

Parents urged to stop exploiting their children

LUUKA

By Donald Kiirya

Parents in Busoga have been warned against promoting child exploitation during the school holidays.

The warning was made by Prince Ayub Banamwita, the chief of Butembe chiefdom in Busoga. Banawita recently handed over scholastic materials to orphans and other vulnerable children at Kyamagwa Parents Primary School in Jinja district. He also visited Green Light Academy Primary School in Kimanto, Luuka district.

"Poverty has been the lead cause of child exploitation. Parents send their children to work in sugarcane plantations to earn a few shillings a day and simply do not have time to sit with them in homes to give career guidance or do their parenting responsibilities," Banamwita said.

"The Butembe chiefdom, in partnership with Obwakyabazinga Bwa Busoga, has started lobbying for support for orphans and vulnerable children in Butembe and Busoga at large, in order to support them with scholastic materials," Banamwita announced.

He noted that the children perform exhausting work for many hours, often in unhealthy and hazardous conditions.

"That kind of work is physically, psychologically and or morally harmful for children. Sit down with your children at home and teach them cultural values. Help them with homework and give them simple domestic chores that lead to skills development," he said.

Banamwita promised that his chiefdom will continue lobbying government bodies to counter child exploitation and to put child rights on the agenda, enable as many children as possible to attend school and educate parents to prevent the next generation from ending up in the vicious cycles of poverty.

Charles Wansaja, the first prime



Banawita (right) and Guild (second-right) handing over scholastic materials to orphans at Green Light Academy Primary School in Luuka district recently. Photo by Donald Kiirya

minister of Butembe chiefdom, noted that there are many schools in the area with bad structures and asked the Government to support such school that help communities.

Mandi Guild from New York (US), said it was her third time to visit Uganda and support orphans and vulnerable children.

"Under our programme dubbed Project Teach, we have managed to distribute scholastic materials to 1,300 orphans and vulnerable children in Busoga and Uganda at large. Today, we distributed books to 100 pupils at Kyamagwa Parents Primary School and to 200 at Green Light Academy Primary School in Kimanto," she said.

Guild said he would continue lobbying for support to orphans and other vulnerable school-going children in Busoga. She also said she was ready to work with Busoga Kingdom to promote education in Busoga.

Susan Kagoya, a resident at Kimanto village in Luuka district, said she has three children at Green Light Academy, but she has been facing difficulties in buying scholastic materials, since they are expensive.

"I am so glad that this project came to us here. My children have enough even for the next term, so I won't have to spend a coin," she said.