



# YOUTH LEADERSHIP IN SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER (SUD) PREVENTION UGANDA

**CASE OF ISSUP YOUTH INITIATIVE UGANDA IN PARTNERSHIP WITH UGANDA YOUTH DEVELOPMENT LINK (UYDEL)**

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## UYDEL DROP-IN CENTRES

### UGANDA YOUTH DEVELOPMENT LINK

HELPING DISADVANTAGED YOUTHS

DEVELOP SELF-RELIANCE

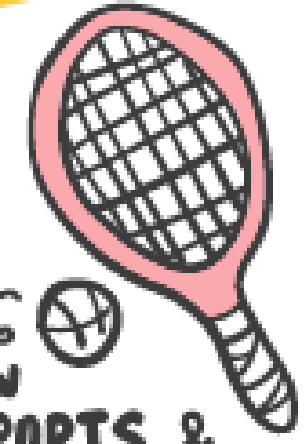
GIRL EMPOWERMENT



HAIR DRESSING



ELECTRONICS



SPORTS & AEROBICS



BAKING



MUSIC, DANCE & DRAMA

Skills offered:

### PROGRAMME FOCUS AREAS

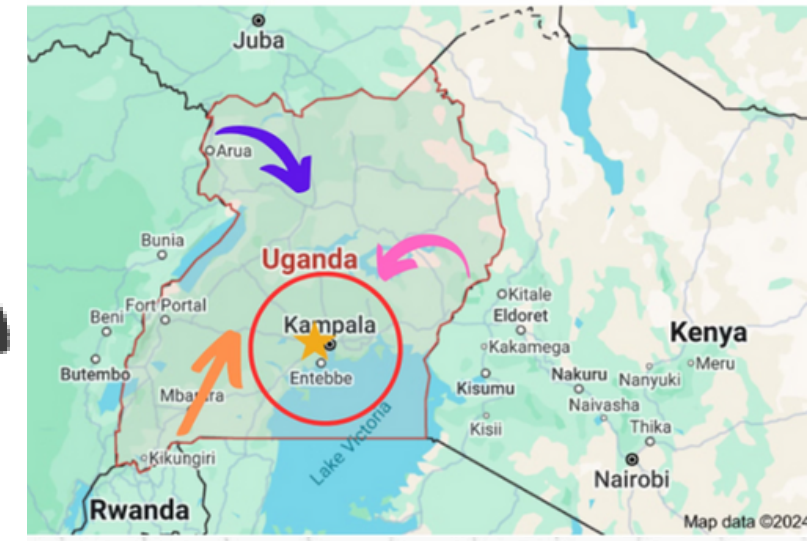
- COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN
- CHILD TRAFFICKING
- ALCOHOL, DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE
- SEXUAL REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS
- HIV PREVENTION
- CHILD LABOUR
- SOCIAL RESEARCH

### METHODS

- SOCIO- ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT
- COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION AND EMPOWERMENT
- SPECIALIZED TRAININGS
- ASSESSMENT AND ENROLLMENT
- PARTICIPATORY RURAL APPRAISAL
- RIGHTS BASED APPROACH
- PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT
- PARTNERSHIPS, NETWORKING AND COLLABORATION
- MONITORING AND EVALUATION
- ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS

### PROJECTS

- IDENTIFICATION, MOBILIZATION AND ASSESSMENT OF CHILDREN
- ASSESSMENT OF THE NEEDS AND VULNERABILITY INDEX
- CONDUCTING OF HOME VISITS TO THEIR FAMILIES AND CAREGIVERS
- PLACEMENT FOR VOCATIONAL SKILLS TRAINING AT A SUITABLE UYDEL DROP - IN CENTRES
- PROVISION OF A TEN -DAY STREET BUSINESS TOOL KIT
- YOUNG PEOPLE ARE HELPED TO FIND INTERNSHIPS WITH LOCAL ARTISANS
- SOME OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE MAY OPT TO UNDERTAKE THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION NON- FORMAL EDUCATION EXAMS
- A CERTIFICATION/ GRADUATION CEREMONY IS THEN HELD AT THE END OF THE ONE YEAR
- ALL CHILDREN ARE THEN RESETTLED AND REINTEGRATED
- THE UYDEL STAFF THEN CONDUCT A FOLLOW UP VISIT



