

# GIRL CHILD PROTECTION Handbook

in Response to Covid-19



*It takes a World to Protect the Rights of the Girl Child*

**Hoima Diocese  
Department of Education**

**January 2022**

**GIRL CHILD PROTECTION**  
**Handbook**  
in Response to Covid-19

**DIOCESE OF HOIMA**

© Diocese of Hoima 2022

All rights are reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form, by Print, Microfilm, Photocopying, Microfiche, Translation or any other means without prior written permission obtained from the author or publishers.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD.....	v
ABBREVIATIONS.....	vi
GLOSSARY.....	vii
<b>1.0 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Purpose, Scope and Target Group of the Handbook.....	1
1.1.1 Purpose.....	1
1.1.2 Scope.....	1
1.1.3 Target Group.....	1
<b>2.0 CHAPTER TWO: CHILD PROTECTION AND COVID-19.....</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1 Child Protection.....	3
2.2 Child.....	3
2.3 The Concept of Covid-19.....	4
2.3.1 Definition.....	4
2.3.2 Transmission of the Disease.....	5
2.3.3 What are the symptoms of COVID-19.....	5
2.3.4 Health precaution measures.....	5
2.4 Covid-19 and Child Protection.....	8
<b>3.0 CHAPTER THREE: GIRL CHILD VULNERABILITY AND ABUSE.....</b>	<b>9</b>
3.1 Girl Child Vulnerability.....	9
3.2 Categories of Abuse in Uganda (Diocese Of Hoima).....	9
3.3 Signs of Abuse among Children.....	16
3.4 High Vulnerability of Girls.....	17
3.5 Mitigation Strategies.....	17
3.5.1 Child Protection Rings of Responsibility.....	17
3.5.2 Roles of Actors in the Protection of the Girl Child.....	19
<b>4.0 CHAPTER FOUR: RIGHTS OF CHILDREN.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>5.0 CHAPTER FIVE: MENSTRUAL HYGIENE.....</b>	<b>28</b>
5.1 Definition.....	28
5.2 Table Summering the Core Problem, Associated effects and Mitigation.....	29
5.3 Break the Silence on Menstruation.....	30
5.4 Key Messages to the Girl Child.....	31

<b>6.0 CHAPTER SIX: GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING.....</b>	<b>32</b>
6.1 GUIDANCE.....	32
6.1.1 Principles of Guidance.....	32
6.1.2 Classifications of Guidance.....	32
6.1.3 Importance of Guidance.....	33
6.2 COUNSELING.....	33
6.2.1 Focus points.....	34
6.2.2 Characteristics of Counseling.....	34
6.2.3 Principles of counseling.....	34
6.2.4 Stages of Counseling.....	35
<b>7.0 CHAPTER SEVEN: POSITIVE DISCIPLINE.....</b>	<b>36</b>
7.1 Tools And Concepts Of Positive Discipline.....	36
7.2 Unique Characteristics Of The Positive Discipline Model Also Include.....	36
<b>8.0 CHAPTER EIGHT: CHILD PROTECTION REPORTING &amp; REFERRAL.....</b>	<b>38</b>
8.1 Examples Of Ways That Children Can Report Violence.....	38
8.2 Qualities Of A Good Reporting Mechanism For Children.....	38
8.3 Basic Elements Of An Effective Reporting And Referral Mechanism.....	39
<b>9.0 CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Reference.....</b>	<b>40</b>

# FOREWORD

Hoima Diocese Department of Education (HODIDE) has prioritized putting up Child Protection systems to prevent and respond to Child Abuse, Violence and Exploitation. We join the Government of the Republic of Uganda, and the initiatives of other implementing partners to reduce the number of Child Abuse cases. In this undertaking, child abuse cases will be identified, reported and adequately responded to by the various duty bearers throughout the Diocese.

This handbook outlines steps and procedures to be followed in identification, reporting and management of several Child abuse cases and the roles of the different duty bearers in child protection.

The development of this Case Management Handbook will enable the government, civil society stakeholders and development partners to standardize child protection case management especially during Epidemics and Pandemics.

On behalf of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Hoima, I urge all child protection actors across different sectors to make this Handbook a key reference point in managing cases of child abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Through the Diocesan Education Office, the Diocese has established a Child Helpline +256392080584 that collaborates with the Government toll free telephone facility with the short code 116, for reporting and responding to child abuse cases.

*'Let your light shine'*



**Rev. Fr. Patrick Mugisa**  
Education Secretary - Diocese of Hoima

# ABBREVIATIONS

Covid-19: Corona Virus Disease

C.P.Os: Child Protection Officers

HCD: Hoima Catholic Diocese

HODIDE: Hoima Diocese Department of Education

# GLOSSARY

**Case Management:** A way of organising and carrying out work to address an individual child's [and their families] needs in an appropriate, systematic and timely manner, through direct support and or referral (Global Protection Cluster, 2014).

**Caseworker:** Is the worker employed by a government or non-profit agency or another organisation with the primary responsibility for ensuring that a child receives appropriate services starting from case identification to case closure.

**Case Referral:** This is the process of formally requesting for services for a child or their family from another agency through an established procedure and/or form.

**Case Transfer:** This is the formal handover of a case from one agency to another for effective management.

**Child Protection:** The prevention of and response to abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence against children.

**Child Protection System:** A set of laws, policies, regulations and services in all social sectors (especially social welfare, education, health, security and justice) that prevent and respond to abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence against children.

**Custody:** The legal and practical relationship between a parent / guardian and his or her child. This can include; the right of the parent to make decisions in the best interest of the child, the parent's duty to care for the child and the right to visit the child.

**Client:** Any person seeking child protection case management services.

**Child survivor:** A child that has suffered violation of their protection right.



# CHAPTER ONE:

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 PURPOSE, SCOPE AND TARGET GROUP OF THE HANDBOOK

#### 1.1.1 Purpose

Child Protection is a shared mandate by different sectors of social welfare, health, security and justice, and involves actions taken by formal and non-formal/ community actors. Given the many sectors and actors involved, this Handbook was developed to provide a harmonized system in response to the several Child Abuses especially in line with the Girl Child in Hoima Catholic Diocese. The Handbook provides guidance on the management of Girl Child Protection cases based on the relevant Education Policies in the Diocese of Hoima and other National Child Protection Laws and Policies. The Handbook complements existing child protection policies and procedures.

