

The community that used to reside within the Mgahinga and Bwindi forests in southwestern Uganda are mostly an illiterate, landless people. **Hope Mafaranga** writes of their struggle to break into a society that has trouble accepting them

The Batwa are considered to be one of the most marginalised people on the continent. This marginalisation has hampered their access to various social services such as quality education.

The Batwa are some of the most marginalised people in Africa, evicted from their ancestral land in 1991, when the forests became national parks for wildlife conservation.

When the *New Vision* visited Kisoro the area with the largest population of Batwa in Uganda, many were found sleeping or loitering on the streets at a time when other children are in school.

The Kisoro Batwa community chairman, Francis Sembagari says their lives depended on honey, forest medicine and game meat.

Some have settled in small polythene makeshift huts outside Kisoro town. Women and young girls are seen drawing water from trenches of sewage that flows from town and district head offices.

Upon their eviction from the forests, they were treated as outcasts; they were discriminated against not just in communities, but also in schools.

Humiliation in schools

Alice Nyamihanda, 28, a resident of Kisoro town, is one of the Batwa whose parents were evicted from the forest. She has made it her life's purpose to fight for their rights.

When she speaks of the humiliation she suffered in school, it is a wonder she managed to complete her education.

Nyamihanda believes that education is the only way the Batwa can be empowered to fight for their rights.

"The stigma of being the shortest person in class was too much. I used to sit behind and

in a corner of the class because of what other children would say about me.

The nicknames they called me, such as *Igitwa*, pigmy, *kafumbi*, they called me made me unhappy," she says.

The third-born of five is the first woman and only Mutwa with a diploma among the community. She went to Gitovu and Mabuyemeru Primary School in Kisoro and Seseme Girls for her O' and A' level. She later joined Bugema University, where she attained her diploma in development studies in 2010.

Luckily, not all Batwa suffer the stigma Nyamihanda did. John Maripazari, 21, a student at Bishop Stuart University in Mbarara district, has a better story.

"I worked as a porter in Kisoro town to pay school fees for myself until United Organisation for Batwa Development in Uganda (UOBDU) spotted me and took me to Kisoro Comprehensive Secondary School for O' and A' level," he says. "In urban centres, the stigma is not as much as it is in the rural areas, so I survived it."

What kept her going

Nyamihanda wanted to be an ambassador of the Batwa and push for their agenda. She realised this could not be achieved without education, a goal she pushed for beyond the humiliation.

Nyamihanda now works as an education officer at UOBDU, an umbrella organisation that brings together all the Batwa in Uganda.

Factors that enabled her

The desire to change the perception of people thinking that the Batwa were failures pushed her to continue with school despite the limited resources.

"I was tired of hearing that we



The only three Batwa women who have gone beyond secondary school. Centre is Nyamihanda. Photos by Job Namanya

1991
The Batwa were evicted from their ancestral land and remain without land to claim as their own to date.

6,000
The approximate number of Batwa in Uganda

Trust, which paid for her primary education and Adventist Development and Relief Agency, which catered for her secondary to university education.

UOBDU works towards promoting the rights and build the capacity of the Batwa through formal and informal education.

"We also empower Batwa in the agriculture sector by hiring land for them and equipping them with practical and vocational skills in carpentry and handcraft, so that they can sustain themselves," she says.

The organisation also deals in skills development, livelihood support and health programmes and advocates the promotion and protection of their human rights.

are failures and I made up my mind to change this perception," Nyamihanda says.

She also got social and financial support from NGOs such as Bwindi, Mgahinga Conservation

The Batwa STRUGGLE to get an EDUCATION

Government Intervention

What is being done to help?

Munyarubanza says the Government has deployed female teachers whom Batwa community demanded to ensure they remain in schools.

"Some Batwa told us that they could not trust their children with male teachers, especially girls for fear of sexual harassment due to their vulnerability. The Government responded to their call and deployed a female teacher," he says.

We also plan to provide supplementary food for the stigmatised group. "Their case is special, they do not have land to cultivate their own food and giving them food will go a long way in keeping them in school," he adds.

The Batwa have attracted the attention of various NGOs such as Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), which have built schools and enrolled Batwa adults in school to acquire basic literacy skills.

The ADRA director of

Solomon Kateregga

programmes, Solomon Kateregga, says they work with people in poverty and distress to create a just and positive change through empowering them.

He says the organisations pays school fees and provides scholastic materials for Batwa children. At schools such as Mabuyemeru, Kateregga says the Batwa children are the only ones in the boarding section and the organisation has been providing food, a matron (caretaker) and security guard.

"Since they had nowhere to live, we decided that they sleep at school, so that we can provide for all their needs," he says.

He says the other group of Batwa live across the Uganda border in neighbouring Rwanda, Burundi and in eastern DR Congo.

"In each of these countries, the Batwa exist as a minority ethnic group living among the Bahutu and Batutsi populations," Munyarubanza says.

In Uganda, their dominant neighbours are the Bafumbira and Bakiga. While accurate figures are difficult to determine, it is estimated that 6,700 Batwa living within Uganda, with approximately half of them living in Kisoro district.

"This is not a small number we can ignore. For this reason, we are supporting them to attain education and other basic rights," Kateregga says.



A typical makeshift shelter for a Mutwa family

forests. We cannot farm to get money, nor do any other work to earn a living and pay school fees for our children, however much we want our children to go school," he says.

School dropouts

Francis Munyarubanza, the Kisoro district officer, says despite several interventions by the Government and other

development partners, Batwa children still drop out of school. Without giving the number, Munyarubanza attributes the cause to lack of food, scholastic materials and stigma.

"Some communities have not yet accepted them, while a big number of them continue to drop out due to other factors," he said.

John Nsenga Haba, the

headmaster of Mabuyemeru Seventh Day Adventist Integrated Primary School, one of the schools with a high number of Batwa children, decried the low rate of enrolment.

"I have a population of 209, but only 27 are from the Batwa community. We have 15 girls and four candidates. I pray they finish school because they are very intelligent," Nsenga says.

Steps achieved

Nyamihanda: The first graduate

Her Western dress-sense and clarity of spoken English suggests she will pursue quite a different path to her fellow Batwa.

"I feel great because I am educated. When they chased us from the forest we were afraid, and we did not have a chance to go back. Now I want to work for my people," Alice Nyamihanda says.

Like many other Ugandans in their 20s, Nyamihanda will graduate from university this week; but unlike anyone else, her origins lie deep in a forest where Uganda meets Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, now known as Mgahinga Gorilla Park.

Nyamihanda is one of a few thousand remaining Batwa in Uganda and the first ever to return to her impoverished native community with a university diploma.

children will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling. To achieve this, President Yoweri Museveni introduced free primary education in 1997.

Nyamihanda was not a beneficiary of this policy, but the importance she places on education as the escape route from poverty reflects an outlook shared by many Ugandans.

"After my studies, I have to help my people, I want to encourage other Batwa children to go to school," she says.

"If someone is educated, you can work in an office and get money," she says. Nyamihanda joined Bugema University on the outskirts of Kampala in 2008 and is graduated with a diploma in development studies — a course with very real relevance to her life.

Her plan now is to return to her village to seek professional employment in larger nearby towns, but this will not be her first experience of the working world.

Hope

Henry Neza from the United Organisation for Batwa Development (UOBDU) works closely with the indigenous group. He says Nyamihanda's achievement is a small step forward for the forest people.

"It is our intention that the Batwa can one day be educated enough to manage themselves and they can begin to represent and support themselves."

It may seem unfair that some of the last people to live so close to nature are being confronted with the demands of the modern world.

But if the Batwa people are going to survive, then Nyamihanda's example may provide their only hope.

She symbolises the rapid shift towards development, which this marginalised community has resisted so hard. And it is clear she believes education is the only way forward.

