

Press Release

Celebration of the International Day of the Girl Child 2015 on 09/10/2015

Theme: 'FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE, I CHOOSE TO PROTECT MY LIFE'/Ndifuzza ejo hazaza heza, mpisemo kurinda ubuzima bwanjye

Recognizing the need of raising awareness of the challenges that millions of girls face every day, in December 2011, the UN declared that it would annually observe the International Day of the Girl Child (IDGC), starting from October 11, 2012. Usually, UN provides the Global theme for IDGC each year and for this year the theme is **“The power of the adolescent girl: Vision for 2030”**. The Government of Rwanda decided to align the celebration of the International Day of Girl Child 2015 to the Global theme under the following: **“For a bright future, I choose to protect my life’/ Ndifuzza ejo hazaza heza, mpisemo kurinda ubuzima bwanjye”**. **The celebration will take place on 9th October 2015, in Rwamagana District, Fumbwe Sector.**

This day will involve children from schools who will demonstrate different poems, drama and songs as a way of showcasing on the achievements and opportunities that girls have been given but also showing the challenges they face. With the theme: **'For a bright future, I choose to protect my life. Ndifuzza ejo hazaza heza, mpisemo kurinda ubuzima bwanjye’**, children need to know that being girls does not mean being vulnerable but - they have to know - that they have the power to determine their future and the community is also there to protect them from any harm.

Note for Editors

According to 2014-2015 Rwanda Demographic Health Survey, 7% of young women aged 15-19 have already begun childbearing: 6 percent have had a live birth, and 2 percent were pregnant at the time of the interview. The proportion of teenagers who have begun childbearing rises rapidly with age, from 1% at age 15 to 21% at age 19. Teenagers with no education and those in the lowest wealth quintile tend to start childbearing earlier than other teenagers. A teenage pregnancy is the main challenge preventing achievement towards 2030 vision.

The Government has taken significant steps to improve the legal and institutional framework for the protection of the rights of children. A number of laws, policies and strategies have already been developed to strengthen the protection and end violence against children specifically girls.

Different campaigns on raising awareness of the community on preventing teenage pregnancies have been conducted. Anti teenage pregnancy campaigns, family campaigns, sixteen days of activism, Anti-GBV campaign are among other initiatives established to empower girls to make right decisions for their lives. In the same perspective, the newly launched He-for-She campaign aims at engaging men and boys as agents of change for the achievement of gender equality and women's rights, by encouraging them to take action against inequalities faced by women and girls.

This year's event - is therefore an opportunity to increase knowledge and skills on reproductive health among adolescents and reduce teenage pregnancy; share the outcomes of Anti teenage pregnancy campaign and set up strategies to reduce teenage pregnancy. The 2015 IDGC celebration will ultimately contribute in equipping girls and teenagers in general with relevant information on reducing dependency by linking them to partners who intervene in income generating activities.

Event detail

In Rwanda, a half day event will be held in Rwamagana District, Fumbwe Sector on **9th October, 2015** where children from G.S Janjagiro, G.S Nyagasambu and Nyamirama Primary school will participate in all demonstration of the day. The main activities associated with the organization and celebration of IDG 2015 include the identification of young mothers under 19 in Fumbwe Sector and link them with partners for both financial and psychosocial support; graduation of the beneficiaries (first cohort) of 12+ program, empowering girls about different themes focusing on teenage pregnancy; and raising awareness on teenage pregnancy through T V and Radio live debates around the theme; mobile health services such as counseling, HIV test, pregnancy test; testimony of a young girl/role model to inspire other teenagers.

The organization of the event is spearheaded by the Ministry of Gender and Family promotion, the National Commission for Children with a number of partners intervening in child rights protection and promotion.

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