#### 1.1.2 Scope

The booklet covers the entire Diocese of Hoima (Bunyoro Sub Region) which is composed of Hoima City, Hoima District, Masindi Municipality, Masindi, Kikuube, Buliisa, Kibaale, Kakumiro, Kiryandongo and Kagadi Districts.

#### 1.1.3 Target Group

The booklet targets Children, School Communities, Parents, Religious men and women, Cultural Institutions, District Probation Officers and Family and Child Protection Units, Law enforcers, District Education Officers, School Inspectors, Community and Faith Based Organizations, Directorate of Public Prosecutions and the relevant District Offices and Education Implementing Partners.

## 1.2 RATIONAL OF THE BOOKLET

This booklet is designed to give elaborations on the effect of Covid-19 on the Protection of the Girl Child in the Diocese of Hoima. It is thus designed to;

1. Give a brief understanding of Covid-19 and its effects on child protection in the Diocese of Hoima.
2. Understand the roles of various actors in Child protection.
3. Increase the community understanding of the pathways for managing child protection cases.
4. Deepen community knowledge on case management principles, ethics and good practices.
5. Appreciate efforts so far taken by different stakeholders in child protection in the Diocese of Hoima.
6. Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation practices in child protection.

# CHAPTER TWO

## 2.0 CHILD PROTECTION AND COVID-19

### 2.1 CHILD PROTECTION

This refers to all mechanisms established to prevent and respond to abuse, neglect, exploitation and other forms of violence against children. In this booklet, special attention shall be directed towards the Girl Child in Bunyoro Sub Region (Diocese of Hoima) who faces several forms of abuse and marginalization resulting from Covid-19 Pandemic. In this regard, the following dimensions shall be given key attention in this booklet;

- i. The Concept of Covid-19
- ii. Girl Child Abuse and Vulnerability
- iii. Child Protection and Covid-19
- iv. Girl Child Rights
- v. Menstrual Hygiene
- vi. Positive Discipline
- vii. Guidance and Counseling
- viii. Psychosocial Social Support

### 2.2 CHILD

This refers to a person below the age of eighteen years; Unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

## 2.3 THE CONCEPT OF COVID-19

### Protect yourself and loved ones from coronavirus.

**Wash** your hands regularly with **soap** and **water**.

**Cover** your mouth and nose while **sneezing** or **coughing**.



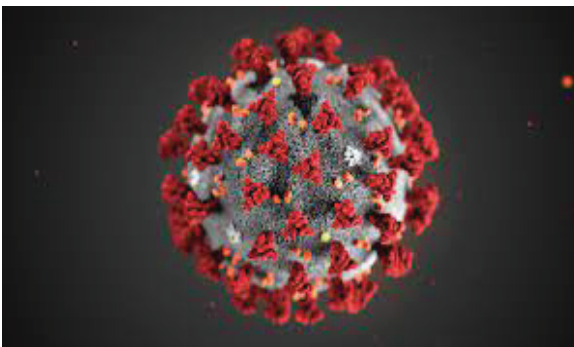
**Avoid close contact** with anyone who has a cold or flu-like symptoms.

If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing, **seek medical care early**.

Figure 1 Source: Ministry of Health

### 2.3.1 Definition

COVID-19 is a disease caused by a new strain of coronavirus. 'CO' stands for corona, 'VI' for virus, and 'D' for disease. Formerly, the disease was referred to as '2019 novel coronavirus' or '2019-nCoV.' The virus continues to manifest in different variants such as Delta, Omicron, among others each of which appears with its distinct and more dangerous ways in relation to the former.



External View of the Virus

## 2.3.2 Transmission of the Disease

It is an air-borne disease transmitted through fluids (from the respiratory system of an infected person) via the nose and mouth to an uninfected person. These fluids could be transmitted through open coughing and sneezing in the community.

It is also transmitted when an infected person has fluids from the respiratory system e.g. saliva, mucus in one of his or her external parts gets into contact with other surfaces and the uninfected person touches the same surface and thereafter touches in the mouth, eyes or ears.

## 2.3.3 What are the symptoms of COVID-19

Symptoms can include fever, cough and shortness of breath. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia or breathing difficulties. More rarely, the disease can be fatal. These symptoms are similar to the flu (influenza) or the common cold, which are a lot more common than COVID-19. This is why testing is required to confirm if someone has COVID-19.

## 2.3.4 Health precaution measures

WHO through the MoH has constantly encouraged community to put into practice the following safety precautions.

1. **Covid-19 Vaccination:** There is no affirmation from health experts that vaccination is a preventive precaution against the pandemic and neither is it a cure for the disease. However, the vaccine reduces the adverse effects of the disease on one's health. It is thus important that all adults (above 18 years) actively get involved in vaccination through;
  - i. Being personally vaccinated,
  - ii. Encourage others to be vaccinated
  - iii. Fight malpractices in the vaccination system such as buying of vaccination cards and vaccines.



*Safe Covid-19  
Vaccination*

2. **Social Distancing:** All persons should observe a distance of at least 02 meters from one another. Always avoid crowded places however much a function might be of relevance. Thus lining up of learners to serve food needs to be always avoided. If learners are many in a given classroom, the school management needs to devise possible means on how to effectively manage the population.
3. **Put on a face mask:** This MUST cover the Mouth and Nose fully and must be strategically touched during removal shown in the photos attached. An individual (infected or uninfected) MUST always cough or sneeze in a handkerchief and after separation from the public.



*Always put on your  
mask rightly while  
in public*

**Wash hands and sanitize:** After touching every surface, an individual MUST wash/ sanitize his or her hands. Recommended detergents need to be always used to ensure that the virus is effectively killed during the process.



*Hand Washing is a good health & hygiene practice*

**Disinfection of surfaces:** This involves the spraying of surfaces with recommendable disinfectants to kill the virus that might be on certain surfaces.