BATWA FACTFILE

They are a minority numerically and politically, making up between 0.02% and 0.7% of the population in the countries where they live

1 Child mortality: 38% of Batwa children die under the age of five, compared with a Ugandan average of 18%.

2 Life expectancy: 28, compared with a Ugandan average of 53

3 Average annual income: \$25, compared with a Ugandan average of \$420

3 Literacy rates: Less than 0.5% of the Batwa population has a full secondary education, compared with 15% of Ugandans

From the Batwa Development Programme Study, UN, World Bank, Minority Rights Groups International

Adapted from BBC Online

WHAT BATWA PUPILS AT MABUYEMERU PRIMARY SCHOOL SAY



Viola Cyzanye, 17, Primary Seven pupil: The only way we can fight for our rights and discrimination is for us to stay in schools and complete. This will show the world that the Batwa can also be achievers.



Emmanuel Irinatwe, 15, Primary Five pupil: "I am reading hard to become a doctor, hopefully the first in my community. I will not allow anyone stop me from achieving my dream."



Rodgers Mfitumikiza, 14, Primary Seven: We are lucky because some NGOs have supported us to make us better people. They have given us a chance to compete with the rest of the world.

THE BATWA WERE GIVEN FOUR ACRES WHERE A MUSEUM WILL BE CONSTRUCTED TO PRESERVE THEIR CULTURE

KISORO

By Hope Mafaranga

"We lived like destitutes and outcasts in the community. We were beggars and given our history of living forests, no one wanted to be associated with us," Dorotia Nyiramaramba, 53 said.

The mother of six and resident of Busaro village in Chahi sub-county, Kisoro, said the Batwa are an indigenous minority group of people who lived in the forests of Bwindi and Mgahinga.

However, in 1992 they were evicted by the Government and their home gazetted as a national park which rendered them homeless and landless.

Change of life

Nyiramaramba could not hide her excitement after the tribe was given over 43 acres of land in the hills of Gitebe Kanaba sub-county and Busaro village, Chahi sub-county in Kisoro.

The land was bought and donated by the Adventist Development and Relief Agency International (ADRA) to resettle the Batwa.

"I own a house, goats and sheep and I am able to grow crops. We can send our children to school after selling some of the produce," she said.

Nyiramaramba took *New Vision* around her garden and showed us her goats and sheep.

The ADRA Uganda country director, Charles Ed II Aguilar, said the organisation had been supporting the marginalised group with training in life skills. He was quick to add that it was hard to support a landless and hungry people.

Batwa finally resettled in Kisoro



Gitebe Batwa settlement village where the Batwa have been resettled. Photo by Hope Mafaranga

"They have gone through functional adult literacy which provided them with reading, writing skills as well as numeracy integrated with practical knowledge," he said.

Water scarcity

Information from the district water office shows that the Batwa – most of whom live on hilltops – are the most hard-to-reach communities because of the high cost of pumping water uphill.

Scovia Rukongi, 28, one of the residents, said they would spend more than five hours in search of water.

To address the water challenge, ADRA Sweden constructed two water tanks with a capacity of 10,000 and 12,000 litres to enable the Batwa community access water.

Beata Nyiradiana, 30, said the extension of water had changed their lives because they could now wash their clothes and spend less time looking for water.

The Batwa community was also given a store which they will use to keep their produce.

However, the Kisoro chief administrative officer, Suleiman Kasozi, appealed to the Government

and other stakeholders to come up with a concrete plan to resettle the remaining Batwa in Kisoro and Bundibugyo district.

Museum

The district also gave the Batwa, four acres of land where a museum funded by ADRA Austria will be constructed to preserve their culture and heritage. The construction of the museum will cost over sh488m.

The ADRA Austria country director, Marcez Wagner, said: "This will be a living museum and it will generate income for the Batwa," he said.



Bizimana

Abel Bizimana, the Kisoro district LC5, said the Batwa were known to be hunters, musicians and fighters of the king. He said it was a pity that they were marginalised.

Landslide

Despite getting land, they face landslides that sweep away their crops, which threatens their livelihood and food security.

"One of the issues we are going to address is soil erosion. We will also put the emphasis on tree planting to mitigate climate change," Wagner said.

Joseph Nizeyimana, the chairman of Kanaba sub-county, appealed to the Government and development partners to work on the road network to enable the Batwa transport their produce to the market.

Elias Nuwagaba, the Kisoro deputy resident district commissioner, said they were in negotiations with the Government to address the challenges facing Batwa.

CAPITO MASTER

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Hand deliver to address above or email: mmindcontractors@gmail.com or post to Master Mind Contractors, P.O. BOX 37638 K'la

You will be contacted by email or telephone notifying you as when and where to attend the seminars upon submission of the following to enable selection process.

- PROOF OF PAYMENT – Bank slip soft copy. (For registration centers applicants)
- Names, address (district, nearest trading centre & town), email, telephone No., referees, and other contact in case you're not accessible.
- Qualifications, skills and experience.

Award of contract will solely be in the discretion of the company, and the company will not be bound to any obligations by any applicant.

Jailed speaker, EC officials released

JINJA

By Jackie Nambogga

After spending four days in different Police cells, all the 13 Electoral Commission (EC) officials and three local leaders who were arrested over election malpractice in the Jinja East by-election have been released.

Moses Bizitu, the Jinja municipality speaker, had since Monday last week been in detention at Kira Police Station in Wakiso district, while the rest were detained at Njeru, Nalufenya and Jinja Central Police stations.

The two other leaders were Joseph Kintu, the Jinja central division councillor for Old Boma A and former Walukuba/Masese division LC3 chairperson, Musisi Kibugudhu commonly known as Badman.

The 13 EC officials are Wilfred Kitale, Steven Kabole, Paul Kyagate, Bosco Gwaba, Jackson Kigenyi, Rogers Efudu, Juma Elemu, Abel Ekodel, Sandra Mpabulungi, Amina Jaden, Asha Namugaya, Judith Natokyo and Cathy Basuta.

Motion for release

On Friday, the Jinja East legislator, Paul Mwiru, filed a notice of motion at the Jinja Chief magistrates' Court asking for the immediate and



Bizitu (in maroon T-shirt) flanked by Mwiru (on his right) and FDC members after his release on Friday

BETWEEN THE LINES

Bizitu denied any dubious dealing in the just concluded polls where Mwiru of FDC defeated Nabeta of the ruling NRM.

unconditional release of the suspects.

He also exerted pressure during a press conference where he had announced a peaceful demonstration on Monday.

Much as they were released on bond, *New Vision* learnt that the Jinja resident state attorney had not yet sanctioned the suspects' files by Friday to prefer possible charges.

It was also established that the files were still with the

Police at the CID headquarters.

Much as the EC officials were not part of his supporters, Mwiru said he wanted them released because he is a human rights advocate.

However, Bizitu denied any dubious dealing in the just-concluded polls, where Mwiru of Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) party defeated Nathan Igeme Nabeta of the ruling NRM with 6,654 against 5,043 votes in a race that attracted six other contenders.

"It is NRM cadres involved in updating the voters register. There is no docket that requires my participation," Bizitu said.

He said these were games by NRM party leaders aimed at accounting for what they were given to spend in the byelection.

