

Domestic violence wrecks Kamwenge homes

KAMWENGE

By Wilson Asimwe

Only identified as Sulaiti, 14 he was abandoned by his parents four years ago after they separated in Kicheche sub-county Kamwenge district.

When *New Vision* visited Sulaiti, he was being tethered like a goat in a banana plantation by his carer, Joselyn Nabukera who adopted him four years ago.

Sulaiti was abandoned by his parents after a domestic fight and left to die in the house until Nabukera picked him and decided to stay with him. Sulaiti is one of the hundreds of children suffering as a result of domestic violence, according to the Police's child and family protection department.

"They were two children and both of them were abandoned. The boy was not in that condition but he became sick and he is always sickly. I tether him in the banana plantation because I don't want people to make fun of him when he walks to the trading centre," Nabukera said.

Nabukera said recently bodboda cyclists abandoned their motorcycles and took off after they found Sulaiti walking around the village.

Nabukera said that Sulaiti's parents separated and



Nabukera with the children at her home in Kamwenge. Inset, The 14-year-old malnourished boy tied to a banana plant.

currently the mother, who she couldn't identify lives in Kampala while the father only identified as Kiwewa cannot be traced.

"The boy is 14 years but because of malnutrition he

looks like he is three years old. I don't have food to feed him and the sister," she said.

At least 50 women in Kicheche sub-county, Kamwenge district have left their marriages citing poverty

and domestic violence over the last one year, according to the community development office at the sub-county.

Sylvia Karungi, a community leader in Kicheche, said the affected women were

battered and sexually abused. According to Karungi, over 100 women have been registered but at least 50 have abandoned their marriages citing domestic violence.

She said their husbands have taken advantage of unemployment and lack of empowerment to brutalise their wives.

Forty eight-year-old Florence Kusiima, a resident of

BETWEEN THE LINES:

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Kinyaigara village in Kitonzi parish, is one of the women who quit her marriage three months ago because of domestic violence.

Kusiima was married to Kwesiga Masumbuko and they had nine children. Kusiima said she decided to quit her marriage, and return to her parent's home in Kichuzi, Ibanda district after enduring 15 years of domestic violence.

Kusiima said although she had put up with Masumbuko's daily beatings, quarreling and

drunkenness, she couldn't take it any more when he bit her breast and private parts over sex.

She said that in November last year while sleeping Masumbuko returned home drunk and demanded for sex but she declined to comply.

"I left and decided to leave my children behind because they couldn't be accommodated at my home because we don't have money to look after them," Kusiima said.

Twenty-six-year-old Floria Atuhirwe, a mother of two, also separated with her violent husband, Mwesigye Gilbert, a resident of Kitagwenda in Kamwenge district.

Atuhirwe said she decided to quit when her marriage deteriorated.

She said that her former husband abandoned her without providing any basic needs. She said whenever she asked for money for food, he would get wild and beat her up.

Patrick Mwesige, a police officer in charge of Kicheche Police, said that they have recorded several cases of domestic violence although he couldn't give the actual figures.

New Vision was unable to access any of the accused men to hear their side of the story.