

A REPORT ON GIRL'S PERSPECTIVE ON CHILD FRIENDLY JUSTICE WEBINAR

DATE: 15TH JUNE 2020

ACCESS TO CHILD FRIENDLY JUSTICE:

A girl's lens

Topic:

Girls perspectives on
child friendly justice systems
in Africa

15 JUNE 2020
MONDAY

TIME:
5:00 -6:30PM
EAT

Live on Mtoto News

 [Youtube.com/mtotonewsTV/live](https://www.youtube.com/mtotonewsTV/live)
 www.facebook.com/Forum.for.African.Women.Educationalists/



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Introduction

As part of the commemoration of the Day of The African Child, FAWE, Plan International AU Liaison Office and Mtoto News held a girl's only conversation on the theme of the "Access To Child Friendly Justice System".

The Girls answered the following key questions

1. What do the words 'girls friendly justice system' mean to you?
2. Are there courts in your country that deal with issues of girls violation of their rights?
3. When girls go through injustices such as rape, beatings, forced marriages whom do they report to? Whether in school, on the streets or at home?
4. How do you think people who violate girls rights should be treated?
5. We are living during the COVID-19 Pandemic times, have you heard of any cases of injustices girls have faced? How have they been handled?!
6. What do you think is the role of girls, parents/guardians, teachers, community members in ensuring girls access justice systems?
7. What special considerations need to be put in place to ensure girls in IDPs, refugee camps and streets access justice systems?

The Girls identified the following challenges in accessing to child friendly justice system

1. The court system is not friendly for children
2. Children Voices are not heard in justice.
3. The Justice system is not friendly for girls
4. There are not enough reporting channels for girls
5. There is lack of Privacy of girls
6. They do not have child Courts but the High Courts are made child friendly to handle child cases
7. Justice should be available at all times



In Urban Communities it's very easy to access justice systems and be safe because girls are quite empowered however in the rural areas its very different because ladies are very uncomfortable because the people they are reporting to are

They identified the following as being a girl friendly justice system

- This is a system where girl's rights are respected, protected and their voice heard
- A child friendly Court should be accommodative and friendly; it should make a child feel comfortable
- A girl friendly justice system is a system that administers justice without fear and manages cases without discrimination
- A justice system that favors girls and helps them overcome trauma instead of adding to the trauma

- A justice system that recognizes, obeys and respects girls' rights

How Courts should be made better

- There are social workers in Courts to make sure that children understand their rights and they aren't violated in any way
- There should be specific courts that cater for the rights and needs of children

Justice amidst the Covid-19 pandemic

- Justice is really hard to get at this time
- Justice is not as it should be. It is not functional

HOW THE JUSTICE SYSTEM LOOKS LIKE IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

When a girl is raped, she can go to a police station for their safety, they can report the crime. They can also go to a medical Centre where they will be taken care of medically, physically and they can share their issues with authorities

Our government has shared a 24 hours' free helpline that can respond to children issues

When a girl is raped, she doesn't appear in Court, she appears in what is called visual appearance which makes the victims not to face the perpetrators

In local set ups the most effective way is going to the chief or reporting to the parents or the school who will forward the issue to the police station

SAFETY OF GIRLS IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

It depends with where you are whether you are in the urban area or in the rural areas, in the rural areas its difficult because sometimes accessing the police station would be far from where the police station would have been because some police stations are a s far as 25 Kilometers away from the victim compared to the urban areas where there are many police station

HOW SHOULD PEOPLE WHO VIOLATE RIGHTS BE TREATED

- They should be given life imprisonment because what they have done is a scar that one lives with the rest of their lives
- These people should be castrated because these people are animals and they don't deserve to live amongst people. They should be given life imprisonment because the scars they cause aren't easy to remove from the victims
- If these people are given 5 years or 20 years' imprisonment they will still come back to the community and they will cause trauma to these victims
- As most perpetrators are close family members, there should be no parole. The best punishment is life imprisonment
- The current punishment should be made stiffer

MESSAGE TO LEADERS

- - They should stop the habit of harboring perpetrators due to fear and report cases. Parents should practice positive parental skills
 - The Community should work together in coming up with solutions on issues affecting girls
 - My president should be able to create girls' courts that focus on girl's rights
 - Relook on girls that underwent through injustices but never got served with justice
 - Create counselling centers where girls can be counselled

The 30 percent gender representation rule should be increased to 50 – 50 to ensure that the rights being respected

The president should help young girls to prevent early marriages and they stop being mistreated because most girls don't study because of being mistreated and they don't know how to report such cases

During these lockdown girls are stuck in the house and sometimes they are stuck with the perpetrators themselves. The president should be sending social workers into houses so that s that they can find girls that are in danger and rescue them

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO ENSURE THOSE IN MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES ACCESS JUSTICE

Access to free lawyers because most girl's rights violators believe that these girls don't have enough money to get lawyers

There should be more facilities for children to seek justice; children need assistance to seek justice

There is need to push for access to civic education so that the girls can know what to demand for

Reinforcement of laws. The laws are in place but there is no action!

What needs to be done to ensure there's justice for children

- Abolish some cultural practices which promote child marriage
- There's need for the government to create awareness against child marriage within Communities
- The government should come up with more rescue centers for young girls
- The government should put emphasis on disabled children
- Girls need to be recognized and given attention by governments
- There's need for governments to put more effort into girl child education
- Creation of more safety centers for children to avoid mixing children and adults in Cells
- Allocation of finances for propone lawyers
- Use of child friendly language
- Transportation of children to Court sessions
- The government should reduce the overstaying of children in remand and police stations
- Strengthening of the Children Assembly forums in the whole Country
- Increase teachers in rehabilitation centers
- The government should apply effectively the existing laws

Conclusion

Action should be put into the justice system of the child. She wants also to see a lot of people supporting children

"We can't do it alone; we need help"

Girls should get justice because if justice doesn't happen the cases will continue happening

Our President should put more measures into place to protect the girl child from abuse

In Zimbabwe government should enforce access to girl friendly justice system to girls facing early marriage because the informal justice systems aren't giving justice to girls

Kimberly – The government should create reporting systems that are girl friendly that have no interference from people who may interfere with the cases

Venessa – We need to start fighting for our own rights and establishing of ways in which we are heard

My message is to girls, we're supposed to support each other, we shouldn't watch other girls being mistreated and violated we should stand together and stand strong to fight for our rights and get ourselves a voice

There should be more organizations to help girls access justice. The justice system isn't functional during this Covid19 season because all attention has been given to fighting Covid19 and justice isn't served to Victims

Social Media Performance

The girl's webinar was held on June 15 and moderated by Yande from Zambia and had 504 views on YouTube and Facebook. The session had girls representing from Nigeria, Malawi, Kenya, Mali, Rwanda, Egypt, Zimbabwe and Zambia.

<https://www.facebook.com/Forum.for.African.Women.Educationalists/videos/545189046151243/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6-orPfpYPO&t=1055s>