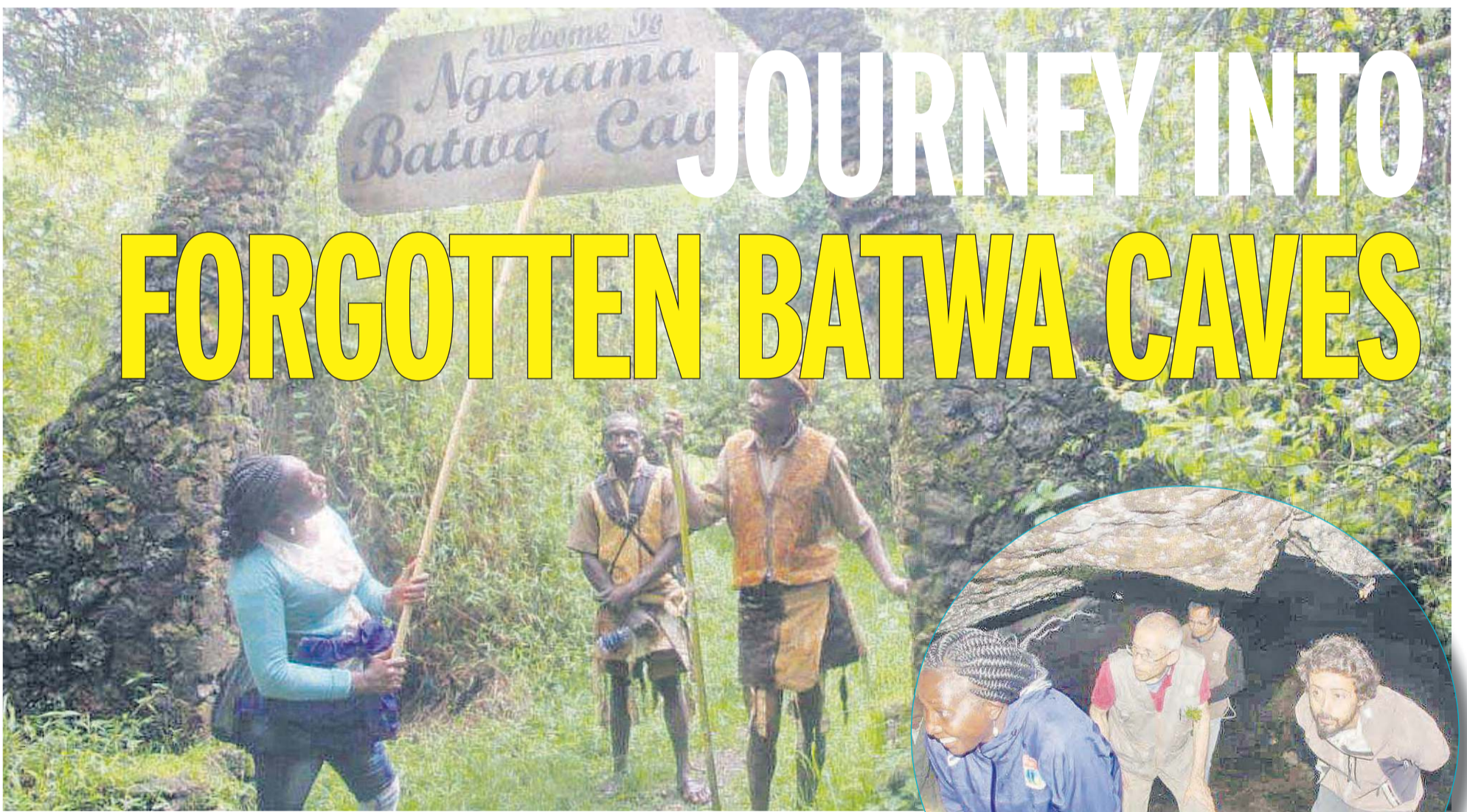


Trekking the mountain

« NGARAMA CAVE IS A 200-METRE LONG LAVA TUBE BENEATH MT. MGAHINGA IN KISORO DISTRICT, WITH DARK CHAMBERS »



A local tourist outside the cave



The writer (left) chatting with Batwa guides at the entrance of the Ngarama Batwa Cave

Over the last month, we have written about the Batwa, a small forest tribe across south western Uganda. **Hope Mafaranga** recently visited the Ngarama Cave of the Batwa clan in Kisoro

At first, I was enthusiastic to trek the dense forest at the foot of the Virunga Volcanoes, which was home to the Batwa people.

My day started at Muhavura Base camp in Kisoro district at the footsteps of the mountain, with a briefing from my would-be tour guide.

Shortly, a group of four men appeared, fully dressed in skins and hides. They looked unique, though scary.

In fact, if I had been alone, I wouldn't have gone with them into the dense forest that was once home to the Batwa people, until 1992 when they were evicted by the Government and the area

gazetted as a national park.

They are taking us on a tour of the Batwa Trail, which runs across the lower slopes of the Muhavura and Gahinga Volcanoes in Mgahinga Gorilla Safari Park. The forest is home to a variety of wildlife, but the Batwa Trail is far from being a conventional nature walk.

With the help of Batwa guides, one sees the forest as a larder, pharmacy, builder's yard, tool kits they used and above all, a home.

The Batwa cultural trail was launched on June 7, 2011 to preserve the Batwa culture and heritage.

Commonly known as "the original dwellers of this ancient jungle", the Batwa were known as "The Keepers of the Forest" and they survived by hunting small game animals using arrows or nets and gathering plants and fruits in the rain forest.

They lived in huts constructed using leaves and branches, moving frequently

EXPERIENCE

Travel
 The cave, according to Serutookye, a Mutwa tour guide, was once home to the Batwa King, where the women of the community performed a sorrowful song.



Serutookye, the guide

The writer with other tourists inside the Ngarama cave

in search of fresh supplies of food.

The Batwa lived in harmony with the forest and its creatures, including the mountain gorillas, for millennia.

Some anthropologists estimate that pygmy tribes, such as the Batwa, existed in the equatorial forests of Africa for 60,000 years or more.

BAMBOO WALKING STICK

After the briefing, a walking stick made out of bamboo was handed over to me. I wanted to reject it, thinking the Batwa trail was just as flat as my home area in Kashaari, Mbarara.

But, Stephen Serutookye, one of the

Batwa tour guides, assured me and other tourists, who included officials from the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) that we would need the sticks as the areas have slopes and are sometimes slippery.

Serutookye informed us that in ancient days, the Batwa were hunters, fruit gatherers and brave warriors.

Their lives depended on the forest for shelter, food and traditional medicine and they largely depended on ancient knowledge to detect dangers, marriage and treasured raw meat and honey, which Serutookye demonstrated to us.

Being my first time to go for the Batwa



Charles Owiny

BACKGROUND: Schools inadequate in the Karamoja sub-region

Charles Owiny, the Abim district inspector of schools, says the situation is not any different in Abim and other districts in the sub-region.

He says Abim, with an estimated population of 121,900, has a large number of

school drop-outs.

The district has 34 government-aided primary schools, 12 community schools and five private primary schools. Out of the 12, six are functional and six are non-functional.

Owiny adds that there are seven parishes without primary schools. He named the parishes as Loyoit, Oringowelo, Agwata, Angwee, Oyaro, Barlyech and Kobulin.

He also says the district only has four secondary schools, of

which three are government-aided and one privately owned.

Owiny further explains that there are four sub-counties without secondary schools – Magamaga, Awach, Abim and Nyakwae.

He adds that the district has

only one technical school, making it hard for students who wish to get vocational skills. “You can imagine the suffering in the areas with no secondary school. They have to trek long distances and this kills the morale,” he explains.

Lokote has repeated the class four times due to lack of school fees

By Hope Mafaranga

“You have no idea what we girls go through in this region to attain education. Someone needs to understand the dynamics of Karamoja and the things parents pay attention to and regard as priorities. There are many priorities here and education is not one of them,” says Esther Lokote, a Primary Seven pupil of Nakoreto Primary School in Kotido district.

“All what my parents see in me are cows and grandchildren. They do not want to see me progress to secondary school,” she says.

Struggle for support

Lokote, who pays her school fees, says she has repeated Primary Seven four times because she cannot afford to proceed to secondary school. No one has so far come to her rescue, despite several appeals.

She pays sh21,000 per term, which she earns during holidays on working as a house help.

Lokote has been passing Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) since 2014, but, because she does not want to be married off, she is forced to repeat to keep away from the eyes of her parents who she says want her married.

“I have been passing, but I do not have the money to proceed to secondary school. I am now reading so hard and praying to God to get aggregates four so that I can get a sponsor,” the 16-year-old says.

She says most of peers are now mothers because their parents looked at them as her a source of wealth.

“I cannot go back to my village because I will be forced into marriage. Moreover parents do not even seek our consent. I have to continue struggling until I attain my goal of becoming a nurse. I believe God will one day will bring an angel to support me,” she says.

Charles Owiny, the Abim district inspector of schools, says parents have a negative attitude towards the education of the girlchild.

Vivian Lochoro, another pupil, says the safest place for girls is school, saying parents value animals more than girls. “A girlchild is basically prepared to become a wife. We have to stand up for our rights,” she says.

Lochoro thanked the Government for introducing the boarding government-aided primary schools in Karamoja to protect them.

She, however, says it is not enough because after completing primary school, those who are lucky to have completed, do not go far due to lack of money. “The Government and other partners should do more to ensure the girl makes it all the way to tertiary level,” she said.

