



Resilient
Women's
ORGANIZATION

A photograph of four children sitting around a small wooden table, looking at a large sheet of paper on the table. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent purple filter. The children appear to be engaged in a collaborative activity or learning session.

Annual Report **2020**

RESILIENT WOMEN'S ORGANISATION ANNUAL REPORT 2020

EMPOWERING YOUNG WOMEN TO EMPOWER THE NEXT GENERATION

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



I am honoured to present to you the Resilient Women’s Organization 2020 Annual Report under the theme, Ending and Response to teenage pregnancy and child marriage through community Sexual Reproductive Health & Rights education.

2020 has demonstrated a great stride towards our vision of a community whereby adolescent girls and young women have equal access to services and resources. Indeed, SRHR education as our major strategic intervention has seen RWO reach out to both in and out of school adolescent boys and girls, vulnerable child mothers and families despite the Covid-19 pandemic.

Every year approximately 14 million girls are subjected to child marriage. In Uganda it’s estimated that more than 24% of pregnancies are of teenage parents. Marriage & pregnancy usually means the end of education to the child; with no education the future of the child is uncertain and undermines numerous development priorities, hindering progress towards a more equal, healthy and prosperous world.

Uganda has a very young population, with nearly half (47%) of its people under 15 years old. The choices that these young people and their parents make will affect the country's future for decades to come. Delaying marriage and pregnancy equates to major benefits to girls and may also lead to societal benefits, such as improved health of children and faster economic growth.

As demonstrated within the annual report, we have continued the fight against teenage pregnancy and child marriage through our mainstream programs aimed at promoting equal and quality education opportunities for both girls & boys, enabling access to age appropriate comprehensive sexual & reproductive health information & services, provision of direct services to at-risk girls and young women and ensuring social and economic empowerment of vulnerable households with a focus on child mothers. We have been in position to implement activities under these programs through the generous support of the Girls First Fund, Founder Members, Individual donors and International volunteers, for which we are always grateful. I would also wish to thank the Local Leaders especially the Local Council Nalugala Women's Representative and her Committee that closely worked with us across the different events and activities we are all celebrating in the report.

I would wish to thank the staff, associates and community champions who have continued to commit to the fight against teenage pregnancy and child marriage with limited or even no pay.

Let this report show that with the right attitude and commitment we shall most definitely create an environment where every child will have an equal opportunity to quality education and develops to full potential without the impact of teenage pregnancy & child marriage; we will indeed see a community where adolescent girls and young women have equal access to services and resources.

Hope Lydia Ndagire

Executive Director

Resilient Women's Organization.

RESILIENT WOMEN' ORGANISATION STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Established in 2016, Resilient Women's Organisation is a registered Community Based Organisation (CBO) based in Wakiso district, Entebbe Municipality to empower and support adolescent girls and young women who have been affected or are likely to be affected by family conflicts, sexual violence and poverty in order to achieve an equal and just society.

