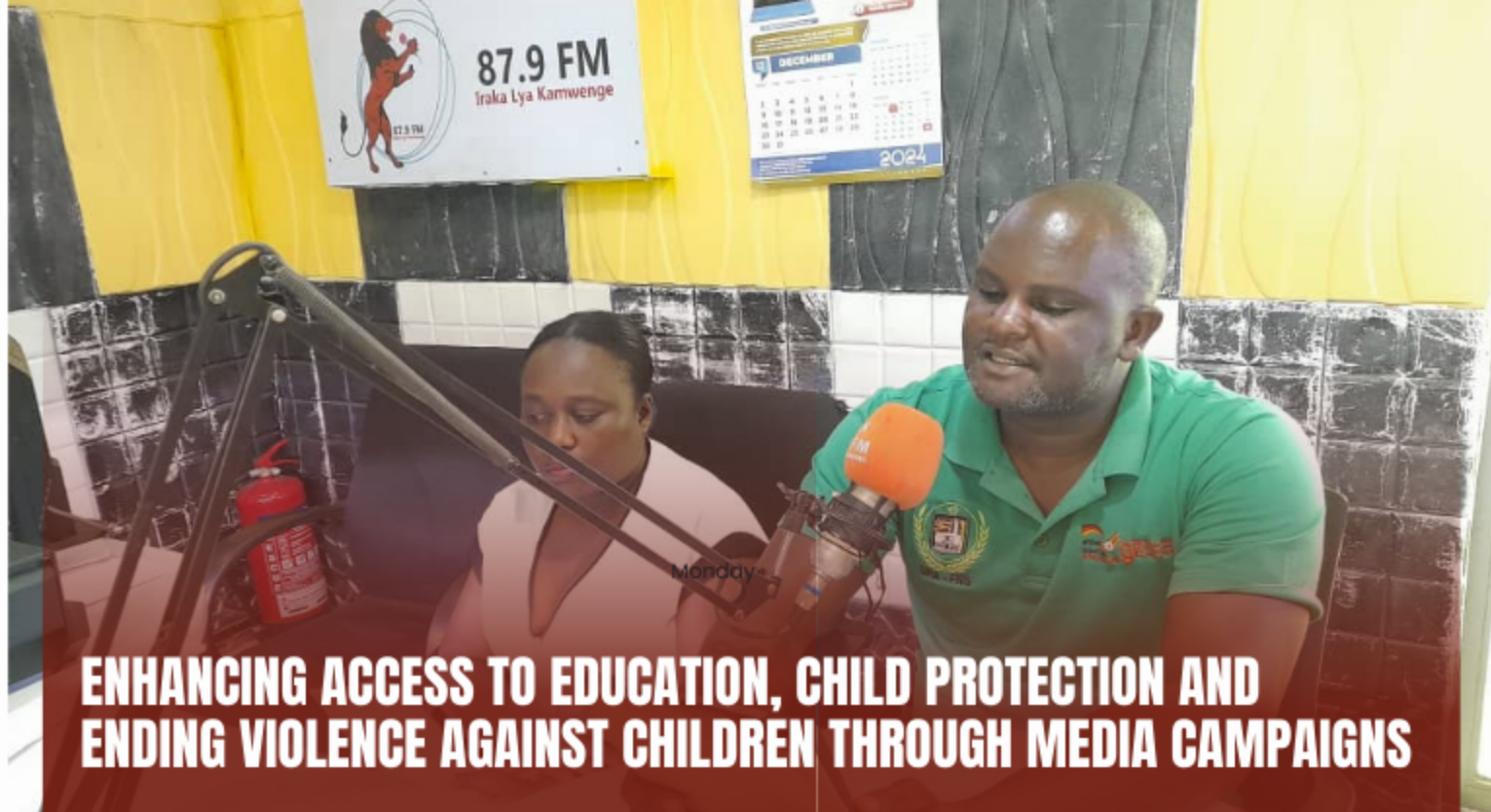
GO BACK TO SCHOOL CAMPAIGNS



Community engagements in Hoima city



Joy for Children Uganda-JFCU conducted "Go Back to school" campaign inform of community engagements in four school communities of proposed IN Kyegegwa, Kamwenge, Ntoroko, Kikube, Hoima district and city. These activities were conducted between 18 th to 21 st February 2025 in various locations, the engagement focused on awareness on USEEP and the enrollment, retention of learners and the value of education, awareness on the GBV/VAC issues in the communities in and around schools, identification of learners to be supported for enrollment and retention in schools. All these aimed at uplifting child mothers, pregnant girls and the boy child on the value of education and protection that they will receive both at school and in the communities. This engagement also aimed at equipping parents, guardians and other stake holders on the different forms of VACiS and referral pathways.