Survival rate

Owiny says one of the biggest challenges the district is facing is the ability of pupils who enrol in primary

Girl reseats P.7 to avoid early MARRIAGE



Nakoreto Primary School Advocacy Club. Photos by Paul Watala

EDUCATION NOT PRIORITY

The Kotido district LC5 chairperson, Ambrose Lotukei, says going to school in Karamoja has not been prioritised. He says when he was young, he had to be forced by soldiers of the Idi Amin government to go to school. In a sad voice, the district boss, who also served as the district education officer for 11 years, says his parents often picked him from school and hid him in granary to prevent him from studying.

school to complete Primary Seven. He says in 2009, 2,119 boys and 2,147 girls enrolled, but only 719 boys and 469 girls were able to complete Primary Seven.

He cited 2010 as another year that saw the number of pupils failing to complete primary school dropping.

“We enrolled 2,194 boys and 4,279 girls, but only 682 boys and 549 girls sat for Primary Leaving Examinations,” he said, adding that the drop-out rates are relatively higher among girls, compared to boys.

Owiny said the survival rate of boys from 2009 to date is 34% and girls 22%, overall 28%. He cited poverty, early marriage, teenage pregnancy, petty businesses, negative attitudes,

bad cultural beliefs, domestic chores, teasing, peer influence, poor performance, lack of role models, lack of guidance and counselling and child neglect as the leading causes of the high school drop-out rate.

Solutions

Charles Owiny, the Abim district inspector of schools says the situation has left the district lagging behind.

His comments were emphasised by George William Kiberu, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Uganda programmes manager in charge of northern Karamoja, who said they running awareness campaigns to change the trend. “We organise radio talk



Esther Lokote

shows on early marriage and teenage pregnancies and discuss issues affecting adolescents,” he says.

Kiberu says with funding from DANIDA, they have also created School Advocacy Clubs to provide child-friendly spaces where children identify challenges that affect their education.

Kiberu said other stakeholders such as Straight Talk Foundation and some political leaders are teaming up to award the best performing candidates in PLE.

The clubs, according to Kiberu, go to the community and look for children who have dropped out of school, use music, dance and drama and take part in go-back-to-school campaigns.

The clubs also sensitise parents on the danger of early marriages, teenage pregnancies and HIV/AIDS.

What others say



HEADTEACHER

Scovia Akidi, headteacher Barlyech Primary School

We opted to volunteer to help children go to school after attending a meeting organised by ADRA Uganda. During these meetings we noticed that no one else will solve our problems.



DIRECTOR

Solomon Katereggea, programmes director ADRA

Stone quarries, small businesses such as selling meat and early marriages are the biggest hindrance to education Karamoja. The Government and other stakeholders need to regulate this.



LEGISLATOR

Hilary Lokwang, MP Ike County, Kaabong

It is a mindset that we need to change so that parents see the importance of education. Some of us who have made it are acting as role models to ensure education improves in Karamoja.

Orumuri, ADRA bahweriire empungi



Enkuyanja y'empungi eyeshukire aha Kyempango Community Center kutunga obuhwezi obu Orumuri na ADRA baretsire



Empungi nizireeba ebintu ebi Orumuri na ADRA baretsire



Sister Charity owa TV West nayakira ebintu ahari Christine

CLIFF ABENAITWE

Vision Group erikushoza orupapura rw'Orumuri ehire enkumi n'enkumi z'empungi za Rwamwanja obuhwezi bw'ebintu by'okukoresa.

Edita w'Orumuri Abraham Ahabwe agizire ngu ebintu ebi bikahabweyo abashomi b'Orumuri, abahurikiza ba Radio West hamwe n'abareebo ba TV west enshmi nkye ehwezi.

Ebintu ebi bibairemu emwenda, ebw'okweshweka, enkito, ebikoopo, amasuwaani hamwe nebindi bingi.

Orumuri rukwakwatanisa n'ekigombe ADRA-Uganda omukugaba ebintu ebi aha mukoro ogubire ahari Kyempango Community Centre omu kampu ya Rwamwanja, Kamwenge. Omu

muringo gw'omutano, Ahabwe asiimwe abantu aba abahaireyo n'omutima gumwe okureeba ngu bahwera abantu abairukire orutaro omunsi yaabo.

"Ninyenda kusiima munonga abantu abatuhaire ebintu, esente, eshaara n'omutima gumwe kuhwera empungi ezi," Ahabwe nikwo agazizire.

Ahabwe agizire ngu empungi zikine obujune buhango na munonga omu bintu byaburijjo, ebyokurya, amaizi n'ebindi kandi yatererera gavumenti n'ebitongore ebindi kurugayo kuhwera empungi ezi.

O mugambirizi wa ADRA Ajuoga Booker asiimire abahagizire ba Vision Group n'abantu boona abahireyo obuhwezi obu ahabw'okubaaha emiko-



Booker nakwatsa empungi ebintu

no omu kureebera abantu abari omu kampu ya Rwamwanja abahungire orutaro omw'ihanga rya Congo omu mwaka oguhwire.

Ajuoga agizire ngu kampu ya Rwamwanja erimu empungi zirikurenga omu 35,000 kandi abaning n'abakazi n'abaana.

Jovah Mwiraneza owarugire omukyanga kya Nyamitembe omuri Congo n'abaana bw 6, asiimire Vision Group n'abantu boona ahabw'obuhwezi obu kandi hoona ayongire yasaha abantu kwongera kubahwera kwenda ngu bature amagara marungi.



Fr. Bukonya of Mbarara Arch Diocese nakwasa Abraham Ahabwe Edita w'Orumuri ebintu



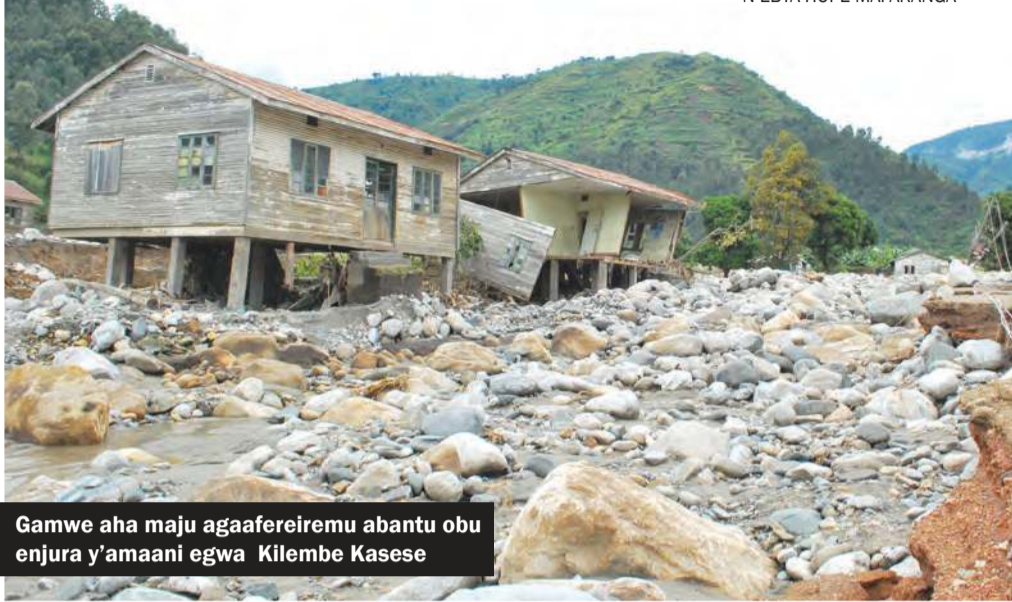
Empungi omurungiriri kutuunga ebintu



Booker owa ADRA na Hope Mafaranga ow'Orumuri nibaha empungi ebintu

Nyamwamba ekagaruka omwayo

N'EBYA HOPE MAFARANGA



Gamwe aha maju agaafereiremu abantu obu enjura y'amaani egwa Kilembe Kasese



Abakazi ba Kilembe barikwakiira obuhwezi obwabahirwe ADRA Uganda



Gamwe aha maju agaateirwe amabaare omu njura eyagwire Kilembe



Ba Inginya barikuteeraho kugaruraho orutindo rwa Kilembe (Katiriti) orwateirwe amabaare



Maj Gen Julius Oketta nayakiira Ajuoga Booker owa ADRA owaretsire obuhwezi Kasese

● **KASESE:** Omugyera gwa Nyamwamba ogurugire kwijurirana amaizi gukareeta n'amabaare agasiisire amaju n'amatungo by'abantu b'omuri Kilembe Kasese okwezi oku kutandikire gukaba gutwire niguraba omu muhanda ogu abantu bayombekiremu.