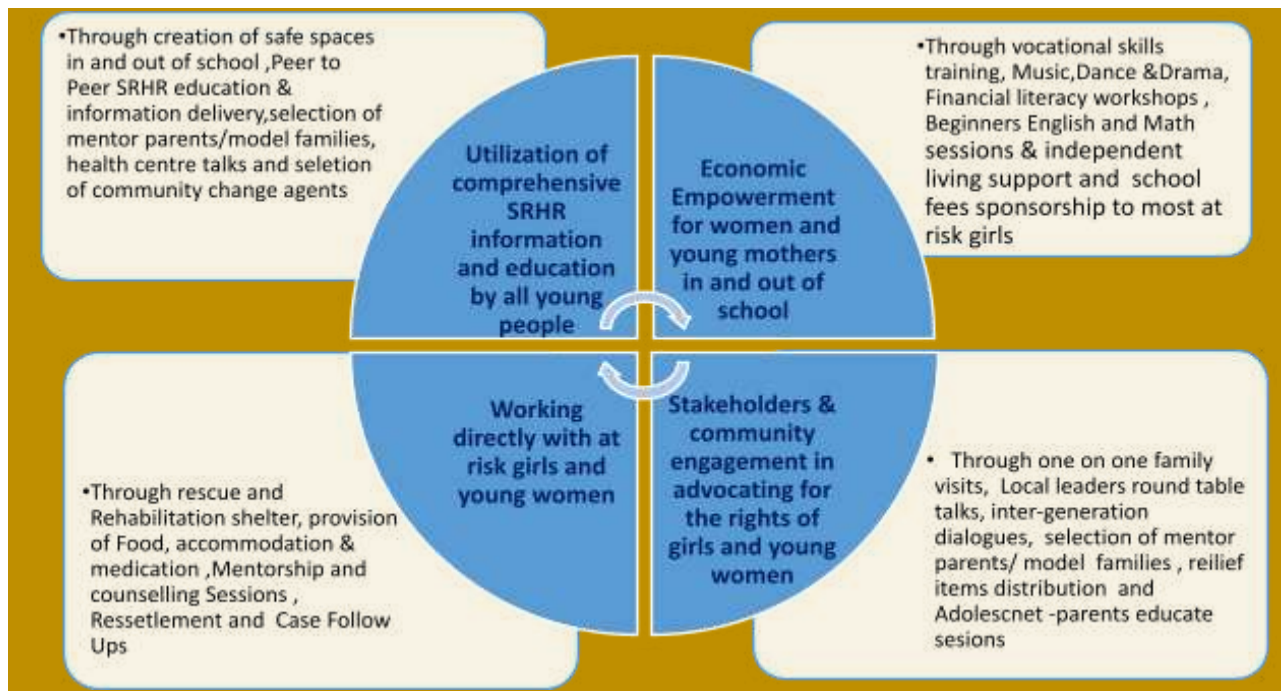
VISION: Resilient Women's Organization envisage a society where all adolescent girls and young women have equal access to resources and opportunities.

MISSION: Resilient Women's Organisation exists to create lasting solutions to poverty and unemployment in the lives of adolescent girls & young women through resilient social and economic empowerment programs.

Our Values

- Professionalism; We measure our results and use our resources efficiently. We act professionally and always strive to improve our work
- Equality; we believe in an equal and just society where everyone has access to resources and opportunities for sustainable growth. We respect, observe the rights and dignity of every human being irrespective of their social standing
- Teamwork; working together with all the stakeholders, dedicated to achieve our organisation's goals.
- Integrity; Transparency, accountability, and efficiency in our dealings with others

What we are doing to realise our vision and mission



2020 QUANTITATIVE ACHEIVEMENTS UNDER OUR RESILIENT SOCIAL & ECONOMIC PROGRAMS

Utilization of comprehensive SRHR information and education by all young people.



- 7 SRHR community clubs established
- 86 SRHR sessions delivered
- 306 young people reached with SRHR education
- 2 community safe spaces established
- 6 mentor parents selected
- 1 health talk conducted,30 young people reached
- 12 peer educators on board
- 3 days' capacity building workshop peer educators
- 9 adolescents- parents SRHR educate sessions, 70 families reached out
- 2 partnerships established young people with SRHR services

Economic Empowerment for women and young mothers in and out of School



- 52 under hair dressing
- 39 under Tailoring
- 52 under talent development
- 1 girl under independent living support
- 6 girls under back to school sponsorship

Temporary rescue shelters to at risk girls and young women



- 9 girls provided a temporary rescue shelter
- 19 families, 17 girls and 5 young mothers reached out during COVID- 19 through calls and food items
- 7 girls were resettled
-

Stakeholders engagement in advocating for the rights of girls and young women

- 128 parents reached out through Intergeneration dialogues
- 21 leaders reached out through local leaders table talks
- 89 vulnerable families provided with relief food items
- 21 one on one family visits

