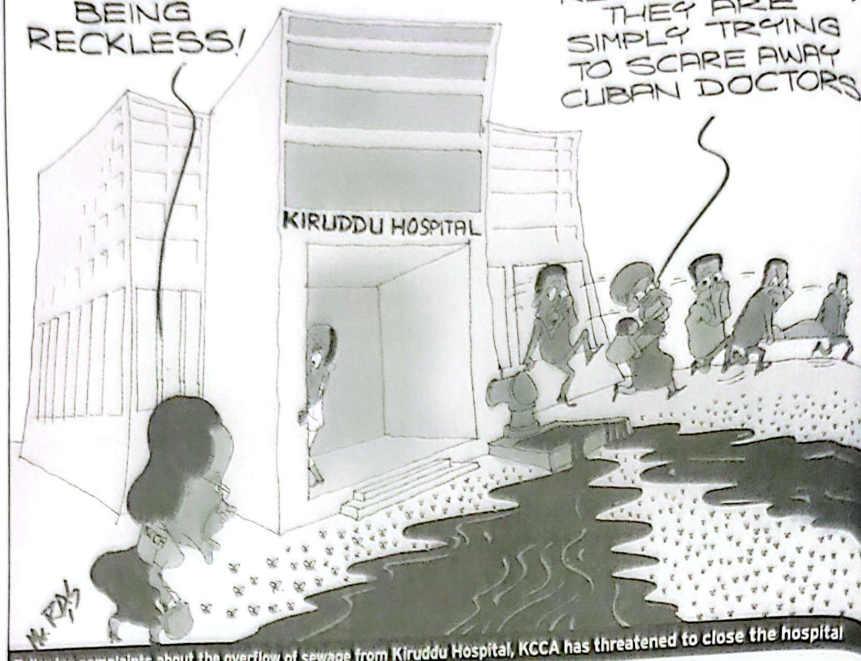


THIS IS
BEING
RECKLESS!

IT'S NOT
RECKLESSNESS,
THEY ARE
SIMPLY TRYING
TO SCARE AWAY
CUBAN DOCTORS



Janet K. Museveni, Minister

Media, disseminate facts about sexuality education

The article that appeared in the *Daily Monitor* newspaper of Tuesday April 3, 2018, page 30 and 31, under the headline "Youth Corners Offering a Lifeline to Adolescents" caught my attention mainly because of the potentially harmful misinformation it was giving out to the young people.

Whereas the idea of Youth Corners is okay, the newspaper column which reported on them must have got wrong information about them, I would like to believe, because the Youth Corners as well as the newspaper column should be utilised to disseminate facts about sexuality education such as what the Ministry of Education and Sports launched as our Sexuality Education Framework, to maximise the impact on the targeted youth.

Instead, the column disappointingly covered a jumbled up mix of myths, old tales and half-truths that can only continue to mislead and confuse our young people.

Reading through the piece in question, one gets the impression that a young person would not glean much useful and constructive information from it concerning the topic of his or her sexuality.

Rather than focus on the distorted and confusing views of the people who frequent the Youth Corners – for example, Ashraf Kaboda's statement that: "If you have sex without a condom with an HIV-positive woman who is diligently taking antiretroviral treatment, you may not get the virus" ...; or the woman who believes that "if young girls use family planning now, they will want to give birth but their eggs would have been spoiled by them" ...; it would have been more useful, if the column had focused on giving its youthful readers accurate and factual information regarding their sexuality and informing them about the real purpose of Youth Corners wherever they are to be



There is need now to ensure that the journalists who deal with young people's issues are informed and trained to maximise the impact of their columns

found.

The right to accurate sexuality education and information is an entitlement. Young people deserve to know the facts about their sexuality and the consequences thereof; the positive experiences and how these can be achieved and sustained, as well as the negative experiences and how to prevent them completely or mitigate their consequences.

The media, in all its forms, should come on board as a major partner in the struggle to reach and equip our young people with clear and well packaged information about safer sex, positive living, dealing with relationships and much more.

Whoever is in a position to play a role in supporting children in their care to develop healthy values

regarding sexuality – parents, caregivers, teachers, communities and the media – needs to be equipped and grounded in the principles of the Sexuality Education Framework the Ministry of Education and Sports has now launched and should have access to scientifically accurate information on sexuality which has been carefully constructed to suit our way of life.

Clearly, therefore, there will be need to bring on board, perhaps through training and orientation, all potential partners, including the print media, to ensure that they are well acquainted with the Ugandan model of youth sexuality education now in place.

I believe there is need now to find a way to bring on board, the *Daily Monitor*, the *New Vision* and other media houses to ensure that the journalists who deal with young people's issues are informed and trained to maximise the impact of the columns they manage.

Notwithstanding the above, our daily papers are to be commended for devoting substantial space in their newspaper on issues affecting young people.

The writer is the First Lady and the Minister of the Education and Sports