- 4. Case management:** Each school is required to at least have one sick bay/ isolation room to effectively manage suspects and infected victims. For proper management, it would be more advisable that if a child/ staff is found positive, strict attention and care be done/ contained at school till an individual heals. It is not okay to send a positive victim back home as this might spread the virus to a larger community. Each school is thus required to have a Covid-19 task force that will always ensure strict implementation of the SOPs. In case of any suspected victim, kindly contact professional health personnel.
- 5. Take more fruits:** These include pineapples, mangoes, passion fruits, lemon, oranges, etc. These contain Vitamin C which greatly boosts the body immune system to fight against the virus, thus take at least one of the fruits below daily. Additionally, an individual is encouraged to always take warm water.



## 2.4 COVID-19 AND CHILD PROTECTION

The two concepts have been given elaboration already above. In this case however, there is a strong positive relationship between the two with Covid-19 greatly affecting Child Protection in Bunyoro (Diocese of Hoima). In an engagement meeting held with Priests in charge of Education in the Diocese on 2<sup>nd</sup>, Dec 2021, it was pointed out that the pandemic has led to at least 7% increment in the child abuse and violence rates in the respective Parishes in the Diocese all resulting from the pandemic lockdown measures. Key among the effects pointed out during the meeting include; Increased teenage pregnancies and child marriages, child labour, domestic violence, increased poverty due to loss of jobs, drug abuse, among others which directly or indirectly have increased vulnerability of the Girl Child to many negative sustainable effects in the Diocese of Hoima.

# CHAPTER THREE:

## 3.0 GIRL CHILD VULNERABILITY AND ABUSE

### 3.1 GIRL CHILD VULNERABILITY

Children (persons below 18 years) comprise 60% of the total population in the Diocese of Hoima (Census 2014) and thus these are entitled to Care and Protection from all forms of abuse as well as equipped with relevant information and skills to protect themselves and others.

Due to the outbreak of Covid-19, which called for various lockdown measures including the closure of schools to curb the spread of the pandemic; A sample from Buliisa District shows a 20-30% teenage pregnancies of the total population in the district have been registered, (Impact of Covid-19 on Women and Girls, 2021). Though such abuses have always existed before, there has been an exponential rise in the abuses which greatly threatens the outcomes for the sustainable development of the Girl Child politically, economically and socially.

### 3.2 CATEGORIES OF ABUSE IN UGANDA (DIOCESE OF HOIMA)

The right of protection from harm and violence is a fundamental human right and key duty for state parties as stipulated in the national legal frameworks and the Diocesan Education Policy. Though the government has made steps to domesticate the policies, there still exist challenges with implementation and inadequate investment to support the operation of the institutional frameworks. This has led to the violation of rights of children. Below are the major categories of abuses in the Diocese of Hoima that have worsened during Covid-19 lockdowns;

**Neglect:** This refers to the intentional failure of parents or care givers to meet their children's emotional and physical needs including food, cloths, education, shelter, medical treatment and other basic needs of life. It happens when care providers can't or won't meet these needs. It also happens when the providers fail to supervise/ monitor the children's way

of life or protect them from harm. Poverty itself may not be an excuse for child neglect or abuse, though children living in poverty can be more at risk of neglect.



Child neglect results into young street beggers

**Sexual abuse:** Refers to any inappropriate, coerced or forced sexual activity, touching, exploitation, misconduct or sexual assault [verbal sexual harassment] involving a child. Sexual violence experienced by children includes being “bad” touches, given unwanted attention, being exposed to naked adults, having sex or being sexually forced to touch adults in sexual ways, or being forced to have sex. Sexual abuse involves incest, child marriage, rape, defilement, exposure to or participation in pornography, sexual slavery, commercial sexual exploitation, among others.



Stop seeking unwanted attention from young girls

**Emotional abuse:** It refers to open or hidden behavior that conveys to a child that he/ she is worthless, unloved, unwanted, endangered or of value only in meeting another's needs. It includes blaming, belittling, degrading, intimidating, bullying, terrorizing, isolating, restraining, confining, corrupting, exploiting, spurning, withholding affection, belittling the child's capabilities, qualities and desires, or otherwise behaving in a manner that is harmful, potentially harmful or insensitive to the child's developmental needs.

In some cases, these result into internal and external displacement of the child resulting into increased number of street children, refugees, missing children from our communities, among other related effects.



Fights between parents directly tortures our children in homes



Unnecessary Communal child segregation leads to desparacy among children

Pact causing injury or trauma to another person by way of bodily contact. Examples include hitting, kicking, punching, beating, stabbing, biting, pushing, shoving, throwing, pulling, dragging, dropping, shaking, battering, strangling / choking, smothering, burning, scalding and poisoning. This usually results into marks on the child's body in the form of injuries, bruises, fire burns, bite marks and swellings.



Such punishments are highly condemned and punishable by the law

**Exploitation:** An act of treating someone unfairly using authority or influence in order to benefit from his or her work. Commercial exploitation hurts a person's physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. Sexual exploitation includes profiting economically, socially or politically from the sexual abuse of another person. Examples include prostitution, pornography and trafficking of persons for sexual abuse.



Let's join hands to end such child labour practices

**Child Trafficking:** This includes one or a combination of the following; sexual abuse, forced marriages, child marriages, forced labour, harmful child labour, child kidnap, child stealing, being used in armed conflict, being used as street beggars, being used in illegal activities, debt bondage, slavery,

human sacrifice, removal of organs and sex tourism (Some of these forms of exploitation are defined under child labour and sexual violence).



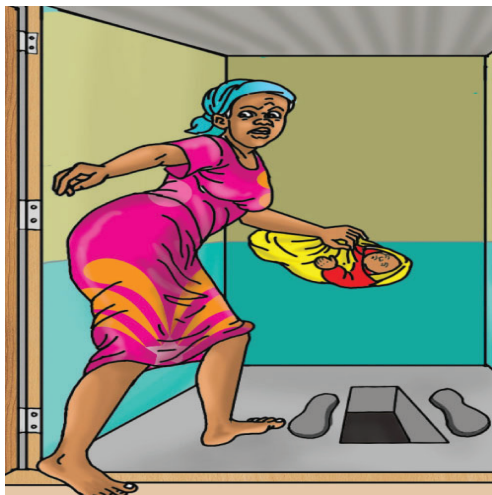
*Let's join hands to  
end child labour in our  
communities*

### **Denial or threatening children's right to life**

Any action that causes or is likely to lead to the death of a child; under this category, we have the following forms of abuses; abortion, infanticide, murder and aiding suicide. Such abuses/ violence lead to direct loss of life; this is directly punishable by the law; like any other human being, children have the right to live.

