

Rainbow House of Hope Uganda Children's Voice



Thank You All for A Great Time in Uganda

By Franziska Thies and Andrea Schneider

After three months full of new impressions and experiences our time in Uganda is now coming to an end. We can hardly believe that time passed so quickly and we are already returning home. It is not easy for us to say goodbye to all the people who became friends to us during our stay. It was they who introduced us to everything we needed to know and who helped us when insecurities or problems occurred. It was they who shared not only their experience but also a lot of time with us. In this way they made us feel welcome and comfortable. That is why it will be they who we will miss so much when we return to Germany.

First of all we want to thank the Rainbow staff for regarding us as part of the team, including us in all the activities and trusting us with our responsibilities. We always had the impression that you really care for our attitudes towards, and approaches to, different issues, and that you value our work.

We also want to thank the youth leaders for giving us an idea about their tasks in different divisions and furthermore for showing us interesting places in and around Kampala.

Last but not least we want to express our gratitude to the numerous children who, along with their families, welcomed us in such a friendly manner, accepted us as members of their community and in this way made us

feel at home in Uganda. Without your rich participation in the activities we planned they would have failed to be successful.

All of you contributed to making our time in Uganda a success and an experience that we will never forget! Thank you and we hope to see you again!

Below; Andrea making crafts



Above; Franzi with RHU child.

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Some Day I Will Be a Social Worker

By Junior Kutosi

us to join.

My name is Junior **Kutosi** and I am 14 years old. I am the last-born child, and the only boy, in our family. My three elder sisters and I used to stay in Kansanga with our mother, but later moved to Nsambya.

My sister Suzie used to have a friend at Rainbow House who introduced her to the organization. After getting used to and enjoying the activities there, she encouraged me to join, too. Our mother was kindly allowed

Before joining RHU I used to have a problem with my school fees. After, I not only managed to get some school fee funds from RHU, but also to develop my talents through playing music in the brass band, making handicrafts and playing badminton.

Shortly after joining RHU, I was chosen to be the chairman of the under-15 group, which was like a gift from God to me.

I would like to thank RHU management, our sponsors from Germany and other well-wishers for supporting me and all the other children.

Some day I would like to become a social worker so that I can also start an organization like RHU. I would like to be able to support street children and other vulnerable children and help them to enjoy all their rights

The RHU Girls' Group Begins to Shine

By Gift Peggy

My name is Peggy and I am 18 years old. My hobbies are dancing, singing, swimming, making friends and touring. I am in Senior Six (S.6), my last year in secondary school.

I joined Rainbow House of Hope (RHU) in 2008 when I met a group of RHU members having fun at a swimming pool in Kabalagala. After interacting with them and learning more about the organization, I decided to join up.

At RHU, I joined the brass band, my first instrument being the side drum. Soon I started learning the trumpet, and later got involved in training, dancing and singing with the girls' group. I am proud to be among the youth at RHU.

The girls' group meets three times a week. During that time we have lessons, play games, sing, and dance, go for country walks and debate. It's nice that we have many girls in the group, and the number is increasing.

I am happy that RHU that came up with a program for supporting young girls, and thank them and all their international supporters for such an exciting initiative.

Over the past month the Rainbow House of Hope Girls' Group has performed in popular places like the Sheraton Hotel and the Serena Hotel in Kampala. They have also been invited to perform on International Refugee Day and are eagerly training in anticipation of the event.

Helped by their energetic trainer Francis, these smart and talented young girls use their intelligence, courage and passion to create fabulous dance performances, and will stop at nothing – no matter what it takes—to achieve their dreams of becoming famous.

Though African traditional communities discourage girls from going out to develop their talents, preferring to leave them in the home for domestic chores, RHU is pioneering a campaign to build the girls' capacity around Uganda.

This is a great chance for girls, and we call upon as many of you as possible to join us. We also urge parents to send both boys and girls to participate in the many educational activities at RHU, such as playing music, sports and games, dancing and singing.

Below: The RHU Girls' Group in a training session, with their trainer, Mr. Francis Kyeyune, in front of them



Above: The RHU Girls' Group performing during a social gathering at RHU house

Why We Need Community Education to Fight Child Abuse

By Christine Turihamwe and Andrea Schneider

A major problem in fighting child abuse is that many people do not know what it means and which behaviour it includes, so that in Uganda, as in other countries, children are routinely mistreated in school or at home. This is one reason we still find a lot of child abuse all over the world, despite the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) coming into effect as long ago as 1989. Take the example of child *physical* abuse. Many teachers and parents do not regard beating as abuse but as a normal and necessary punishment. Moreover, since *they* grew up physically abused, they see nothing wrong with it, which perpetuates the problem, with parents thinking what was good enough for them should be good enough for their children, so that the cycle continues.

