

NEWSLETTER

August 2021



The month of August came with the lifting of the total lockdown and a greatly improved COVID-19 situation in Uganda. For FIDA Uganda, the month presented an opportunity to strengthen our partnerships, reconnect with the community justice actors that we work with and continue to serve our clients through both our online and in-person avenues.

ENHANCING ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR WOMEN

Case Statistics

During the month of August, a total of **2050 cases** were handled at FIDA Uganda's **15 field offices** and **4 justice desks**. Out of these, a total of **1353 clients were female** and **697 were male**. The organizations handled high numbers of land cases and also continued to provide support in family matters concerning **domestic violence, maintenance and custody**.

Success story of the month

FIDA Uganda rescues and repatriates 35 survivors of child trafficking from Kenya

Child trafficking is a major concern in the Karamoja sub-region. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, child trafficking figures have escalated in the Napak district in particular. The motive behind this trafficking varies from forced labour to organ harvesting, forced marriage and sexual exploitation. Children are being trafficked mainly to commercial centres such as Kampala and Busia and also across the border to Kenya.

On Thursday 5th August 2021, FIDA Uganda, with support from UN Women in partnership with Ecological Christian Organisation (ECO Uganda), Dwelling Places, Uganda Change Agents, The Child and Family Protection Unit of the police-Napak District (CFPU), and Italian Cooperation rescued and repatriated 35 Karamojong girls from Kenya to Uganda. The Kenyan government worked hand-in-hand with the Ugandan government to ensure that the children were returned home safe and sound, and the process was overseen by International Organisation for Migration, Uganda and Uganda Migrations.



The repatriated girls meet with the Resident District Commissioner of Napak District upon arrival.

The girls, who were trafficked from Napak District, were received at the Busia border and taken to Koblin Technical Institute in Lorengocora sub-county, Napak District for temporary settlement while receiving skills training and psychosocial support. Since the repatriation, FIDA Uganda in partnership with CFPU-Napak has successfully resettled 28 of the 35 girls at their respective homes. The parents of the children were greatly relieved to be reunited with their children since the majority of the girls left their homes willingly, believing the promises of traffickers, and without telling their parents about their plans.

During the resettlement process, FIDA and CFPU-Napak sensitized the parents of the girls on the

illegality of child trafficking and cautioned the community against trafficking. It is important to instill collective responsibility among communities in order to end child trafficking in Napak district.

One of the key perpetrators of child trafficking from Napak to Kenya was tracked down, arrested, and is currently in custody. The matter has been filed in court and proceedings are ongoing with legal support from FIDA Uganda. FIDA Uganda is grateful to our strong network of partners and allies who have worked together to make this rescue and repatriation possible. ■



Figure 1: FIDA Uganda officers together with CFPU-Napak officer resettling one of the girls in Napak district, after being rescued and repatriated from Kenya



Figure 2: The trafficked girls rescued from Kenya arriving at Busia border

ADVOCACY



Promoting justice for children in conflict with the law

FIDA Uganda held a stakeholder engagement with the Uganda Police Force (UPF) concerning the current state of the juvenile justice system. The engagement was held on 10th August 2021 at the Police Headquarters in Naguru and was attended by officers from the Child and Family Protection Unit as well as the Directorate of Human Rights and Legal Services. Ms. Susan Wamala from FIDA Uganda accentuated the challenges faced by children in conflict with the law, who often face human rights abuses in detention, including being detained in the same holding cells as adults. The UPF representatives welcomed FIDA's recommendations and agreed that the Juvenile Diversion Guidelines are not universally applied by all police stations and officers. It was agreed that FIDA Uganda will work with the Police to raise awareness about juvenile justice and update the guidelines and disseminate them among District Police Commanders. ■



Ms. Susan Wamala, FIDA Uganda; ASP Diana Nairuba, UPF; SP Dorothy Kyobutungu, UPF; SSP Maureen Atuhairwe, UPF

PARTNERSHIPS



On August 19th FIDA Uganda and our partner, the Strategic Initiative for Women in the Greater Horn of Africa (SIHA) met with Kampala Capital City Authority Directorate of Gender and Community Services and Production in order to discuss a possible partnership between the Directorate and FIDA Uganda for the promotion of rights of women market vendors in Kampala. It was agreed that FIDA Uganda will

be allowed to make input into an Ordinance which KCCA is developing aimed at reducing Gender-Based Violence in the city markets and that FIDA will train KCCA law enforcement officials on a human rights-based approach to law enforcement within the markets. FIDA also committed to conduct community awareness sessions on vendors' rights and to provide legal aid services. A Memorandum of Understanding is currently under negotiation and FIDA Uganda looks forward to a fruitful relationship with KCCA, for the promotion and protection of the rights of women in the informal sector. ■



Ms. Irene Ekonga, Director of Programs FIDA Uganda; Mr. Gumisiriza Godwin, KCCA Manager Gender, Community Service and Production; Ms. Liliane Adriko, CEO FIDA Uganda; Mr. Esau Galukanda, KCCA Ag. Director Gender, Community Service and Production; Ms. Brenda Aber, SIHA Network and Ms. Agnes Dhatemwa, Program Coordinator, FIDA Uganda.



MEMBERSHIP



FIDA Uganda Board Member appointed as Commissioner to the Uganda Human Rights Commission

FIDA Uganda proudly congratulates the Vice-Chairperson of our Board of Directors, Adv. Shifrah Lukwago on her appointment as Commissioner to the Uganda Human Rights Commission. We believe that Adv. Lukwago will continue to champion the rights of women and girls in this new capacity and look forward to bearing witness to the impact that her tenure will have on the advancement of human rights in Uganda. ■



Adv. Shifrah Lukwago (Photo: Facebook)



Plot 4, Robert Mugabe Road.
Off Chwa 11, Mbuya.
P. O. Box 2157. Kampala-Uganda



Tel: +256-414-697-067
Toll free: 0800-111-511



Email: fida@fidauganda.org
www.fidauganda.org