Our 2020 in depth

1. THE GIRLS FIRST FUND PROJECT

After a successful completion of our annual learning year Girls First Fund grant in response to Child Marriages and Early Unions (15th July 2018 up to 15th July 2019), Resilient Women's Organisation was considered for a renewal of this very grant under an amplified response to child marriages and early unions for 2 years. The project goal is 'All young people especially girls and young women are empowered to say no to child marriages and early unions through SRHR information and economic empowerment'. Under the GFF project, three major outcomes describe our two years' journey. These include;

- i) Utilization of comprehensive SRHR information and education by all young people.
- ii) Empowered young people increasingly voice their rights
- iii) Supportive social-cultural, environment for youth-friendly SRHR

2. COVID-19 Response Fundraiser

This was led by Beth & Trigg from United Kingdom on behalf of Resilient Women's Organisation. The money raised was used to buy food including posho, beans, sanitary towels, soap and salt. These were distributed to most vulnerable families and girls during the pandemic.

3. Girls sponsorship movement

Our girls' sponsorship movement has grown from 6 sponsors to 9 sponsors. The number of sponsored girls has also grown from 6 girls to 9 girls. All the sponsored girls are in secondary school.

4. Working Directly with at-risk adolescent girls and young women

❖ Rescue and Rehabilitation



Our temporary rescue and

Rehabilitation shelters have been in place to offer social –physiological support to girls and young mothers who are victims of sexual and gender based violence. The shelters proved to be the most source of rescue and hope to girls and young women during COVID-19 times, more especially during the lockdown. Before COVID-19, the shelter had a number of 9 girls, whom three were young mothers. As a result of government restrictions on gatherings, we had to dismiss some of the girls, however, our offices remained open offering calls to the vulnerable and most at risk families. The immediate presidential directives of closing all institutions across the country and the ban on social gatherings directly affected our work, girls and young women we serve as they were disproportionately affected.

As a result of increased cases of sexual violence, Psychological-stress, domestic Violence and Forced sexual encounters, we had to ensure the safety of girls and young mothers through our three points interventions;

i) **Parents, young mothers and girls' check-Ins:**



The staff at Resilient

Women Organization directly engaged families, girls and young mothers through phone calls providing Sexual Reproductive Health rights information, needed

referrals and provision of psychological support counselling. 19 girls, 14 families and 5 young mothers were reached out.

ii) Meaningful Engagement of local leaders



Local leaders

including the chairmen Local council ones, women and youth leaders were facilitated to reach out to most vulnerable families and girls. All local leaders who are already registered as stakeholders of RWO have been facilitated with airtime so that we can be kept alert and informed in case our beneficiaries need us. 21 local leaders were involved.

5. Integration of SRHR information and COVID-19 information during the check-ins calls

Our social worker and the councillors ensured dissemination of right information regarding COVID-19 and safety measures as laid down by the ministry of Health and WHO to protect our beneficiaries. This information was

disseminated alongside vital information regarding domestic violence, safe sex and counselling. The Temporary shelters are now accommodating four girls, including a young mother whose baby is two months old.

6. Economic Empowerment for women and young mothers in and out of school

❖ Back to School sponsorship program

In January 2020, 3 girls joined our Sponsorship program after a long wait since they dropped out of school after completing primary seven. These were assisted to join secondary school. So far, the organisation has a total of 9 girls under the back to school sponsorship program. The organisation also printed out various scholastic and reading materials for our girls both at the centre and in the community during the lockdown

We also celebrated a transition for one of our girls, rescued from the threat of a forced marriage at 15 years old, sheltered and sponsored, Olivia completed her Primary Leaving Examination successfully in 2019 and joined Secondary Level education thanks to the support of our sponsors.