Then there is child *sexual* abuse. Even if children identify certain adult behavior as having sexual intent (which many children cannot), there is no way out for them because they dare not tell anyone about it. For one thing, they feel ashamed, as their violators might be teachers, neighbors, or even relatives. Again, they might simply fear the revenge of their offenders.

While abuse of all kinds occurs to both boys and girls, there are problems unique to girls. In Uganda, for instance, denial of education of girls stems from a deeply-rooted cultural attitude that girls should work at home until they can be married off, which enriches the family that receives dowry. Accordingly, so the reasoning goes, it is unnecessary for them to attend school. Many families prefer to pay fees for boys, whose future prospects look more promising from their point of view.

Child labour is another form of abuse, where children are burdened with heavy work not out of proportion to their age or ability to perform. It does not matter whether this is within or outside the home, but at home most of the workload goes to girls, for the same cultural attitudes mentioned above. They work all day long - digging, fetching water, preparing food, washing utensils and clothes, leaving no time for going to school. Also, working under harsh supervision makes the girls hate themselves and end up going to streets or escaping from home.

From all this it is clear that solving the child abuse problem requires a multi-pronged approach. Education is an important first step. Parents need to be taught to respect children's rights as guaranteed under the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Such parents' education can take the form of community talks to discuss their problems at home and possible solutions that do not include violence. If people find some support in their neighborhood they might change behavior in case of unforeseen challenges.

Secondly, children should be encouraged to talk about their experiences and in this way find relief and support. This serves not only to make adults understand the children's plight better as they witness the psychological damage abuse does to children, but also to open the door to holding offenders accountable for their actions.

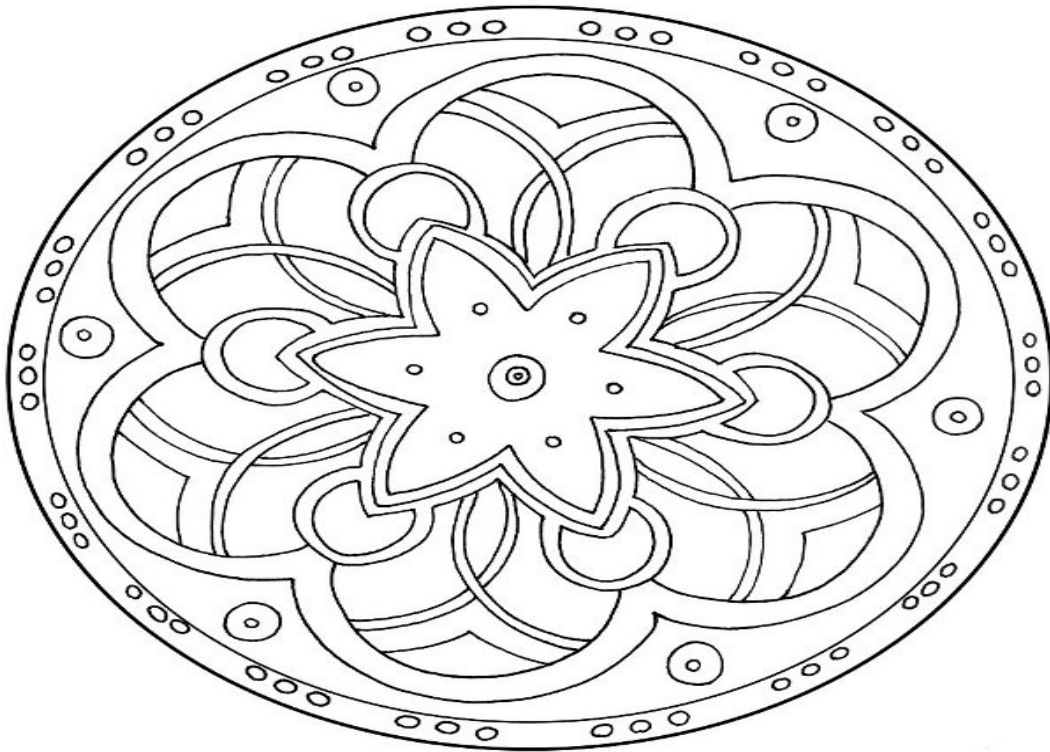


Above: Both girls and boys need equal opportunity to express themselves when their interests are threatened

Below: Fighting child abuse needs the participation of the whole community. No one is too small or too big to contribute. Even babies, both boys and girls, have something to give!



Children's Page: Mandala Children Print



Language Course, Lesson 13: Child Abuse

English	Deutsch	Luganda
street children	Strassenkinder	Abaana b'okungudo
a buse	der missbrauch	
punishment	die bestrafung	Okubonereza / Ekibonerezo
labor	kinderarbeit	Okukozesa
the children	die kinder	Abaana
rights	die rechte	Eddembe
equality	gleichstellung	Obwenkanya
gender	geschlecht	Okubeera omukazi oba omusajja
education	die bildung	Obuyigirize / Enjigiriza