JFCU conducted 4 radio programs on Spice FM in Hoima city, Kyaka FM in Kyegegwa District and Voice of Kamwenge in Kamwenge District on 24th January 2025 under the theme GO BACK TO SCHOOL, aimed to inspire and encourage students, parents, and the community to prioritize education. The shows delved into the importance of education, child protection, and safety, addressing current challenges and solutions to ensure that children return to school after the holiday break and call upon all those who dropped out to return to stay and finish their studies. The conversations featured stakeholders including the Inspector of Schools, a Probation Officer, and Project Officers at Joy for Children Uganda. Listeners engaged through call-ins, raising concerns about financial difficulties and the need for more support for young mothers to continue their education. The radio talk shows played a crucial role in raising awareness and fostering dialogue on education and child welfare, reinforcing JFCU's commitment to promoting children's rights, safety, and access to quality education in Uganda



INTERNATIONAL WOMES DAY CELEBRATIONS

On this International Women's Day, it was a great honor and privilege to meet with teenage mothers from the Acutukum community in Ayami Subcounty, Lira District.

We encouraged them to work hard to raise their children, support their children's education, and delay pregnancy and marriage until they are at least 18.

We also reminded them not to lose hope for a brighter future, emphasizing the importance of education and engaging in income-generating activities.

Additionally, we discussed menstrual hygiene and distributed pads, thanks to the support of our partners, Afripads and Friends of Girls.





IMPACT OF USAID FUNDING WITHDRAWAL ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN UGANDA

29.01.2025



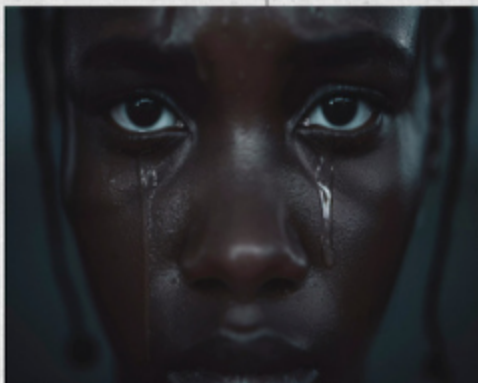
The recent directive from the U.S. administration issued on January 24, 2025 has paused nearly all foreign aid including significant funding to Uganda. The withdrawal of funding from USAID-funded projects has far-reaching and multifaceted effects on local communities in Uganda given the significant role USAID has played in supporting the essential sectors of health, education, food security, economic development, and governance.

[READ MORE →](#)

Press Statement

29th Feb 2025

JOY FOR CHILDREN UGANDA CALLS FOR URGENT ACTION TO ADDRESS THE RISING SUICIDE CASES AMONG STUDENTS



Joy for Children Uganda is deeply concerned about the rising cases of suicide among students across the country. The tragic loss of students from Seeta High School and Divine Mercy Secondary School is a stark reminder of the urgent need to prioritize students' mental well-being. While the exact reasons behind these incidents remain under investigation, these cases highlight the immense pressures young people face, including academic stress, bullying, economic hardships, and family challenges. Many students struggle in silence, and it is our collective responsibility to ensure they feel seen, heard, and supported.

We call upon the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Ministry of Health, parents, educators, and communities to urgently prioritize mental health programs within schools. This includes integrating mental health education into school curricula, strengthening counseling services, enforcing anti-bullying policies, and fostering inclusive environments where students feel safe. Parents and guardians must also be equipped with skills for positive parenting to nurture open communication and emotional support at home. Schools should establish safe spaces where students can seek help without stigma, and teachers should be trained to recognize early warning signs of distress, such as isolation and behavioral changes, ensuring timely intervention.

[Read More →](#)