*Join hands to end  
Child Sacrifice*



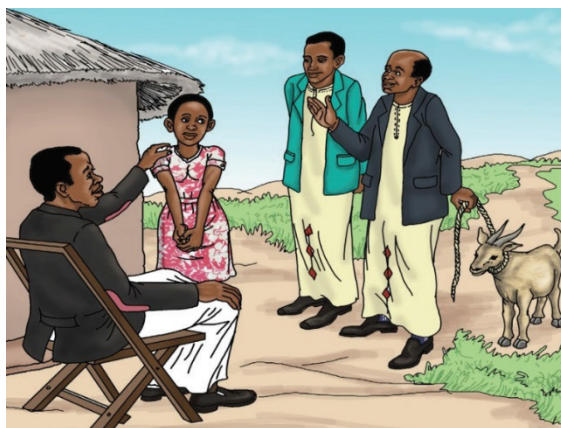


Babies too have the right to live Stop throwing them in latrines/toilets/ rubbish pits

## Harmful traditional and religious practices

Widely accepted norms and practices of cultural and religious institutions which have intentional and unintentional negative consequences on the lives of children. Examples of these include; female genital mutilation and early/ forced marriages.

Teenage cultural marriages are highly punishable by the law



### 3.3 SIGNS OF ABUSE AMONG CHILDREN

**Malnutrition:** This could be a result of a child being denied food or even due to psychological torture, a child could decide to exempt him/ her self from eating directly leading to malnutritional health problems.

**Body Cuts/ physical injuries:** Due to heavy punishments such as beating, piercing, etc., a child's body could be directly injured/cut.

**Self harm:** In some cases, children decide to commit suicide as a solution to get relieved from all the social challenges that he/she might be facing. Children thus end up taking poison, hanging thyself, among other deadly actions. In such cases, a child could die or might face other health related complications of which most can be seen physically.

**Crying:** Under normal circumstances, a child may cry after denial of a certain right. Eg. Among babies it could be hunger or love of a closest care giver like the mom. After fulfillment of such demands, the baby immediately stops the cries. Worst of it is when a mature child who can talk constantly sheds physical and hearty tears. This could be a result of failure to identify a trustworthy person to efficiently handle his/ her life challenges.

**Children run away from home:** Due to the several mistreatments a child might be going through, one may decide to run to what he/ she thinks of as being safer havens to stay. Among the girl child, many of them have ended up running to boy friends for marriage as they find more comfort than their homes. Some children run to streets in search for sources of livelihoods hence the increasing numbers of street children in Bunyoro.

**Violence against one another:** Due to the constant psychological torture experienced by the Child from a given community, children sometimes constantly fight with others while in the community since they see themselves neglected and thus lack love for one another.

**Self Isolation:** This results from a child feeling unloved thus in most cases may fail to participate in common activities. A child segregates him/ herself as the only solution to a given problem, thus lack of care/ followup/ identification of such children timely might result into other worse scenarios eg suicide.

Other signs of abuse among children might include; night mares, bed wetting, run- away from care givers, etc. It is advisable that as a responsible stakeholder in the protection of our children, once one or more of the above signs are identified, let appropriate action be immediately taken.

### **3.4 HIGH VULNERABILITY OF GIRLS**

The journal of Pediatrics and Child Health (2020) sites out the following practical causes of the vulnerability;

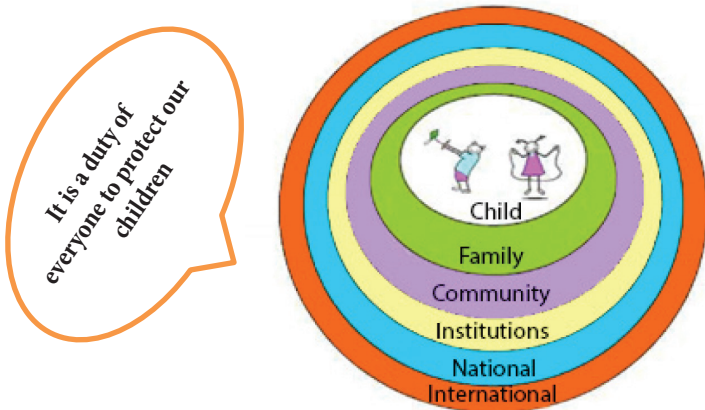
- i. The closure of schools and churches implied the delayed detection of Girl Child abuses as these have always been safe places for timely detection of the abuses. Girls always feel these sites very safe and confidential to report and adequately manage the challenges they are going through.
- ii. The high demand for basic needs by girls in relation to boys amidst the high financial constraints.
- iii. Increased exposure to accessibility to pornographic information resulting from increased access to internet access using phones, computers, etc.
- iv. Tight schedules for parents who hardly lack time for nurturing of their children as many claim to be very busy with work.
- v. Ignorance about body growth and development among the girls.

### **3.5 MITIGATION STRATEGIES**

#### **3.5.1 Child Protection Rings of Responsibility**

A local child protection reporting and referral mechanism that covers all types of child protection issues can be shaped by looking through the “lens” of the Rings of Responsibility as an approach to child well-being.

The rings represent the various levels of protection around children and each ring reinforces the other. Although many people are responsible for the protection of children, families are the primary unit of society. In almost all cases, the family provides the best environment for meeting a child's protection and developmental needs. In some cultures, the family is defined as the child's immediate relatives: their parents and siblings. Elsewhere, family includes an extended family such as grandparents, aunts, uncles and more distant relatives within a clan, village or community. Every decision for either reporting or referring a case is based on what is going on inside a particular ring for that particular child protection case. For example, if the family ring is broken or is a risk, the response is to then engage another ring to handle the case. If the issue can be addressed within one ring without moving out of that ring, the issue is addressed at the level of that ring. It is important to remember that there is always a range of factors to consider in determining an appropriate response. Two children who experience similar abuse will need different approaches in terms of how their case is handled. With one child, it may be possible to handle the case within the family ring, whereas another child may need the help of the community ring. During the workshop module, participants will have the opportunity to explore the different actors involved at each level of the Rings of Responsibility, as well as analyze the strengths and weaknesses of each ring. International, National, Institutions, Community, Family and Child rings of responsibility of an ecological perspective.



