

ECCA MONTHLY BULLETIN



EMPOWER CHILDREN AND COMMUNITIES AGAINST ABUSE

ECCA MID-TERM REVIEW

By Isaac Bwire

This month has seen ECCA take yet another long stride in adhering to ECCA's 5-year strategic plan (2005-2010). An independent consultant Ms. Laetitia Lillian Basemera was contracted to carry out a mid-term evaluation of all ECCA programs.

She was able to interact with a good portion of ECCA stakeholders namely: Board members, staff, district & sub-county officials, school teachers, in and out of school children, women in self help groups and men also mobilized into groups). She applied diverse methods to obtain information (focus group discussions, interviews, observations and testimonies). A draft report was submitted on 26th February 2008 and there was a de-

briefing on 29th February 2008 at the new ECCA offices in Kansanga where a cross-section of ECCA stakeholders had convened. The report is to be presented to the Board on Thursday 6th March 2008. We are optimistic that the recommendations in this report will inform our future planning. This month also saw ECCA as one of the Global Fund for Women grantees in Uganda invited to attend a grantees convention between 27th—28th February 2008 at Muyenga Club organized by Icon Partners & Associates. This convention was an opportunity for ECCA to consolidate its visibility and also attract potential collaboration from grantees.

Isaac Bwire is the Executive Director, ECCA.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Raising awareness on domestic violence in Munyonyo suburb, Makindye division (Kampala)
- Self Help Groups Training in Lyantonde
- Refresher Training on Entrepreneurship skills for 60 model families in Lyantonde district
- Launch of Counseling Letter Link at Buyanja and Katovu Primary Schools and St. John Kaliiro Secondary School in Lyantonde district

OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH JOIN HANDS TO FIGHT HOUSEHOLD POVERTY

By Simon Mbabali

Since the inception of Empower Children and Communities against Abuse (ECCA) in 2002, plans have been underway to start working with out of school youth to empower them to address gender-based violence in their homes and communities. ECCA is happy to report that one of the three men's out-of-school groups that we are planning to work with in Lyantonde district, ECCA's field operational area has started a

brick laying activity. During the writer's interaction with them, one of the men mentioned that they have also been able to discuss issues pertinent to good family development. Dialogue among men is one of the activities that ECCA promotes in its Research & Advocacy Program. ECCA believes it is a great avenue for men to come up with feasible solutions to family and community problems. "It has also helped increase our earnings compared to the past", retorted another man.

Poverty as one of the secondary causes of gender-based violence is being tackled by communities using the self help approach and we also believe that with ECCA's facilitation the groups shall be able to address the core cause of domestic violence which is the power relations between men and women as dictated by our patriarchal society and socialization from childhood.

Simon Mbabali is a social worker, ECCA.

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PRE-MARRIED COUPLES SENSITIZED ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

By Juliet Nakabugo

In an effort to create a world free of Gender-based Violence, ECCA counselors in Lyantonde responded to an invitation from Reverend Father Mujuzi, the parish priest of Kijjukizo Catholic Church to attend a pre-marital counseling session where they sensitized 34 couples preparing to exchange their marriage vows.

During the discussion, domestic violence issues were tackled, and participants learnt what domestic violence is, why it happens, who the perpetrators are, the types of violence, indicators, causes, consequences and solutions.

Juma, one of the participants opened up a discus-

sion that unveiled the underlying factors of men's aggression towards women. He stated that, "as a man, I have to discipline my wife if she does not fulfill my expectations—through slapping or kicking her—because men were destined to exercise overall power over women". This statement sparked off a hot debate and at the end, it was discovered that if the society continues to value men more than women, gender-based violence is inevitable; therefore, there is need to redefine gender roles and change some of cultural practices so as to curb the vice.

The session enabled participants to find ways to apply the lessons they had learnt. Nonetheless, we

should endeavor to understand that change is a process, not a single event. Influencing communities to change their beliefs about women and men requires time and the involvement of a wide range of community members such as key decision makers, opinion leaders and professionals, and the time to start is NOW.

Juliet Nakabugo is a program officer, Psychosocial Support Program

“ as a man, I have to discipline my wife if she does not fulfill my expectations... because men were destined to exercise overall power over women ”

ECCA CONDUCTS HIV/AIDS SESSION IN LYANTONDE SCHOOLS

By Sandra Leila Drile

In response to the letters written by many of the children in ECCA's partner schools participating in the Counseling Letter Link (CLL), ECCA counselors conducted group counseling sessions to tackle the common questions the children had asked on HIV/AIDS. Normally, when an issue is presented by a big number of pupils, the program officer in charge of CLL, Mrs. Sandra Leila Drile organizes a group session to tackle the issue.

The impact of HIV/AIDS on individuals, families and communities is still increasing drastically. HIV/AIDS continues to affect people

who support and care for both children and the elderly. Millions of children worldwide have been and continue to be traumatized by the loss of their parents or guardians. These children and the elderly have been and many more continue to be left destitute besides families being disintegrated and survivors being left homeless.

In Uganda, HIV/AIDS is talked about freely in the media, in schools and higher institutions, a campaign strategy that has worked effectively. If the campaign stops the percentage of people getting infected will



Ms Nakabugo during the sensitization meeting in Kasambya Primary School

increase drastically.