# WHY YOUTH INVOLVEMENT MATTERS

- Youth are directly affected by SUD.
- They bring unique perspectives to prevention and recovery initiatives.
- Youth engagement enhances community impact and policy relevance.
- Statistic: youth participation rates in programs (e.g., engaging 150 vulnerable youth in Kampala)



1. Monthly Meetings with Youth Mentor YNL and ISSUP Regional Coordinator

2. Visiting Youth Drop-in Centers

3. Participation at the “Harnessing efforts to establish an informal international platform advocating for drug abuse prevention among young people” side event during the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND)

4. Participation in ISSUP Regional and Executive Meetings

5. Community Dialogues and Awareness Raising Sessions with Parents and Caregivers in Kampala

6. Engaging with Busy Coalitions

# ISSUP YOUTH INITIATIVE UGANDA ACTIVITIES

7. Submission of petition to Rubaga Division & talk shows on awareness raising

8. Conducting School Outreach Program

9. Comprehensive Prevention Discussions Focusing on Youth Alcohol Prevention in Kampala

10. Joint Project: Youth-led Webinar

11. Creation of Social Media Platforms for Youth

12. Drafting Advocacy Letter to Ministry of Health

13. Drafting Rules and Guidelines for Parliament to Implement New Narcotics Law (CSO perspective)

14. Participation in UYDEL Peer Educator Training



TITLE: ACT NOW TO ADDRESS YOUTH CRIME AND SUBSTANCE USE IN OUR COMMUNITIES (SLUM AREAS OF RUBAGA DIVISION)

Introduction.

We the undersigned are the concerned citizens who demand action to address the growing issue of youth in crime and substance use in our community. We urge our leaders to take immediate steps to prevent youth involvement in crime and provide support for those struggling with addiction.

Specific demands:

1. Increase funding for youth substance abuse treatment and prevention programs. This includes

- Sensitization in communities like schools, slum areas and prisons where the confined youths are being arrested due to drug use to enable them learn the dangers of drugs use as a sustainable approach for those arrested due to crime as a result of substance abuse.
- Structuring of more substance abuse rehabilitation centers for youths by the government to treat those in drug addiction.
- Address mental health as well among the youths.

2. Enhance community resources and support services for youth including:

- Accessible counseling and therapy for all the youths it should be free or affordable.

3. Address the core causes of youth's involvement in crime such as

- Racial and socioeconomic disparities
- Lack of access to quality education, mentorship for youths and health care.

4. Implement evidence-based policies and programs to:

- Reduce drugs and alcohol among youths
- Address underlying issues like poverty, trauma and lack of opportunities.

5. Increase police presence and community engagement to build trust and prevent crime.

Call to action:

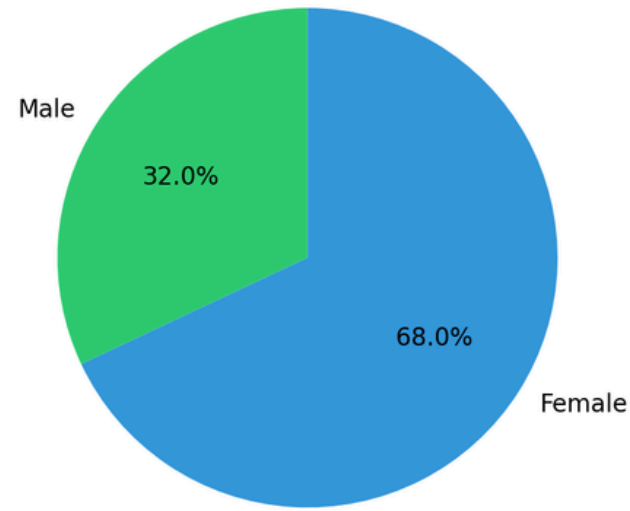
We urge our elected leaders to prioritize the well-being and safety of our youth. We demand action to address the root causes of crime and substance use and to provide necessary resources and support for our young people to thrive.