Maj Gen Julius Oketta orikukora aha bihikiirizi omu ofiisi y'Enganzi ya Uganda ohikire aha mwanya agizire ngu omu myaka ya 1960, abakozi kuruga Canada ababaire nibatimba Cop-per bakahindura omuhanda gw'omugyera gwa Nyamwamba baagukiika kyababaasisa kwombeka ei

gwabaire niguraba.

Mbwenu enjura y'amaani ku egwire, amaizi gaagaruka omu muhanda gwago gwakare gajja n'amabaare gahenda entindo gashenya amaju kandi gaita n'abantu 8 reero abandi barikurenga 10,000 babura oburaaro.

Omugambirizi w'ekitongore kya ADRA Uganda ekitwaire obuhwezi Ajuoga Booker agizire ngu okuhinga omu mishozi n'okushisha obuhangwa bw'ensi ni bimwe aha bintu ebiretsire ekizubu eki kyabaho.

Ajuoga nagira ngu okweyongyera kw'omubaro gw'abarikutuura omu myanya egi nakwo kwongyereire.

Real life story: I now spend one hour instead of a day during hospital visits

By Vision Reporter

"It is amazing how I can come here and spend just one hour. It is like a miracle for some of us who have lived with HIV/AIDS for more than 20 years.

"Two years ago, I needed a full day to access treatment

because of the tedious system the health workers had to go through to retrieve our files. But now I just offer my fingerprint and get services immediately."

Olivia Kajumba, 37, a resident of Nyakigumba village, Kisomoro sub-county

in Kabarole district, who has been getting HIV treatment and care at Kibiito Health Centre IV, could not find the right words to express her gratitude regarding the new technology.

The technology being implemented by the Makerere University School of Public

Health, through its project of Monitoring and Evaluation Technical Support (METS), is being piloted in Kabarole and Hoima districts and funded by the Centre for Disease Control (CDC).

Kajumba said she now spends less time at the health

facility and has enough time to engage in more productive work to sustain her family.

"The queues were so long because the system of retrieving our files from the records office took a lot of time. The fingerprint technology has reduced the lines because

it takes a short time to verify information," she said.

Kajumba said the system is capable of telling what combination a particular patient is taking, the drugs the patients is allergic to, his/her next medical appointment and the doctor that examined her.

Fingerprint technology improves care, support for HIV/AIDS patients

By Hope Mafaranga

Among the interventions technology is spearheading is monitoring the viral load of people who are already on the antiretroviral drugs (ARVs) to see how they are coping with treatment and if the virus in their bodies has been suppressed.

According to scientists, a low or suppressed viral load will lead to the prevention of new HIV infections, improve the health quality of people living with HIV and reduce HIV mortality.

Chris Byaruhanga, the Kabarole district biostatistician, said the technology will also help determine the actual number of people living with HIV/AIDS.

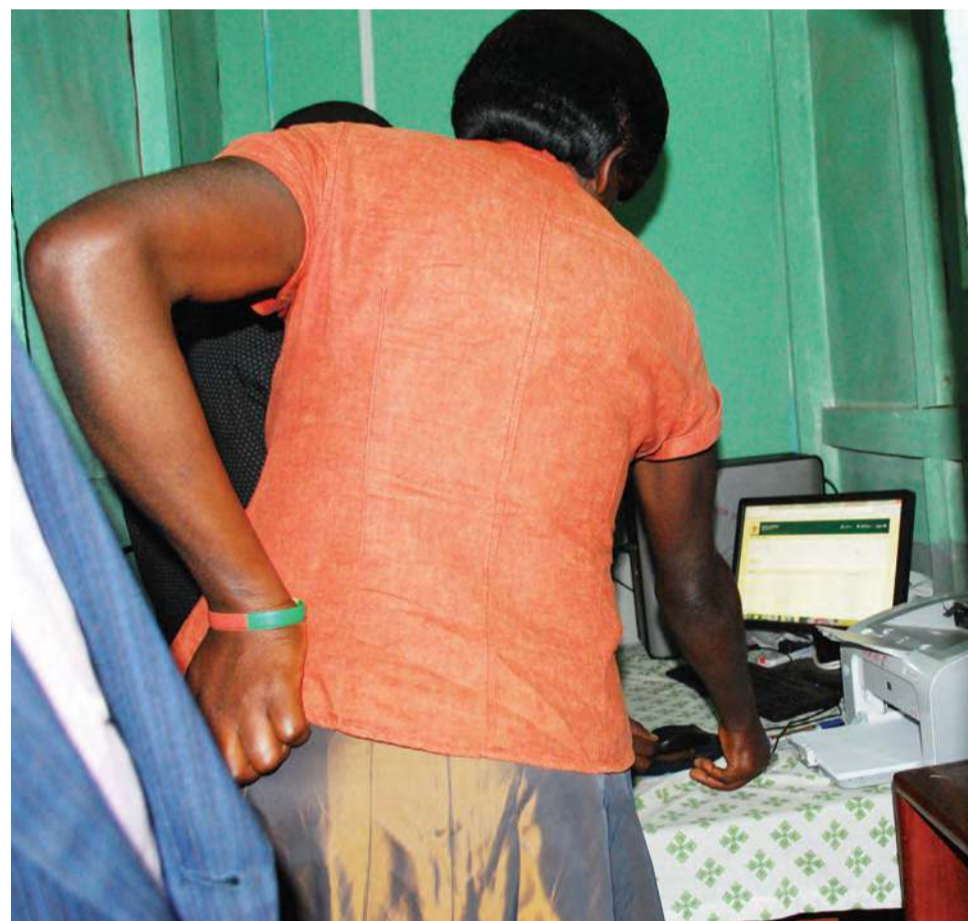
He said in 2016, the health ministry placed Kabarole HIV prevalence rate at 15%, which was much higher than the national level of 6.7%.

"The facilities using fingerprint technology have been interlinked, which is necessary to accurately monitor the clinical progression of HIV-positive patients longitudinally," he said.

Charity Kyomugisha, the monitoring and evaluation technical support (METS) deputy programmes manager, said they have been able to eliminate double testing of people and hope the technology will go a long way in fighting drug resistance among people living with HIV.

Kyomugisha said it will now be easy to followup patients who have been in care from one health facility to another and also track down those who are having adherence to treatment challenges.

"We have heard of people



One of the people living with HIV pressing her fingerprint on the machine used to track her treatment in Kabarole district. Photo by Hope Mafaranga

testing from one health centre and going to another one to get treatment, while others abandon their treatment and deceive their new health providers that they have not been on treatment. The technology will sort all this out," she added.

Edgar Kansiime, the HIV case based surveillance coordinator, said people living with HIV who lose their cards, will have no cause for alarm as the technology is able to

identify the patients' medical records.

"People who misplace their medical cards should not fear to come for their next appointment. All they need is their fingerprint and the records will automatically be retrieved," he said.

However, Dr Hudson Baliddawa from the health ministry, clarified that the new technology will not entirely eliminate paperwork, but only reduce it, which he said will

also save the Government expenses on stationery.

"We will use less paper for backup purposes, just in case the Internet is down or in case of an emergency, so that our patients do not miss their treatment," he said.

Integration

Dr Eddie Mukooyo, a commissioner in the health ministry, said the fingerprint technology will be integrated into the Uganda Electronic

Medical Records System (UgandaEMR).

UgandaEMR is an application which enables the design of a customised medical records system with no programming knowledge, although medical and systems analysis knowledge is required.

Mukooyo said UgandaEMR was approved by the Ministry of Health Patient Electronic Medical Records System, currently running in 600 health facilities across the country.

The country has 6,408 facilities, including public facilities, private for-profit and private not-for-profit facilities.