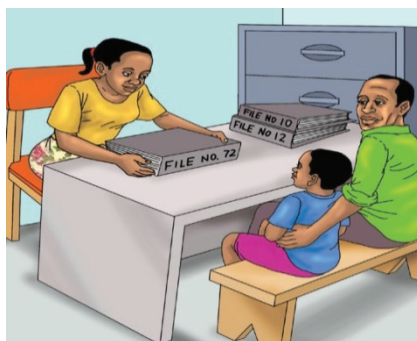
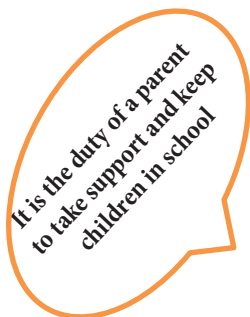
## 3.5.2 Roles of Actors in the Protection of the Girl Child rings of responsibility

### 3.5.2.1 The Child

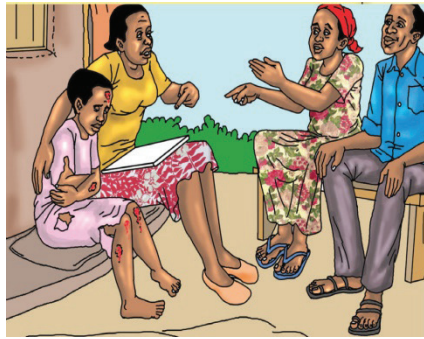
1. Reports any attempts of abuse on themselves and the other children.
2. Learns skills that protect themselves and others.
3. Children, especially children leaders in clubs and committees help to sensitize others about their rights and cases of abuse.
4. Advocate for fellow children and engage stakeholders for improved services to victims of abuse including justice for abused children.

### 3.5.2.2 Family (Parents & Care givers)

1. Nurture children from childhood in moral ethics: This involves building confidence, socialization with other people in the community, etc. This also includes creation of a friendship relationship between the parent and the child.
2. Provision of all basic needs to the children e.g. education, cloths, etc.



3. Giving a child sense of belonging including giving a name, clan, birth certificate among others.
4. Teach children right cultural norms and customs.
5. Report cases of child abuse in the community to several service providers.
6. Support and train children in self-defense techniques.
7. Collaborate with other parents for conflict management among children.



### 3.5.2.3 Faith leaders

1. Collaboration with several rehabilitation centers: Faith leaders need to always engage actors and other stakeholders through effective communication frameworks in line with child protection.
2. Offer guidance and counseling.
3. Spiritual development in line with child protection
4. Moral authority command center.
5. Promote child protection through inter-religious cooperation, the use of religious texts to teach about child rights, advocacy and

awareness against violence, and educating and supporting families and communities to care for children holistically. In the same regard, faith leaders play a key role in ending corporal punishments.

### 3.5.2.4 Police and Law makers

1. Put in place laws and policies to protect the Girl Child as well as interpret the laws to the community.
2. Enforce child protection laws in the community: This involves implementation of several and appropriate sanctions to abusers of children rights.

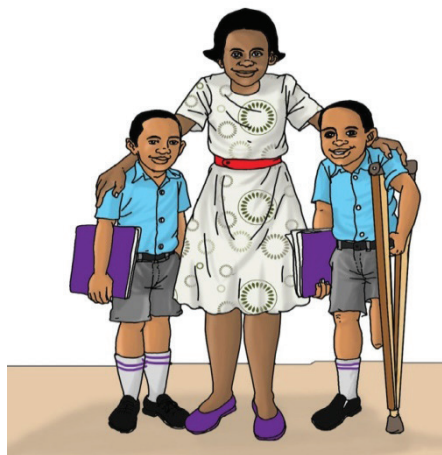


*If found guilty abusing children rights, sanction measures will be applied*

3. Refer child protection cases to appropriate rehabilitation centers.
4. Raise awareness about the common child abuse cases and about the laws and policies in place.

### 3.5.2.5 Teachers/ School communities

These are always the second parents to our children. In Uganda, under normal school times, teachers spend at least 70% of the time with the children, thus have a key role to play in the formation of children (parenting) and their roles are as below;



All children must be  
equally treated

Ensure fair treatment of children while at school. School staffs are meant to eliminate all forms of segregation, corporal punishments and all the other forms of abuses against children while at school. As shown in the photo above segregations based on disability, color, etc. among children while at school are to be eliminated.

1. Protect children from all forms of abuses e.g. defilement, rape, child labour, etc. In better established schools, children are accompanied to their homes using school transport means to ascertain children safety.
2. Sensitization of children on their rights, roles and responsibilities in the effort to self-protection against abuses.
3. Help children form child protection clubs and movements (e.g. menstrual hygiene, self-defense, guidance and counseling, etc.) while at school. Teachers are to ensure that each child belongs to at least one club at school.

### **3.5.2.6 Probation officers**

1. Coordinate with families to fight violence against children. They give appropriate reports and recommendations to the law enforcers for appropriate action measures to abusers of children.

2. Interpret child protection laws and policies to the families/ parents as well as represent children in courts of law.
3. Help in bringing harmony among families to ensure that a child is wholly raised by both parents.

### 3.5.2.7 Health Workers

These are always very important in response to the health status of the victims and below are there roles and responsibilities;



Teachers must collaborate with health workers to provide health services

Decent and functional school sick bay



- i. Provide health care (medical examination and treatment) to the victims of abuse.
- ii. Refer victims to other service providers e.g. police in line with protection of the children.
- iii. Coordinate and identify better health workers to provide better services to abused victims.

### **3.5.2.8 Roles of Hoima Diocese Department of Education**

This is the secretariate for education in the Diocese of Hoima, its roles are as below;

- i. Formulation of Child Protection Policies.
- ii. Ensure rightful Child Protection procedures are implemented in Catholic founded schools from other implementing partners in education.
- iii. Outsourcing the right partners and funders in line with Child Protection.
- iv. Collection, compilation dissemination and discussion of key issues in Child Protection with other actors in the Diocese of Hoima.
- v. Collaboration with other stakeholders.
- vi. Coordinating with other Diocesan departments.