The group sessions were carried out in Kabula High School, Kasambya, Biwolobo and Kalagala

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Primary Schools, and was conducted by counselors Ms. Juliet Nakabugo and Mrs. Sandra Leila Drile. The following issues were discussed: HIV/AIDS, the differences between HIV and AIDS, the different ways in which the disease is acquired and can be prevented besides giving the children a few tips on Positive Living.

The students participated actively and it was evident that they were brilliant. Although they had an idea on each and every question discussed, the counselors noted that the

children had wrong information and believed in lots of myths, which the counselors corrected.

The children of Biwolobo Primary School were also not free to participate in the discussions owing to their teacher's presence.

ECCA counselors continue to offer support to all students in their partner schools in matters of health, career development, personal/social development

ensuring that today's students become more productive, and develop into well-adjusted adults of tomorrow that can make responsible and wise decisions.

"Together we can make a difference"

Sandra Leila Drile is a Program Officer/Counselor in Child Support Program ECCA.

NATIONAL POLICY ON OVCs LAUNCHED IN LYANTONDE

By Angel Namukasa

On 19th and 20th February 2008, ECCA staff attended a two days workshop at the Lyantonde Town Council where Save the Children, an International non-governmental organization and the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development launched the National Orphans and other Vulnerable Children Policy. The workshop aimed at improving the capacity of service providers in delivering services especially to the Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVC) of Lyantonde district. To achieve this objective, service providers were provided with the National Policy Strategic Plan on OVC as a way of improving their skills in delivering quality services to constituents in their areas of operation.

FOLLOW-UP EXERCISES ENDEAR ECCA TO CLIENTS

Under the Psychosocial Support Program, ECCA has emphasized that after sessions with clients, it is good to follow-up the clients so as to monitor the progress of the clients; identify gaps and look for the way forward. Such activities have given clients a sense of belonging because the organization has shown its commitment to serve them. It is not surprising today that many refer to ECCA as their mother organization.

Angel Namukasa is a social worker in ECCA

BUZIGA WOMEN DEVELOP IN SELF HELP GROUPS

By Annet Tumwujukye

Women in Buziga have found out that there is strength in numbers, and have pooled their resources together in self-help groups of their own creation. This has given them an opportunity to change their lives and the lives of their families and communities.

"Every meeting adds something of value to the group in terms of strength", says Salima Nassanga, the group facilitator, with regards to the self group meetings that they attend every Thursday.

The sitting arrangement is always in form of a circle which has helped them to know each other's needs and achievements. The women say that being able to raise their voices during the meeting is enough to make their day. They believe that each one's voice is of value to the whole group. Among the many achievements that ECCA has registered are the good relationships amongst members, who nowadays view themselves more or less like sisters. "And now we command respect in the community, and even from our husbands," chips in Salima.

The group now looks forward to being exposed to other women's groups. They believe this will open their eyes, build their confidence and help them gain decision-making status in their community. This will also encourage them to participate in decision making processes in their respective villages besides taking part in the fight against gender based violence and in the promotion of women's rights.

Annet Tumwujukye is the Psychosocial Support Coordinator, ECCA

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**SHG MEMBERS-
CHANGE AGENTS IN
LYANTONDE**

By Simon Mbabali

Due to the proper structures established in Self Help Groups (SHGs), ECCA groups have been considered by other non-governmental organizations and governmental institutions to be some of the most organized groups in Lyantonde district. As a result, ECCA groups of Kyakabalu village in Biwolobo parish were rewarded with six water tanks from PARDI, an organization working in Lyantonde district .

The Ministry of Health also invited the ECCA groups to participate in a sensitization workshop on the Home-Based Management of fever Strategy (HBMF) where participants were informed of the change of malarial drugs from HOMAPAK to COARTEM..

Through the self help groups, this information shall easily be communicated to other group members and the community at large. This makes SHG members agents of change in Lyantonde district. Well done!!!!

COMMUNITY FACILITATORS AND STAFF EQUIPPED WITH DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION SKILLS

By Joseph Kasenene

To be able to build others capacity, one should first be empowered with the necessary skills. It was in light of this premise that the Capacity Building Program of ECCA whose main aim is to build and strengthen the capacity of individuals, communities and children to address the problem of gender violence (GBV) in Uganda, built the capacities of Lyantonde staff members and community facilitators to address domestic violence. The session was conducted at the ECCA field office and facilitated by Joseph Kasenene from ECCA, Josephine Kamisya and Flurina Derugs from Center for Domestic Violence Prevention (CEDOVIP). Participants were taken through domestic violence issues, and how one can address them They in turn identified possible strategies they could use to address domestic violence and some of these included:- identifying men (agents of change) to influence other men and using drama groups to sensitize the general public.

The community facilitators however, requested for the more training in counseling skills and techniques to enable them offer primary support to people affected by GBV. In conclusion, the training was timely and shall enable both staff and the community facilitators to mobilize communities to address domestic violence and largely gender based violence in their communities.

Joseph Kasenene is Program Officer, Community Empowerment Program

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