Mukooyo said the health ministry has set a target of 1,000 health facilities to be running UgandaEMR by the end of March 2018.

BETWEEN THE LINES:

The facilities with fingerprint technology have been interlinked, which is necessary to accurately monitor the clinical progression of HIV-positive patients.

"With support from METS and other partners, the ministry has customised UgandaEMR to include the tuberculosis (TB) data entry forms, maternal and child health (MCH) forms and registers," he said.

Capacity building

To quicken the integration progress, the ministry, METS and other partners gathered at Lake View Hotel in Mbarara district recently and trained a cadre of UgandaEMR expert trainers and users across the country.

"We are training biostatisticians, record-keepers and other health workers to upgrade, troubleshoot, use UgandaEMR and extend UgandaEMR to all health facilities," Mukooyo said.

He also said the cadres will be able to provide hands-on training and build capacities for their colleagues to support the rollout of the updated version of UgandaEMR.

In numbers

600

The number of health facilities with UgandaEMR

15%

HIV prevalence rate in Kabarole district in 2016 compared to the national level of 6.7%

6.7%

The national HIV prevalence rate

"Trained personnel are expected to pass on the knowledge to others so that we have a force of well-equipped, knowledgeable people to roll it out at all district levels. We want Ugandans to get comprehensive health services," he added.

Kansiime explained that the system will also help Uganda achieve the 90-90-90 UNAIDS Sustainable Goal by 2020.

"The system will help us to achieve the goal of having all people know their HIV status, all people diagnosed with HIV getting treatment while all people receiving antiretroviral therapy (ART) will have viral suppression by 2020," Kansiime said.

He said their target is to have 1,195,742 clients on ART from 1,476 ART facilities, with the majority of these clients from health centre IIIs, IVs and general hospitals across the country.

Seventy-seven per cent of facilities are government owned, with 67% of targeted clients and the high-volume facilities the priority for the EMR rollout.

"The ministry is targeting the roll out to cater for non-ART facilities so that they can use UgandaEMR in the subsequent years," he said.

Kansiime also said the technology generates reports directly automatically. This enables health workers to make monthly, quarterly and annual reports easily and has improved accurate and timely reporting.

"Imagine each time a health worker was to make reports, they had to go back to the register. It was time-consuming and needed more manpower. But with the new technology, it is becoming more sufficient and effective to make reports that for policy and decision making to the health ministry," he added.

VOICES

Fredrick Kakoraki, Kitoba sub-county:

It will minimise the duplication of cases and provide accurate data generated locally to fill in the national data.



Irene Ahaisibwe, Kabarole female youth councillor:

It is time-saving and helps health workers to give prescription on HIV with the right information.



Francis Kazini, Kiziranfumbi sub-county:

Clients who lose their documents will now get their drug prescription basing on valid electronic information.



HEALTH & Beauty

New Vision YOUR WELLNESS GUIDE

Monday, July 16, 2018

By Hope Mafaranga

When he was three months old, he developed a cough that did not cure even after taking several cough syrups. He was losing weight. His parents took the then eight-month-old baby to Kasangati Health Centre IV in Wakiso district, where he was diagnosed with tuberculosis (TB).

"I was shocked that a baby could get tuberculosis," Elizabeth Nsubuga, the child's mother, said.

John Paul Dongo, the acting director of The Union, an international organisation, said Uganda has a high burden of tuberculosis. The disease affects children aged between zero and 14 years, but is more severe in those under five.

Dongo, who is also a specialist in TB, said about one million children under 15 are infected with TB annually. One in four of these children die from the curable disease. He adds that unfortunately, children are not given priority in the TB response.

Prevention

Harriet Nabunya, the TB focal person at Nsangi Health Centre III, said contact screening requires a health worker to determine the patient's contacts at home, workplace or social environments to establish who is at risk.

"The Decentralise TB Services and Engage Communities to Transform Lives of Children with TB. (DETEC Child TB) has proven successful in increasing the detection of children with TB. It has also increased the number of children who have been exposed to the disease and are receiving preventive therapy," Nabunya said.

Dr Frank Mugabe, the manager National TB and Leprosy programme, said concerted efforts by the global public health community has saved about 50 million lives from TB between 2000 and 2016. Consequently, the global number of new TB cases fell by a third and the annual death by almost half over the same period. He, however, said far greater efforts are required to end the global TB epidemic.

"The global End TB Strategy adopted in 2015 provided for the global health community to end the long-standing neglect of TB in children," Nabunya added.

Treating children

Josephine Nakakande, a clinical officer at Nsangi Health Centre III, says child TB screening and treatment have improved in developed countries. However, in middle- and low-income countries, child TB is still largely neglected.

Children have 'pauci-bacillary TB',

TB IN CHILDREN: A SILENT TREATABLE KILLER

TUBERCULOSIS IN CHILDREN

TB spreads from person to person through the air when an infected individual coughs, sneezes or spits. Another person needs only to inhale a few of the germs to get infected.

Unborn and new-born babies are susceptible to maternal-to-child transmission of the disease

KEY SYMPTOMS: cough, fever, night sweats and weight loss, which can sometimes occur for many months

DID YOU KNOW?

- Children have 'pauci-bacillary TB' (Few bacteria in the patient's body, thus harder to diagnose than in adults)
- Children are considered a lower priority in the TB response because they are less contagious than adults
- Most TB-related deaths in children occur in young children who have not been diagnosed or treated

GLOBAL GOALS

- UN member states to establish inter-ministerial task forces to combat child TB by 2019
- 90% at-risk children receiving preventive therapy by 2022
- 90% children with active TB or MDR-TB receiving diagnosis and treatment by 2022

Estimated **1 million** children under 15 years are infected annually. **One in four** of these die

90% of children infected worldwide are left untreated, causing death of **a million** every **four years**

There are **72%** at-risk children

Prevalence of multi-drug resistant TB (MDR-TB) in children is unknown, less than **10%** of all children with MDR-TB are detected and treated

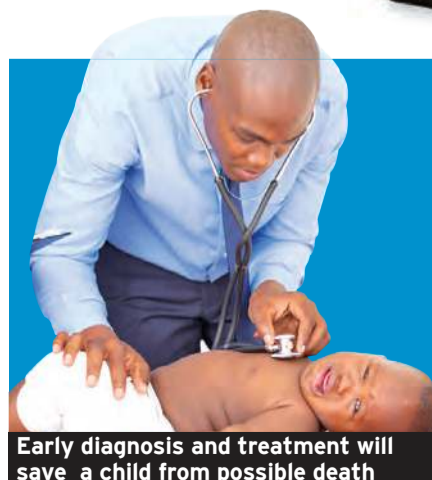
13% of children eligible for preventive treatment with isoniazid receive it globally - WHO

9.7 million orphaned by TB

GRAPHIC BY BRIAN SSEKAMATTE

meaning there are few bacteria in the patient's body, making it harder to diagnose than in adults. The bacteria are less likely to be detected in sputum. This is further complicated by the difficulty in getting sputum from children, yielding false negatives using the common acid-fast bacteria smear method," she said.

Children are less likely than adults to develop lung lesions that show up on X-rays. Tests using fluid extracted from the stomach can be inaccurate and are difficult to perform, Nakakande adds.



Early diagnosis and treatment will save a child from possible death

Who is at risk?

Children living with an adult TB patient are at risk of contracting TB, says Joseph Nsonga, a programme officer at The Union.

"Children with TB are also at high risk of developing severe forms of the disease and death, especially infants and those under five," he said.

Nsonga added that most TB-related deaths in children occur in young children who have not been diagnosed or treated.

In addition, the prevalence of multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) in children is still unknown, but it is estimated that less than 10% of all children with MDR-TB are detected and treated.

Continued on page 28

HEALTH VIEW POINT

**Child TB:
Why adults
should be
infection-free**

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), over 250,000 children develop TB. Of these, 100,000 children will die from the disease each year. Children become vulnerable in the presence of infected adults. Unfortunately, due to their barely developed immunity, children have a high risk of developing active tuberculosis. A 2015 study focusing on TB in children in Kampala by Eric Wobudeya and others, indicated that there was a high TB incidence in the city at 7.5 % of all the reported TB cases than the WHO reported national average.