❖ Vocational and Life skills training

The fact that we work with a marginalised key population including young mothers, teenage pregnant mothers, out of school youths, single mothers and orphaned children, we had to strengthen our vocational skills trainings as to minimise the poverty and economic disparities as a result of COVID-19 to our beneficiaries. To protect families, girls and young mothers from the risks of making unhealthy life choices including marrying off daughters in exchange of dowry, prostitution, forced marriages, unsafe sexual behaviours in exchange of money and domestic violence, early unions and school dropout, we designed a creative approaches aimed at

preparing communities cope up with COVID-19 impact. We have integrated skills training in both of our safe space centres.



The livelihood skills trainings within the communities are providing an opportunity for 24 young mothers, 22 in school girls and 6 young boys in hair dressing. Again, 8 out of school young mothers and 31 in school girls are still under training in tailoring (91 young mothers, girls and boys received trainings from Jan to December 2020). Two young mothers are employed as the trainers for these two skills within their communities

❖ INDEPENDENT LIVING SUPPORT

Four of the girls who successfully completed skills trainings were able to start up their own income generating activities.



Two of the girls been employed as full time trainers with the organisation, one girl has started her own hair dressing salon and tailoring shop in kitale, and the two other girls also own salons in Kampala.

7. One on One SRHR information to most vulnerable families'/parents visits

With the help of the mentor parents / role model families and the local women and youth leaders, were able to identify most vulnerable families, these included girl's families headed by single mothers, economically challenged parents/ guardians, families with girls being headed by elderly parents, families with out of school girls and families with histories or at risk of marrying off girls at an early age. We have been able to reach out to 70 vulnerable families and 40 parents, all these families have been able to receive continuously receive parent- adolescent SRHR sessions weekly. The 70 families have also received relief items including food, sanitary towels and reading materials twice. Two young mothers have also been rescued for shelter and one most at risk girl helped to join back to school program.

8. Working with stakeholders to advocate for the rights of adolescent girls and young women.

❖ Relief Items Distribution to most vulnerable and most at risks families.

We selected 6 mentor parents / role model families, 2 local women leaders and 4 youth leaders, we worked with these local leaders in identifying most vulnerable families, these included girl's families headed by single mothers, economically challenged parents/ guardians, families with girls being headed by elderly parents, families with out of school girls and families with histories or at risk of marrying off girls at an early age.



We were able to distribute relief items including posho, beans, sugar, soap, soap and sanitary towels to 89 vulnerable families including, care takers, girls and young mothers both in nalugala and kitala. Within each family, a series of 19 parents-adolescent SRHR educate sessions were delivered reaching out to 104 parents. Sessions included child marriages, parents-adolescent communication, parental guidance and the need to help young people access age appropriate SRHR information

❖ **Inter-Generational dialogues and Local Leaders Table Talks**

With an objective to encourage dialogues and engagements between girls, parents and community leaders to decipher SRHR information, economic empowerment and giving girls and young women a platform to voice their concerns and views about teenage pregnancies and child marriages, Resilient Women's Organisation has made considerable efforts in bringing various stakeholders together at community level to gain support for young people's SRHR. We have so far successfully facilitated 3 multi-stakeholder round table talks for 21 local leaders and one Intergeneration dialogue at community level bringing together 128 relevant stakeholders that don't usually meet and exchange views, ranging from district government (both technical and political arms), local and youth councillors, young people, school and health centres management, teachers, religious leader and parents. Resilient Women's Organisation empowered young people to raise their concerns and asks in these dialogues. We have also supported key influencers in the community that became champions for SRHR of young people.



These local leaders also fundraised Shs. 700,000 to support safe spaces with hairdressing skilling materials. Engagement of local leaders and parents has strongly increased the ownership and acceptability of the program activities within the communities, it has also helped in identifying victims of child marriages and teenage and most at risk girls from hard to reach areas and families.

9. Adolescents Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights information and education empowerment

❖ Adolescents SRHR educate sessions and information delivery

Through a peer to peer education model, young people, both boys and girls, in and out of school have continued to receive weekly SRHR information and educate sessions on topics such as human development, gender, life skills, safety from violence, relationships, promoting and protecting health, alcohol and drug abuse, and making reusable sanitary pads through a peer to peer education model. We had to adjust our planned in-school programs to a new model of out of school Youth Friendly Safe corners opened up in Katabi town council. The objective is to enable young

people more especially girls and young mothers make informed life choices.



