



Right To Play in Uganda

SUPPORTING SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES TO EDUCATE AND PROTECT THEIR CHILDREN

Right To Play has been working in Uganda since 2001 to improve learning outcomes and develop critical life skills in children and youth using play-based approaches. Right To Play has significant experience in both development and humanitarian settings, working in refugee-hosting districts and other vulnerable communities across the country. Under the framework of the National Integrated Early Childhood Development program supported by UNICEF, Right To Play has recently expanded its work to include integration of play-based approaches into early childhood development settings.

Right To Play has developed strong relationships with the Government of Uganda at national and local levels, particularly with the Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Education and Sport, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, district local governments and the Kampala Capital City Authority. Since 2018, Right To Play has been working together with the Uganda Olympic Committee as a member of the Athletics for Development network under the sponsorship of the Minister of Education and Sport to advance the role of athletics in promoting social cohesion and inclusion.

In 2019, Right To Play reached over
25,000 disadvantaged children and youth
in Adjumani, Isingiro, Kyegegwa, Kamwenge and Kampala districts.

The challenges faced by children and youth in Uganda

Uganda has one of the youngest populations and one of the highest birthrates in Sub-Saharan Africa, with 56% of its population under age 18.¹ Uganda has made great strides in expanding access to basic education and health services for these children, but the quality of services remains low. While the Government of Uganda is committed to providing equitable access to quality and affordable education for all Ugandans, the education sector is constrained by a high level of teacher and student absenteeism, weak school level management structures, inadequate availability of learning materials and large class sizes.²

With ongoing civil wars and unrest in neighboring countries and a generous and progressive refugee hosting policy, Uganda now hosts over 1.4 million refugees, the largest number of refugees in any African country.³ Many refugee hosting districts were already vulnerable before the influx of refugees placed additional strain on livelihoods and social services.

- 59% of girls and 68% of boys experience physical violence in childhood.⁴
- 1 in 4 girls aged 15 to 19 have begun childbearing.⁵
- 53% of primary school-aged refugee children are out of school.⁶
- 56% of children experience multiple deprivations such as access to education and health care.⁷



Only 19% of under five children have a birth certificate.

Achievements

REDUCED BARRIERS TO GIRLS' EDUCATION

MHM Information:

95%
Of Participating
Girls

No Longer Missing Class:

68%
Of Participating
Girls

95% of participants had improved access to menstrual hygiene management (MHM) information.
68% no longer missed classes when menstruating.⁸

STRENGTHENED SKILLS FOR ECD TEACHERS

100%
of Participating
Teachers

100% of early childhood development (ECD) teachers used active, child-centered pedagogy and play to promote early literacy and numeracy.⁹

IMPROVED KNOWLEDGE ABOUT SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Participating Children:

92%

Non-Participating Children:

50%

92% of children in Right To Play programs correctly identified ways of preventing HIV transmission as compared to 50% of non-participating children.¹⁰

¹ Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development/UNICEF, "Situation Analysis of Children in Uganda", 2019.

² Global Partnership for Education, <https://www.gpe.org/what-we-do/our-work/uganda>.

³ As of April 30, 2020, Office of the Prime Minister/UNHCR.

⁴ Uganda Violence Against Children Survey, 2018.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Uganda Country Refugee Response Plan, 2019-2020.

⁷ Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development/UNICEF, Situation Analysis of Children in Uganda, 2019.

⁸ READ, Final Report, 2019.

⁹ Child's Play, Final Report, 2019.

¹⁰ Taking the Lead, Midterm Evaluation, 2011.

Program Overview



IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR VULNERABLE GIRLS AND BOYS

Right To Play supports the provision of quality primary education for refugee and host community children and for girls and boys living in the slum settlement of Kamwokya in Kampala. In alignment with the national curriculum, Right To Play trains teachers and education officials to use play-based approaches for child-centered, participatory learning. Training covers a wide range of topics such as child development, modifying games to achieve curriculum outcomes, positive discipline techniques and inclusive participation, including the participation of girls and children with disabilities.

Right To Play establishes communities of practice, providing teachers the opportunity to regularly share experiences, successes and challenges with peers. Teachers are also supported through joint supervision visits with district education and other ministry officials who have been trained on coaching and mentoring.



PROMOTING SAFE, SUPPORTIVE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES

Right To Play addresses the violence in schools, homes and communities that forms a barrier to school attendance. Northern Uganda has been a focus for this work since South Sudanese refugee children may unintentionally bring the legacy of violent ethnic conflict into schools and communities where they now study and live. Right To Play strengthens school-based child protection systems by reinforcing referral pathways for children experiencing violence, by training school governance bodies on child protection and safeguarding, and by supporting children to report child protection concerns. Teachers are trained to use positive discipline, create inclusive classrooms and cultivate conflict resolution and peace-building skills in students, using an adapted sport and peace education curriculum originally piloted by Right To Play in Burundi.

Right To Play enhances the safety of schools through infrastructure improvements such as classroom rehabilitation. It provides private, safe and appropriate sanitation facilities in primary schools and ECD centers, with particular attention to the needs of menstruating girls. Girls and boys are taught the importance of improved menstrual hygiene management and how to make and use reusable pads. Community and school mobilization to improve the environment is an emerging area of work in Kampala.



EMPOWERING YOUTH AS CHANGE AGENTS AND PEACE BUILDERS

Right To Play supports district governments and refugee settlements in refugee-hosting areas of the country to coordinate, manage and scale up quality integrated early childhood development services for refugee and host community children. ECD centers receive infrastructure improvements and support to connect to child protection, health and other services. ECD teachers are trained on play-based learning and positive learning environments, early literacy and numeracy for young children, and how to make play materials and books from locally available material.

Right To Play orients parents on positive parenting and the Key Family Care Practices of the Ministry of Health. Parents are also engaged to strengthen the capacity of ECD Center Management committees to manage the centers and increase community demand for ECD.



This is the way to go; through play, children take on challenges within games, they learn faster and they become creative and innovative which is a prerequisite for survival in the 21st century. Play-based learning is creating our critical thinkers for the future.

– Ministry of Education and Sport, Senior Official¹¹



Right To Play International

Right To Play is a global organization that protects, educates, and empowers children using all forms of play – games, sport, poetry, performance, dance, art and music. We work with children in some of the most difficult and dangerous places on earth, empowering children with the knowledge and skills to drive change in their lives, their families and their communities.

In 2019, Right To Play transformed the lives of 2.35 million children in 15 countries around the world, working in collaboration with teachers, governments, communities, and parents.



A good teacher inspires hope and confidence, awakens the imagination, and stimulates a love of learning.

Supporters



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