### **3.5.2.9 Roles of Hoima Diocese Child Protection Officers (CPOs)**

- i. Monitor and ensure the Implementation of HODIDE Child Protection procedures in schools.
- ii. Review the implementation of child protection plans of a given period of time in schools/ communities.
- iii. Collaborate with partners in line with child protection at the respective leadership levels.
- iv. Promote campaigns against child violence.
- v. Offer guidance and counselling.
- vi. Encourage and empower children to stay in school especially a girl child.
- vii. Sensitize the community on child protection.

- viii. Collaborate with child protection units (Probation officers, Child and family protection unit, DEOs, Law enforcers etc)
- ix. Compile reports on child protection and sharing with responsible education stakeholders.
- x. Guide the Diocesan education secretariat on evidence based child protection procedures.

### **3.5.2.10 Roles of the Bunyoro Kitara Kingdom**

- i. Dialogues with kingdom parish chiefs on the implementation of good cultural practices at family levels.
- ii. Conduct periodic radio talkshows in the protection of the Children.
- iii. Hold periodic meetings with school communities on the implementation of cultural appropriate practices at school level.
- iv. Monitor the implementation of child protection policies in the different areas of implementation.
- v. Support children in the attainment of education through lobbying for several scholarship programs to be awarded fairly to qualifying learners.
- vi. Limit marriage of school going children e.g. limiting the officiation of such ceremonies among the children.
- vii. Liaise with different stakeholders in the education sector to do research, develop appropriate reports, discuss them, and ensure appropriate implementation of resolutions in line with child protection.

It should be noted that although teenage pregnancy might destruct one's concentration towards academic excellence, it is not the end of life. A much brighter future still exists for such children, one can be skilled in tailoring, hair dressing, catering, among other handwork skilling. The Diocese of Hoima has established 10 vocational skilling tertiary institutions throughout the Diocese which can boost the economic welfare for such girls.

**Photos showing handwork skilling for some girls at Millenium Business school (Hoima) as a strategy to earn a source of living.**



Hair Dressing



Tailoring

Parents are urged to collaborate with the Diocese through the education office (**0775082184**) to secure vacancies and scholarships for such programs.

# CHAPTER FOUR

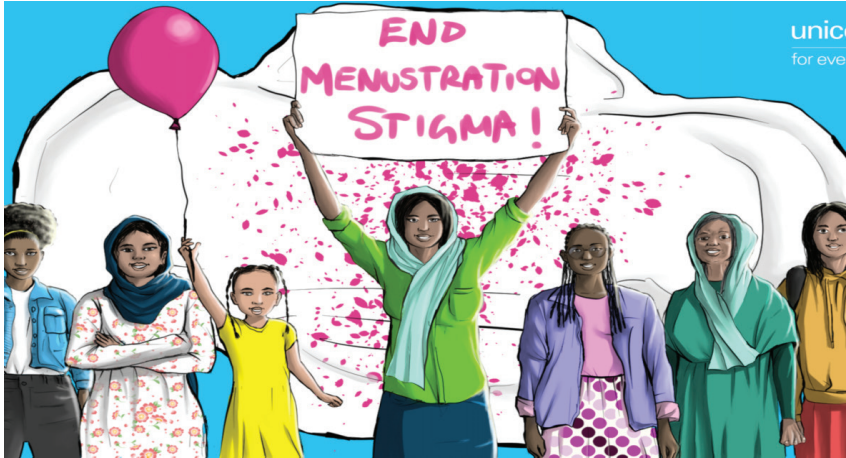
## 4.0 RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

There exists a number of well-defined Children rights as cited out in the Republic of Uganda Children's Act 2016. However, in this case the following rights with their appropriate amendments were considered;

- i. Right to live with his or her parents/ guardians.
- ii. Express his/ her views, beliefs, opinions on any matter that affects his/ her well-being.
- iii. Access any information to which a parent, guardian or any other person in authority deems critical to the child's well-being.
- iv. Safety, privacy, information and access to basic social services.
- v. Leisure which is not morally harmful and the right to participate in sports and positive cultural and artistic activities.
- vi. To use any social amenities or other resources available in any situation of armed conflict or natural or made disaster.
- vii. Be treated without discrimination of any kind irrespective of race, color, religion, beliefs, age, family status, culture, language, gender, disability, ethnicity, etc.
- viii. Harmful customary and cultural practices: a person shall not expose a child to any harmful customary or cultural practices that bare harmful to one's health, well-being, education or social economic development.
- ix. Harmful employment: a person shall not employ a child or engage him/ her in any employment activity that may be harmful/ hazardous to his/ her health or physical, moral, mental or social development.
- x. Prohibition of sexual exploitation: a person shall not engage a child in any work or trade that exposes the child to activities of sexual nature whether paid or not.
- xi. Effective legal aid including representation in all civil, criminal and administrative proceedings.

# CHAPTER FIVE:

## 5.0 MENSTRUAL HYGIENE



### 5.1 DEFINITION

This refers to a natural part of the female reproductive growth and development system that prepares a female to have a baby. In cases where a mature ovum is not fertilized, the process is followed by the peel off of the uterine walls which is always passed out in form of blood (menstrual blood).

Despite that Menstruation is normal among females, it is something adolescent girls usually find difficult to discuss with strangers; many of them are always unaware about such body changes. Among the young unsensitized adolescent girls, it always a subject of embarrassment, shame and stigma. NB: for some children, this stage starts as early as 8 years while others it may start later; therefore, children should be prepared as early as possible to manage this stage.

Many girls have thus fallen into trap of teenage pregnancies, marriage, among other effects. Core causes to the problem are categorized as follows;

1. Inadequate Information: Many of adolescents lack clear, adequate and safe information about the concept from rightful people. Some girls thus end up receiving wrong information that leads them into worse health conditions.
2. Inadequate facilities: In some cases poverty has been a key cause in the Diocese of Hoima. Children of poor peasants can hardly afford a disposable sanitary facility which is essential during the management. Sometimes our schools lack adequate latrines, water facilities, incinerators and changing rooms for the girls.
3. Poor Attitude towards menstrual hygiene as a result of cultural beliefs and norms.