Signature section:

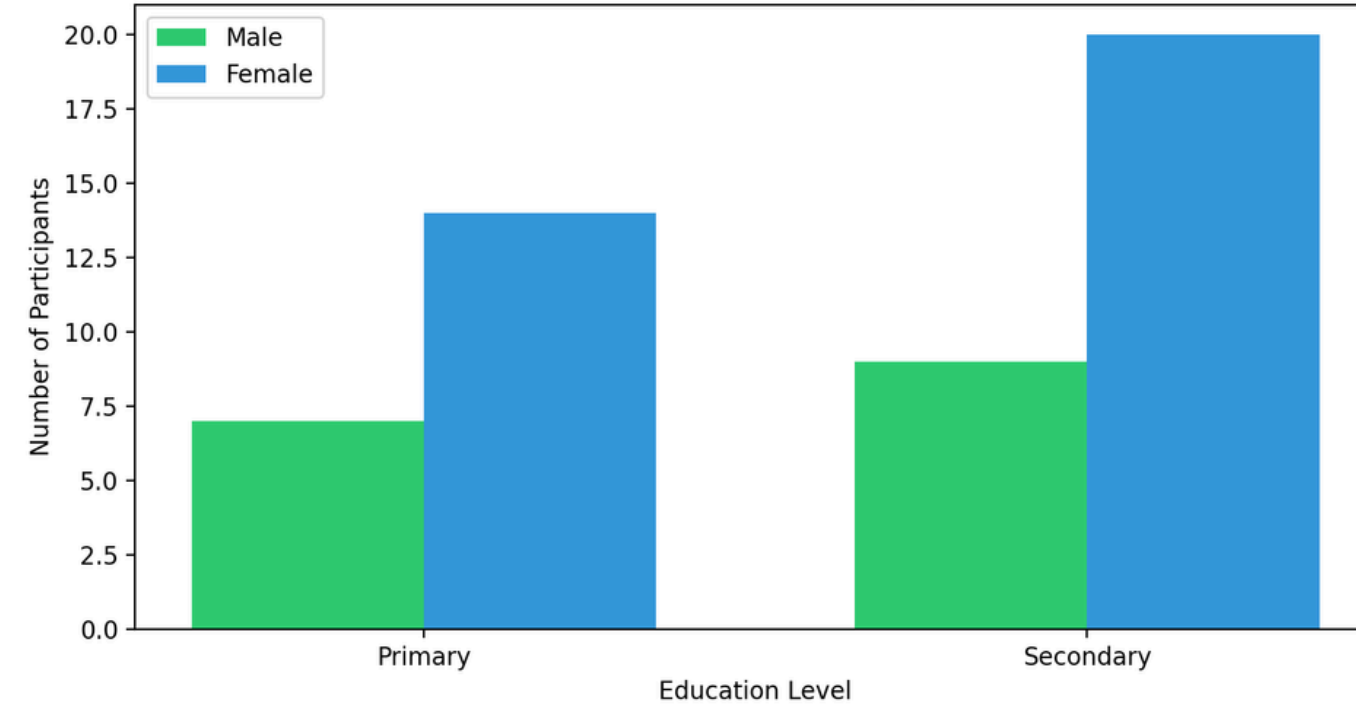
Name	Contact	Signature	Date

# AUDIT TOOL FINDINGS

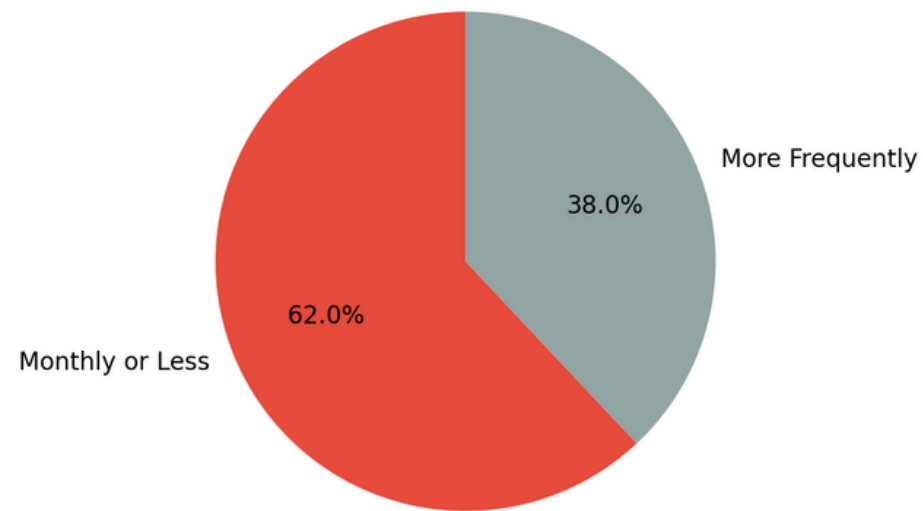
Gender Distribution of Participants



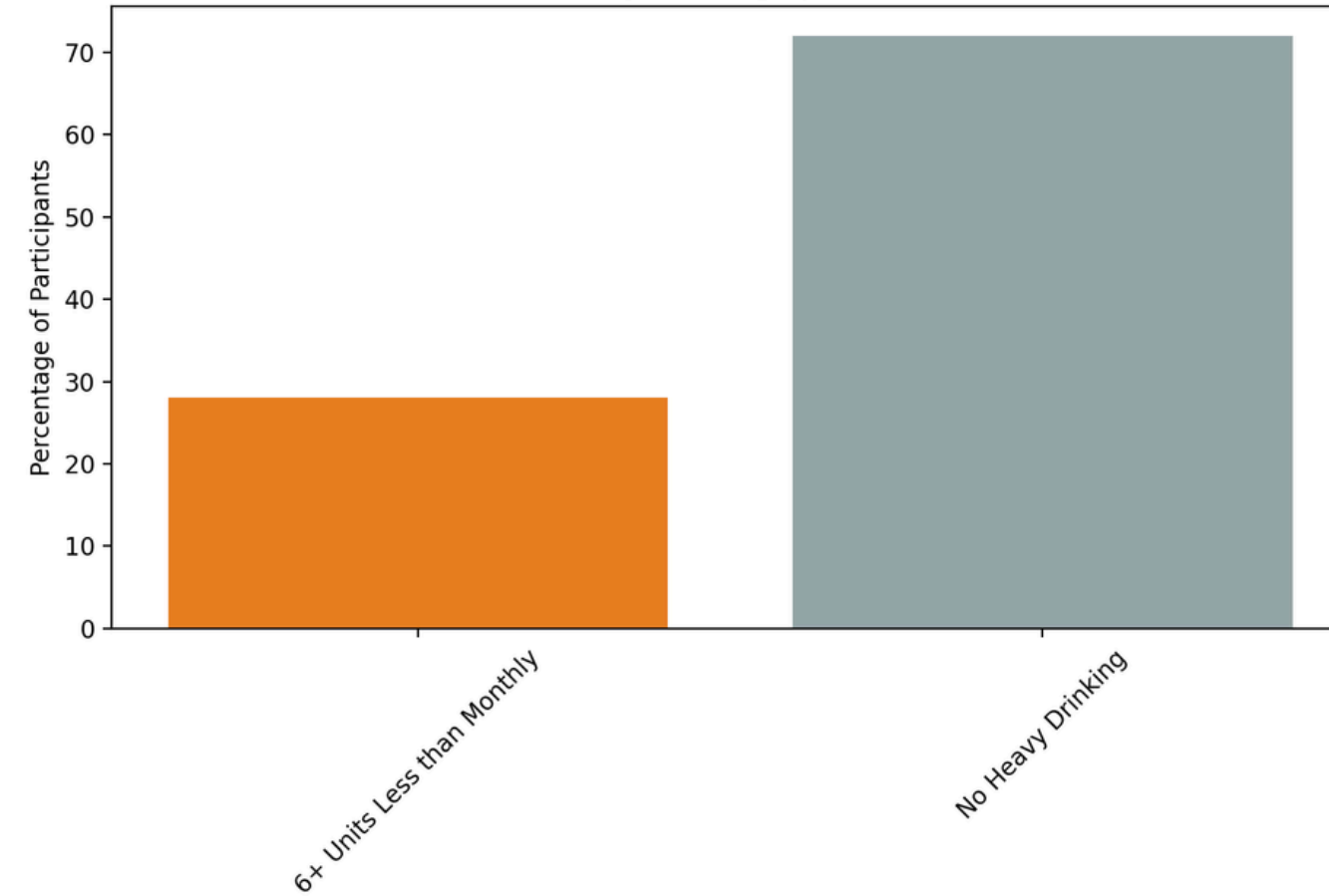
Education Level Distribution by Gender



Alcohol Consumption Frequency



Heavy Drinking Episodes



# YOUTH-LED EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACHES

## 1. Alcohol Prevention Sessions

- Targeted discussions with youth in Kampala on alcohol abuse.

## 2. Webinars and Peer Learning

- Engagement between countries like Uganda and Kazakhstan.

## 3. Community Dialogues

- Educating parents and caregivers on their role in prevention

- "One approach that's really working is our focus on alcohol prevention. We've had honest, sometimes difficult, discussions with youth in Kampala, and the impact is clear—young people are making healthier choices."