So far, 7 resilient community clubs have been established in the communities of Nalugala and Kitala. In addition, seven model families' / mentor parents have continued to host and mentor the clubs. The peer educators have been able to deliver 86 sessions in total reaching out to 409 young people, including 304 girls and 105 boys. Out of these, 36 are young mothers. As a result, young people's knowledge and life skills have increased and this has enabled them to make safe choices. Some case stories recorded clearly indicated the changes in sexual behaviours and goal setting. For the many affected school goers, we made sure that they have access to reading material, as part of our care packages.

10. Establishment of Safe Space Drop-In Centres for both in and out of school youth

The main objective for these Safe spaces is creating a supportive environment for adolescents SRHR and also providing spaces where they can learn, educate and stay safe. Resilient Women's Organisation has so far put in place two safe space centres, Nalugala and in Kitala. The creation of safe spaces within the communities in partnerships with the community local leaders, more especially the women and youth local leaders. These have provided spaces where young people learn, educate and help them stay safe during this unprecedented times of COVID-19 where schools are closed. 6 Model family's/mentor parents were selected; these provide us with free safe space venues where young people meet from. While early unions remain

prevalent in the communities where we work, model families and parents who are seen to have succeeded in life, educated their children play a significant role in offering an alternative to the social norms and practices that fuel child marriages and have a strong voice in the communities

11. Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights Advocacy through Music Dance and Drama

As an organisation, we believe in the ability of edutainment when it comes to young people. A peer MDD trainer was recruited to help in developing talents among young



girls, young women and boys. The MDD club organised and led the community change ambassadors' day where all the clubs came together to raise awareness on ending child marriages and early unions through poems, music, traditional and creative dance, education and news reporting, drama and skits. 100 young people participated in the presence of the mentor parents and leaders. We have learnt that advocacy through MDD increases confidence and the ability to raise sensitive SRHR issues affecting young people including access to and use of contraception, parents-adolescent communication and harmful cultural practices including child marriages.

12. Health Centre Talks

We organised one health talk in partnership with Katabi Health Centre 111, the health talk was aiming at sensitizing young people and parents on menstrual care management. 30 young people and 4 mentor parents were trained in making reusable sanitary pads. Among the trained, 8 were trained as trainers of trainers. These has also transferred the skill to train their fellow peers and parents. The talk was also aimed at highlighting myths and misconceptions surrounding menstrual periods and pregnancy

FUTURE PLANS AND COMMITMENTS

The organisation finalised the Five Year Strategic plan (2020-2025). Three strategic goals will guide our five-year journey. These include:

- i) Ending Child marriages, early unions and teenage pregnancies through SRHR information and services delivery.**
- ii) Economic Empowerment for girls and young women through vocational skills training and Strengthen**
- iii) Enhancing Resilient Women's Organization capability, growth and sustainability. We aim at achieving an NGO status by end of 2022.**
- iv) Eliminating GBV and Violence against women and girls through our socio-economic empowerment programs and community led/centered approaches.**

As part of our future plans, we are resilient in ensuring we put in place a modern vocational skilling centre in Nakawuka by 2025. We also want to strengthen our back to school program to ensure we have more out of school girls and young women on back to school program. Community drop in centres in all the communities of Entebbe

We also envisage a big movement of young girls capacitated to improve the SRHR environment in Uganda.

We also envision expanding our girl's sponsorship program to 50 girls, both in primary and secondary education.

As an organisation, we are cognisant of the impact of working together, the resilient team is more focused on creating more resilient friends and partnerships to support our vision and mission. We are building a strong team to help achieve this.

We couldn't have done this without support from The Girls First Fund, Judi & Richard Musick Family, and all Beth & Hellen Trigg, Naomi Leigh plus all the Sponsors of our Back to School Program.