## 5.2 TABLE SUMMERING THE CORE PROBLEM, ASSOCIATED EFFECTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Problem	Effect of Problem	Mitigation Strategy (to be achieved by the end of this project)
Lack of information on menstruation and puberty	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Some girls think they have terrible disease.</li> <li>2. Leads to harmful ideas and risky behavior.</li> <li>3. Teachers say they are embarrassed to talk about it.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Community sensitization on menstruation.</li> <li>2. Formation of menstrual clubs in schools.</li> <li>3. Empowerment of senior man and woman teachers on menstruation and puberty.</li> </ol>

Inadequate access to sanitary facilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Girls cannot manage their periods with confidence and dignity. Damages self-esteem.</li> <li>2. Girls miss school during their menstrual days</li> </ol>	At least 10,000 girls from 100 schools trained on how to make reusable sanitary pads
Inadequate toilets/ latrines/ Incinerators/ change rooms/ insufficient water facilities	Girls will stay away from school when they are in their menstrual periods.	Collaboration with schools and partners to establish WASH facilities in at least 10 schools in the Diocese of Hoima by the end of 2022.
Sense of Stigma and shame	One reason they fear being teased so much is the feel of stigma, shame and have no one to share with.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sensitize parents to always teach girls on biological facts on menstruation.</li> <li>2. Parents could attach a girl child to a female teacher at school.</li> <li>3. Empower senior man and woman teachers</li> <li>4. Teach boys not to tease girls</li> </ol>

### 5.3 BREAK THE SILENCE ON MENSTRUATION

Faith groups are the most trusted institutions in the Diocese of Hoima, they shape opinions and influence behavior in the community. This can be done through Faith leaders, Faith- based women groups, Faith- based youth groups and Faith values.

## 5.4 KEY MESSAGES TO THE GIRL CHILD

1. Menstruation is a natural, biological process for women and girls.
2. It was created by God as part of human reproductive processes.
3. It is not a disease/ illness. It is a sign of good health, growth and development.
4. Girls need to manage it with dignity.



# CHAPTER SIX:

## 6.0 GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

Although the two always go hand in hand, the concepts always differ but are directed towards the holistic formation of a child particularly in our schools. A school without an appointed person to do this, is vulnerable to production of purposeless children in the community who in the end become threats to the community. In line with our Diocesan Education Policies, it is thus a duty of the Senior Woman and Senior Man teachers to fully conduct this activity as the Head teacher remains the principle supervisor of the activity. Below are the details about the two concepts;

### 6.1 GUIDANCE

This is a process of helping a child to develop, accept an integrated and adequate picture of him/herself and one's role in the world of work to test his concept against reality and to convert it into reality with satisfaction to one's self and benefit the society. It deals with maximum development of an individual to ensure that he/ she can take personal decisions.

#### 6.1.1 Principles of Guidance

1. Aims at Holistic development of an individual
2. Recognizes the individuality of every human person
3. Maneuvers individual behavioral process
4. It is based on cooperation
5. It is a continuous and sequential activity

#### 6.1.2 Classifications of Guidance

**Educational guidance:** This is aimed at enabling the child to adjust to the education environment in an effective manner. In some cases, children may lack concentration in class resulting into poor academic performance as well as health implications thus the need to adequately help such learners. It is thus aimed at boosting the academic performance, provide academic

direction as well as encourage the child to stay in school amidst all the challenges.

**Vocational guidance:** This aims at helping the child identify the right career in relation to the available opportunities in the environment.

**Personal guidance:** focuses on helping the learner discover more on thyself and effectively fit into the available environment.

### **6.1.3 Importance of Guidance**

1. Promotes self-understanding and self-direction
2. Promotes optimal development of and individual
3. Helps an individual to explore and solve certain problems
4. Helps in academic growth and development
5. Helps in making vocational choices
6. Promotes social as well as personal adjustment of and individual
7. Promotes better family life
8. Promotes optimal use of resources
9. Promotes national development

## **6.2 COUNSELING**

This refers to the professional service provided to an individual facing a problem and needs help. It is considered to be an integral and central part in guidance, and be conducted successfully two individuals must be in existence that is counselor and counselee.

It is thus a purposeful and dynamic relationship between two people who approach a mutually agreed problem with mutual consideration for one another to the end that the young or less mature/ troubled of the two is aided to a self-determined resolution to a problem.

NB: Counseling is not restricted to giving advice, attempting to solve a problem and neither is it judgmental, but rather it is based on three core principles that is;

## 6.2.1 Focus points

1. **Informing:** This involves the counselor giving information to the client.
2. **Advising:** The counselor identifies the right course of action towards solving a certain problem.
3. **Counseling:** It involves helping an individual understanding personal needs and providing the necessary help to enable the client take personal decision

## 6.2.2 Characteristics of Counseling

It is a mutual relationship between two individuals

1. Involves discussion
2. It is a face-face relationship
3. It is a professional activity.

Areas of counseling in this case would include; education, marriage, personal, social, rehabilitation and vocational.

## 6.2.3 Principles of counseling

1. Principle of acceptance
2. Principle of permissiveness
3. Principle of respect
4. Principal of thinking with an individual
5. Principle of learning
6. Principle of trustworthy
7. Principle of consistency with ideals of democracy
8. Principle of Autonomy
9. Principle of beneficence
10. Principle of Justice
11. Principle of self-respect

## 6.2.4 Stages of Counseling

1. Initial disclosure/ Relationship building: engage the client and explore issues of the client. It involves critical listening and study skills where the counselor is to study verbal and non-verbal expressions of the Clients. It involves empathy, genuineness, warmth, etc.
2. In depth exploration/ Problem assessment: The counselor asks more questions from the client in an effort to know more about the problem. Questions asked could involve search on one's background.
3. Goal Setting: Involves setting commitment to a set of action points to overcome a given challenge. They are always outcomes that the client would wish to achieve at the end of the session with the help of the counselor.
4. Counseling intervention: The mode of implementation usually depends on the client, nature of the problem to be solve. The stage involves actual message from the counselor to the client. In our case it is better adopt the methodology where the client is given opportunity to participate.
5. Evaluation, referral and termination: The counselor plans in advance to ensure a positive conclusion while avoiding anger, sadness or anxiety and also reach an early agreement on how the therapy will end and what success looks like.

