



## **JFCU STATEMENT ON SCHOOL ATTACK IN KASESE DISTRICT**

Joy for Children Uganda was saddened to learn about the brutal massacre of innocent students of Lubiriha S.S in Mpondwe - Bwera, Kasese District. On June 17th 2023 , it was reported that Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) attacked Lhubiriha secondary school in a border town of Mpondwe living 41 people dead including 38 students who were burned, shot and hacked to death. According to Uganda military at least six people were abducted by the rebels who fled across the porous border into Congo after the attack. (CBS News 17 june 2023)

This is not the first time gunmen attacked a school in Uganda . In June 1998, ADF attacked Kichwamba Technical Institute where they killed 80 students , left others wounded and several were abducted. (Daily monitor 17/06/2023)

As joy for children we condemn acts of terrorism, lawlessness and extreme violence meted against innocent students. We believe that every child has The right to life, the right not to be killed and the right to survive and to grow up in proper conditions.

Joy for children Uganda extends heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of the victims who tragically lost their lives in this heinous act and demands the immediate release and safe return of the abducted learners.

Terrorist attacks on students and schools cause a long term effect on education and education systems. The existing research indicates these attacks lead to ; Increased school drop out rates , Destruction of education facilities , Long term damage and delayed repair of infrastructure and increased mental health issues among children.

Children living and growing up in extremely insecure and frighteningly challenging situations suffer lifelong effects on their physical and psychological well being. Surviving is just the beginning for them. Distressing conflict-related events can affect children's psychological and emotional well being in various ways including; aggression, anxiety, loneliness, insecurity , emotional withdrawal among others.

Joy For Children Uganda remains committed to promoting a safe environment for all children in school and communities where they will live peacefully & without exploitation, and benefit from quality free education.

### **Call to action**

- Members of the public should remain calm, united, and vigilant and to further cooperate with security agencies in providing the necessary information aimed at facilitating investigations
- The government needs to strengthen security systems especial on boarder districts that are at risk.
- Children and families affected need to be given psycho social support and relief items in terms of scholastic materials , mattress etc
- Empowering communities to be each others keeper and report any suspicious activities of violence and unknown people in the communities.