It is important to stay on the lookout. Early diagnosis and successful treatment of an infectious adult patient has been cited as the best way to protect children from the disease. In today's issue, find a detailed account of TB in children.

Health and Beauty Team

TB in children: A forgotten danger wiping out youngsters

Continued from page 27

When diagnosed, children respond well to commonly used treatments. Unfortunately, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO), only 13% of children eligible for preventive treatment with isoniazid receive it globally. The less than 1% mortality in children treated for TB is rising to 13% due to multi-drug resistant TB (MDR-TB), suggesting most deaths are preventable with treatment.

Ending tuberculosis in children needs an integrated, family-centred approach to care and prevention.

"There is major potential to make progress with the low-cost tools that we already possess, including child contact screening and management. The standard of care in high-income countries is rare in TB endemic countries," Mugabe said.

When an adult is diagnosed with TB, investigating if the children in the home have been exposed must become the standard implemented everywhere to end the scourge, Joseph Nsonga, a programme officer at The Union, says.

What is TB?

TB is an infectious disease caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. While it typically affects the lungs, it can spread to any other part of the body.

TB spreads from person to another through the air when an infected individual coughs, sneezes or spits. Another person needs only to inhale a few of the germs to get infected. Key symptoms include cough, fever, night sweats and weight loss, which

can sometimes occur over many months.

About a third of the world's population carries latent TB. This is when a person is infected with *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, but does not have active tuberculosis.

Political participation

On September 26, the United Nations will issue its first high-level political declaration on TB.



Josephine Nakakande attending to a child. Child-friendly services will ensure the end of child TB. Photos by Hope Mafaranga



Treatment

Tuberculosis is treatable. It is treated with antibiotics taken over about six months, Mugabe explains. He adds that multi-drug-resistant cases require treatment for up to two years. However, without proper treatment, up to two-thirds of people with TB will die.

"Each person infected with tuberculosis has a 10% chance of progressing to TB disease within his or her lifetime. People with compromised immune systems — often caused by HIV, malnutrition, age, diabetes or who use tobacco — regularly have a higher risk of developing TB disease," he said.

Threats

Dongo explained a number of factors are contributing to the spread of active TB.

He said the emergence of MDR-TB, the prevalence of HIV combined with lifestyle factors such as smoking, diabetes and accelerating urbanisation are threatening to cause an epidemic.

"These trends affect children under adult carers. Co-infection with HIV and TB remains the biggest driver of mortality among people with HIV of all ages, with TB accounting for 40% in 2016 of AIDS-related deaths in 2016," he said.

diagnostics, treatments and a vaccine, has been set.

Screening and diagnosis

Henry Namigugu, the charge of Nsangi Health Centre III, said universal implementation of TB contacts screening is important to identify children who have been in close contact with people with TB.

There are low-cost tools for screening and diagnosis of child TB, with trained volunteers identifying child TB cases based on symptoms such as cough and fever, he says.

"This technique is easily taught — empowering community-level workers to screen at-

CHALLENGES

- Self-medication is one of the major challenges in treating TB, says Dr Frank Mugabe, the manager National TB and Leprosy programme. "Over 90,000 people get TB per year in Uganda, but 40% of them do not seek medical attention. They buy drugs without diagnosis, putting their lives at risk of multidrug-resistant TB," he said. Mugabe said a person with MDR-TB needs over \$4,000 to treat the condition, while treatment of non-drug-resistant TB is about \$300.
- He said lack of patient follow-up at referral level and stock-outs of TB drugs has led to the poor enrolment of patients.
- There is limited funding from the Government, which hinders stocking of drugs, buying equipment such as X-rays, films and facilitating human resources, especially the radiographers.

TB and HIV in children

Currently, there are about 3.4 million children living with HIV and 14 million individuals, of all ages, infected with both HIV and TB, most in the developing world.

Unborn and new-born babies are susceptible to mother-to-child transmission of both diseases. Children orphaned by AIDS or TB are challenged in seeking medical attention and adhering to treatment.

WHO estimates that 16.5 million children have been orphaned by HIV and 9.7 million by TB.

A human rights abuse

Dongo says children not being given priority in the TB response is an abuse of their right to access healthcare. "Tuberculosis in children is fatal if left untreated. Child TB is a silent epidemic, with 90% of infected children worldwide

left untreated," he said.

Dongo said this is responsible for the death of a million children every four years, yet treatment is free.

"This neglect can no longer be excused because a number of international human rights agreements state that equal access to healthcare is a human right. These treaties are considered legally binding on all signatory nations," he added.

Dongo said over the last two decades, activists have used human rights law to make healthcare provision equitable, regardless of social, economic, ethnic or cultural diversities.

He said national courts and international tribunals, including the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the European Court of Human Rights and the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights have compelled governments to ensure the delivery of TB treatment.

Way forward

John Paul Dongo, the acting director of The Union, said their initiative, DETEC Child TB (Decentralise TB Services and Engage Communities to Transform Lives of Children with TB), has been a success. This prompted Uganda's health ministry to incorporate it into the country's national TB action plan.

"Looking beyond Uganda, this or similar community-based approaches, could benefit other high-burden countries," he said. He added that eliminating child TB requires combining innovative public health interventions with technology, research and development for improved, child-friendly diagnostic techniques and treatments.

"Ending the child TB requires

interventions sensitive to social and cultural context, to reach at-risk children," Dongo said.

There is need for a vaccine against TB, Mugabe said.

The declaration will adopt the recommendations of the Stop TB Partnership, calling for member states to establish inter-ministerial task forces to combat child TB by 2019. A goal of 90% of at-risk children receiving preventive therapy and 90% with active TB or MDR-TB receiving treatment by 2022; and calling for member states to research child-friendly

risk children in resource-challenged areas," Namigugu said.

Develop New TB vaccine

For decades the developing world has relied on the Bacille Calmette Guerin (BCG) vaccine, first introduced in 1921 Worldwide.

However, according to WHO, the vaccine has a between 60%-80% effectiveness against severe forms of TB.

BCG interferes with tuberculin skin tests, making this common screening less effective and unsafe for use in children with HIV.

According to WHO, a plan to develop a new infant vaccine with 10-year duration, could save \$185 million worldwide annually.



Dongo

Namigugu



The forced migration of a large number of South Sudanese has seen over one million refugees seek safety in West Nile, Uganda. The fighting in South Sudan that broke out in December 2013 between government forces loyal to President Salva Kiir and the former vice-president, Dr Riek Machar, left many needy and vulnerable. For the next one month, *New Vision* will publish articles to highlight the plight of refugees under the campaign *Be Your Brother's Keeper* to encourage Ugandans to support refugees in all ways possible. Hope Mafaranga analyses the challenges children who fled the war unaccompanied now face



Nancy Igarija (right) with other minors who ran away from the war unaccompanied. Photos by Hope Mafaranga

Unaccompanied refugee children long to go home

When war broke out, in South Sudan in 2013, many were forced to flee to Uganda, including Nancy Igarija, who was 10 years old.

Her family no where in sight, the little girl trotted behind those who ran towards Migale at the border between Uganda and South Sudan.

"By the time we reached the boarder, I had passed out due to exhaustion. When I woke up, I found myself in Bidibidi Refugee Settlement in Yumbe district. I was told that trucks from the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) picked us from Migale and brought us to Yumbe," she recalls.

Bidibidi, which sits on 88 square miles, is the largest camp hosting over 270,000 refugees.

"I could not recognise anyone. Officials from OPM came and took us to homes, where many children without parents had been gathered," Igarija says.

Igarija and other unaccompanied children were later transferred to Zone 5 in Bidibidi.

The children often attempt to escape from the camps to go find their parents

"I had to make new friends and start life here. We were constantly reminded by camp workers that if we tried to run away to search for our parents back home in South Sudan, we would be killed in the war," she says.

She was enrolled in Ayivu Primary School in Ariwa sub-county in Yumbe district in Primary Four. She still hoped to one day see her parents.

Igarija's hopes were buried when workers from different aid organisations trying to reunite minors with their families told her that her parents and other relatives had been killed. She says her world came to end.

New Vision also met Hellen Nyaka, who came to Uganda at the age of 14,

unaccompanied.