# CHAPTER SEVEN:

## 7.0 POSITIVE DISCIPLINE

This is a program designed to teach young people to become responsible, respectful and resourceful members of their communities. To be successful, contributing members of their community, children must learn necessary social and life skills.

### 7.1 TOOLS AND CONCEPTS OF POSITIVE DISCIPLINE

- i. Mutual respect. Adults model firmness by respecting themselves and the needs of the situation, and kindness by respecting the needs of the child.
- ii. Identifying the belief behind the behavior. Effective discipline recognizes the reasons kids do what they do and works to change those beliefs, rather than merely attempting to change behavior.
- iii. Effective communication and problem solving skills.
- iv. Discipline that teaches (and is neither permissive nor punitive).
- v. Focusing on solutions instead of punishment.
- vi. Encouragement (instead of praise). Encouragement notices effort and improvement, not just success, and builds long-term self-esteem and empowerment.

### 7.2 UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POSITIVE DISCIPLINE MODEL ALSO INCLUDE

- i. Teaching adults and students through experiential activities. Creating opportunity to practice new skills and to have fun learning by doing.

- ii. Classroom discipline programs and parent education programs that are consistent. Parents, teachers, and childcare providers can work together to provide a secure, consistent environment for children.
- iii. Inexpensive training and ongoing support so members of communities can teach each other Positive Discipline skills.
- iv. Certified trainers across the country who can work with schools and communities.

# CHAPTER EIGHT:

## 8.0 CHILD PROTECTION REPORTING & REFERRAL

### 8.1 EXAMPLES OF WAYS THAT CHILDREN CAN REPORT VIOLENCE

- i. Report to the parent or care giver
- ii. Calling a child helpline 116 Sauti
- iii. Telling a teacher or another trusted adult
- iv. Putting a note in a 'comments' box.
- v. Reporting to a friend in the children's club

### 8.2 QUALITIES OF A GOOD REPORTING MECHANISM FOR CHILDREN

- i. **Accessibility:** Any child can access this reporting mechanism remain confidential
- ii. **Child-friendly:** The reporting mechanism is user-friendly for any and all children
- iii. **Confidence:** children are confident that the incidence will be addressed and followed up to their satisfaction
- iv. **Confidentiality:** any child can be confident that their report will remain confidential
- v. **Feedback:** children and the community should be able to get feedback from the progress of their reported case.

## 8.3 BASIC ELEMENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE REPORTING AND REFERRAL MECHANISM

**Who reports to whom:** For a reporting and referral mechanism to be effective, it needs to be clear for all child protection actors how to handle a local complaint reported by someone who has identified potential risk or harm being done to a child. The person who receives the report should also be clear on what steps are needed to identify the child protection violation and decide on the appropriate action, based on the Guiding Principles, especially the best Interests of the child.

**Referral and follow-up:** Once a child protection case has been reported to the appropriate person or institution, and the child is appropriately referred for services, it is vital to follow up on the case regularly and determine if the child is in need of other services or further levels of protection. These services will be identified as part of this workshop module, including contact information of those who provide the services.

Follow-up should be carried out at each stage of reporting and referring and should be documented: using agreed upon forms developed through this workshop module. Follow-up should continue until the case is closed and it is determined that the child has been reintegrated to the family or placed in a situation that is in his or her best interest and will contribute to his or her well-being.

**Accountability:** Once a reporting and referral mechanism has been defined and is being carried out by local actors, an accountability system should be set up as an on-going process, which will keep track of the entire child protection system and reporting and referral process, including the services, policies, actors and codes of conduct, etc.

**Monitoring and evaluation** of the child protection cases that have been reported provides the opportunity to collect data that can be used in advocacy for:

1. Improving services
2. Improving policies
3. Reviewing codes of conduct
4. Reviewing the legal system
5. Reviewing programs.

## 9.0 CONCLUSION

Conclusively, we thank all parents, religious men and women, school communities, education implementing partners and all stakeholders in the protection and education of our children as we prepare them for a strong and firm educational background. We appeal to you to always adhere and join the Diocese of Hoima in the further implementation of guidelines in this booklet. Thank you. God bless you.

## REFERENCES

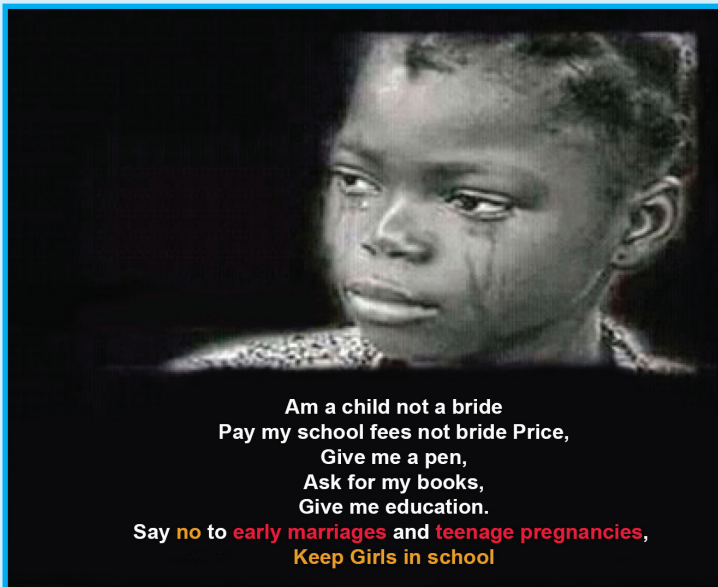
UNICEF (2016): A handbook for Case Management.

Ministry of Education and Sports (2014) - Reporting, Tracking, Referral and Response Guidelines on violence against children in schools.

The BANTWANA Initiative and FXB Uganda (2010). Protecting ourselves and each other: a child rights and protection Resource.

Walakira. E. J., et al, (2012). Violence against Children in Uganda, a decade of Research and Practice, 2002-2012.

Journal of Paediatrics and Child Health (2020). Increased Child Abuse in Uganda amidst Covid-19 Pandemic.



Am a child not a bride  
Pay my school fees not bride Price,  
Give me a pen,  
Ask for my books,  
Give me education.  
Say **no** to **early marriages** and **teenage pregnancies**,  
**Keep Girls in school**

---

**HOIMA DIOCESE**  
**Girl Child Protection**  
**Handbook in Response to Covid-19 - 2022**

---