- Why It Matters: "When youth take the lead, we see real, lasting change in their behaviors and communities."



# KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

**01.** Reached 60 parents and caregivers in Kampala, equipping them with skills to create safer home environments for youth.

**02.** Launched TikTok and WhatsApp platforms, engaging 30 young people in peer support and promoting healthy lifestyles online.

**03.** Three monthly meetings improved stakeholder coordination, aligning drug prevention efforts across youth mentors and ISSUP Regional Coordinators..

**04.** 30 vulnerable youth were trained as peer educators, empowering them to lead drug prevention in their communities.

**05.** Engaged 46 participants at the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), amplifying youth voices in global drug prevention advocacy.

# SUCCESS STORIES YOU'LL WANT TO HEAR

## **Awareness Creation Impact**

"These community dialogues helped me understand the role I play as a parent. I now feel equipped to protect my children from the dangers of drug use, both at home and online."

— Parent participant in Kampala

## **Meaningful Youth Engagement Impact**

"Being trained as a peer educator changed my perspective. I'm not just avoiding drugs myself; I'm actively helping my friends make better choices and creating a safer community."

— Trained youth peer educator

## **Advocacy Impact**

"As trained peer educators, we knew we had to take our advocacy beyond conversations. Submitting the petition to the Mayor of Rubaga Division was a key step in pushing for change. We gathered input from our community, especially from parents and youth, who wanted stronger policies to prevent drug abuse in our area. This petition represents our collective voice, demanding safer spaces for young people and better support systems."

— Youth Peer Educator, ISSUP Uganda

"The petition to the Mayor was not just a document—it was our community's plea for action. Parents and caregivers, empowered through our awareness sessions, joined the youth in calling for more drug prevention initiatives. We want Rubaga Division to be a leader in protecting young people from substance abuse, and this advocacy effort is a clear sign that we are ready to work together to make that happen."

— Community Member, Kampala





# KEY LEARNINGS FROM UGANDA'S INITIATIVE

1. Parent Involvement
  - Crucial role of caregivers in prevention.
2. Effective Digital Engagement
  - Social media platforms like TikTok and WhatsApp have been successful in outreach.
3. Collaboration
  - Multi-stakeholder efforts yield better results



# CHALLENGES IN YOUTH- LED INITIATIVES

## 1. Resource Constraints

- Limited funding and support.

## 2. Lack of Awareness

- Community and family-level gaps in understanding SUD and prevention.

## 3. Digital Media Influence

- Need for ongoing education on navigating online influences



# OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

- We have so many opportunities ahead of us. By expanding our digital reach and continuing to collaborate with schools, Alumni engagement health workers, and governments, we can create even more impact.
- Personal Hope: "I truly believe that if we support youth leadership, we will not only see a reduction in substance use but an entire generation rising to lead healthier, more empowered lives."



# THE BIGGER PICTURE

- "It's not just about our individual efforts. Imagine a world where youth from every region come together to share ideas, support each other, and advocate for policy change. This isn't a dream—it's already happening, and we can grow it."
- Invitation to the Audience: "This is where all of you come in. Whether you're a policymaker, a community worker, or a young person yourself, you are part of this movement."

# FINAL THOUGHTS/NEXT STEPS

- "If there's one thing I want you to take away today, it's that youth are not just the future—they are the present. And by investing in their leadership, we are building a better world for all of us."
- Call to Action: "Let's continue to support youth in leading prevention, treatment, and recovery efforts. Together, we can create a world where substance use no longer defines or limits their potential."
- Expand the peer educator model to other divisions and districts, training more youth leaders to spread drug abuse prevention messages in new communities.
- Increase the frequency and geographic reach of community dialogues with parents and caregivers to deepen their involvement in drug prevention and expand the support network for at-risk youth.
- Collaborate with schools to implement drug prevention education as part of the curriculum, ensuring that more young people receive continuous support and knowledge on healthy lifestyles.
- Strengthen and expand digital platforms like TikTok and WhatsApp to engage more young people online, offering ongoing peer support, educational resources, and opportunities for meaningful youth participation in advocacy.
- Conduct periodic monitoring and evaluation of the trained peer educators, community interventions, and youth advocacy efforts to assess long-term impact and make data-driven adjustments to strategies.



# THANK YOU VERY MUCH

I'd love to hear from you—what questions do you have? Let's make this a conversation, not just a presentation.