Nyaka, who is now in Primary Seven, says life in a foreign land, moreover without family, is tough.

"My parents used to help me with homework and loved me. I used to play with my brothers and sisters. Now look at me, whom do I call mother or father?" she asks.

She adds: "People outside the camp think we get free things from donors, but they (aid organisations) cannot meet every need we have like our parents did."

"We were only given just one exercise book each and a pen for the four subjects we do, which is not enough," Nyaka says.

She says they need more assistance to study.

No hope for secondary education
Edina Olire, 14,

is in Primary Five at Ayivu Primary School. She says even if she completes P7, she has no hope of joining secondary school.

"The only secondary school is so far away while the host communities are sometimes hostile towards refugees," she says.

Monday Atiku, a case worker with Save the Children, says the biggest challenge they face is counselling children to come to terms with their new reality – a new environment and life without their families.

"It is sad when children ask about their parents and you have no answers. Some of them try to run away from the camp because they want to see their parents. They miss them," she says.

Trauma

Atiku says most of the children are traumatised, especially those who saw their parents and

relatives being killed in South Sudan.

"They do not understand why their loved ones were killed and why they are living in camps. We see that a lot when they withdraw and stop speaking to those around them," she says.

Atiku says they try to co-ordinate with other organisations to search for the relatives of the unaccompanied minors, but some have not been lucky enough to be reunited.

"Breaking the sad news to them is heart-breaking and increases the trauma and psychological torture of these young souls," she says.

To help them cope, Atiku says they identify adults in the refugee settlements to act as foster parents of the children.

"Save the Children supports these families with basic needs and even visits them to find out how they are coping in their new lives," she says.

She also says in some homes, fostering does not work, so the organisation has to find new foster parents to stay with the children.



Case worker Monday Atiku

Arua youth riot over refugees, accuse aid agencies of marginalisation

By Benedict Okethwengu

The youth around Rhino Camp and Omugo settlements in Arua district yesterday staged a demonstration, saying they are not benefiting from hosting refugees.

Omugo and Rhino Camp are home to more than 200,000 refugees who fled violence in South Sudan and eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.

Uganda has seen the size of its refugee population rapidly increase in recent years as it continues to welcome new arrivals from three ongoing

Omugo and Rhino Camp are home to more than 200,000 refugees from South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo

emergencies in South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi.

The angry youth mounted barricades on the roads leading to the camps, denying aid workers access to the

settlements.

Jinaro Onegi, the head of West Nile Private Sector, which is one of the implementing partners in Omugo settlement, said the youth were rioting because they felt that more

attention was being given to refugees than the host communities.

"The youth feel that they are being marginalised, that is why they are rioting," he said.

Ketty Acayo, the Police focal person in the Office of the Prime Minister, said Police had been dispatched to quell the riot.

The latest incident adds to the growing list of hostilities being unleashed on refugees and implementing partners by host communities.

The failed expectations of better jobs and access to social

services are being blamed for the increasing hostilities.

Last year, a section of youth from Yumbe district, under a loose organisation called the Yumbe Youth for Refugee Affairs, gave the Government a one-month ultimatum to address what they called the refugees dominance of jobs in humanitarian organisations in the camps.

They threatened to eject the agencies if their concerns were not addressed.

There have been youth protests, which signify growing resentment among the

younger generation in Yumbe towards non-governmental organisations in the camps.

The youth say their grandfathers offered land for the refugees, so they should benefit from such generosity.

But Yasin Taban, the Yumbe district LC5 chairperson, said the growing demonstration among the youth was unnecessary.

He said the locals get 30% of the donations meant for refugees and are given priority when it comes to jobs, as long as they qualify.



The forced migration of a large number of South Sudanese refugees seek safety in West Nile, Uganda. The fighting in South Sudan that broke out in December 2013 between government forces loyal to President Salva Kiir and the former vice-president, Dr Riek Machar, left many needy and vulnerable. For the next one month, *New Vision* will publish articles to highlight the plight of refugees under the campaign *Be Your Brother's Keeper* to encourage Ugandans to support refugees in all ways possible. Hope Mafaranga spent a day with some of the child-headed families to understand the challenges they face

She beams with a smile and greets me as I approach her stall. Victoria Jokuru, 15, who sells onions and sugar, immediately starts to market her products. I listen for a while, introduce myself and then ask her how she ended up at Bidibidi Refugee Settlement in Yumbe district.

Before she can answer, twins; Emmanuel Kenyi and Flora Mami aged 12, appear. She gives them a few instructions and sends them off.

Jokuru says Kenyi and Mami are some of the children she ran away with when the South Sudan war broke out in December 2013. Aid workers have tried to find their parents, but so far they have been unsuccessful.

Other children under Jokuru's care are Joyce Konga, 14, and Grace Oba, 10.

"Konga and Oba are my siblings. I ran away with them and I have to protect them. I am their mother and father because our parents were killed during the war," she says.

Jokuru says she decided to act as the head of the household so as to keep her siblings and the twins together.

"We all work together at home; we collect firewood, water and cook together. I sell these items so as to earn money to buy a few basics," she says.

"Our neighbour came home and informed me that my mother was among those who had been killed in the fighting in Wonduruba Market in South Sudan," she adds.

Escaping the war

Shortly after the war broke out, Jokuru and her siblings left their village with their neighbour and walked for seven days until they reached Uganda.

Jokuru and her younger siblings are among more than 5,000 unaccompanied South Sudanese refugee children who fled the civil war and crossed into Uganda without

South Sudanese children. Some of them were forced to head families after their parents were killed in the war. AFP photo



Refugee child gives up school to mother siblings

Conflict

2013

President Salva Kiir fires his entire cabinet, including vice-president Riek Machar. Violence erupts and fighting breaks out between government forces and soldiers loyal to Machar.

2014

The South Sudanese government and Machar's forces sign a cease fire deal.

2016

President Kiir reinstates Machar as vice-president as part of a deal to end the civil war. He is sworn in in April. In July, fighting breaks out between government forces and soldiers loyal to Machar. Hundreds are left dead, and Machar flees the country. He is sacked again and replaced by Taban Deng Gai.

2017

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees says the number of refugees who have fled South Sudan tops 1.5 million.

Before the war broke out, Jokuru was in Primary Five at Yie Primary School in South Sudan

parents.

"The journey was so hard. The sun was hot and we had trouble finding food and water. We also met soldiers and rebels along the way," she says.

Jokuru says it is hard to care for the children and harder to meet all of their basic needs.

"When they need medicine, clothing or scholastic materials, they look to me. I make between sh1,000 and sh3,000 a day selling onions and sugar. I often borrow from my neighbours to buy food," she says.

Before the war broke out, Jokuru was in Primary Five at Yie Primary School in South Sudan. After fleeing to Uganda, she gave up school to look after her siblings and the twins.

"I have to work to ensure that we survive and this cannot be done if I am in school," she says.

Rose Alma, a child protection officer with Save the Children, says the number of child refugees who travelled alone to escape fighting is alarming.

"They have been forced to become adults. They are now responsible not

just for themselves, but also their siblings," she says.

Robert Baryamwesiga, the Bidibidi Settlement commandant under the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), says 86% of the refugees are women and children.

He says OPM works with partners like United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Vision, Save the Children and the Danish Refugee Council to send out case workers to monitor child-headed households.

What is being done

Albert Okai, the acting project manager of Save the Children, says they conducted a rapid household economy analysis to get a better understanding of the livelihood opportunities for refugees.

The study, he says, produced the Cash for Work Project, which targets refugee communities with the aim to improve their household income.

Okai says the project is funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and that they have trained 500 refugees, including foster families and child-headed households in various skills.

"After the training, they were given start-up

capital to start businesses. The first payment helps pay for necessities and a second goes towards training and funding families to start their own businesses.

Okai says the move is aimed at reducing refugee reliance on external aid.

Aziz Aluma, the LC3 chairperson of Ariwa sub-county, says Bidibidi settlement currently hosts more than 272,2061 refugees from South Sudan.

Bidibidi Refugee Settlement is situated across the five sub-counties of Romogi, Kululu, Kochi, Odravu and Ariwa, according to Aluma.



Jokuru breaks down as she narrates her story