

VOICE OF MIFUMI

February 2010

MIFUMI petitions the constitutional court to outlaw Polygamy

Our mission is to protect women and children from violence and abuse.

In doing so, we have to address the root causes of violence and abuse in our communities like Poverty, Bride Price, Polygamy among others.

By petitioning the constitutional court, we are recommitting ourselves to address violence at the highest office of decision makers so that women, children and our publics enjoy their freedoms and rights.

This petition is another effort by MIFUMI to end violence and abuse in our communities and country. Culture is dynamic, status can no longer be measured by how many children and wives a man has because they are not assets, the future is demanding, the standard of living high, with increased homelessness, child neglect and violence. Everyone must have plan for the future.



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MIFUMI'S PETITION ON POLYGAMY.

On Thursday 28th January 2010, MIFUMI petitioned the constitutional court to outlaw polygamy on the following grounds;

- That polygamy dispossesses women and children of land and property who use it to marry another wife
- That polygamy has been noted for the increased cases of abandonment and neglect of women and children as a result of a man's inability to provide for his many wives and children.
- That polygamy exposes married people to HIV/AIDS when;
 - The man gets a new wife who may be infected
 - The man inherits a widow who may be infected
- That polygamy in itself is inequality raising questions on
 - Discrimination:

Why should men marry more than one wife and women shouldn't marry more than one man?

-Attention:

Can a man give undivided attention to as many as 2 or more wives?

- That there are ambiguities in the laws of Uganda on polygamy: Which Law should govern the people of Uganda when it comes to Marriage?

It is noted that Polygamy is allowed under the Customary Marriages Registration and the Marriage and Divorce of Mohammedan BUT is not allowed under the Marriage Act.



My Passion, My life; 30 years of fighting violence against women



Immaculate shares a light moment with a survivor of domestic violence

Remembering Carol

Carol Dorothy Bongomin, you came to MIFUMI a young happy bubbly yet respectful girl.

Your character and personality rubbed off on all of us leaving us either smiling or amazed at your ability to do that.

As a Tae-kwondo and life skills instructor, you transformed the Sure Start project and proved yourself a tireless worker and a great asset to both the project and the girls you trained.

It is your courage, confidence and zeal with which you approached your work, along with your amazing sense of humour, gifted storytelling and honest personality that MIFUMI, the pupils you taught and were yet to teach will miss.

You danced the Laraka-kara during office events and parties; beckoning us to join in; daring us to throw away our jackets, ties and shoes; to loosen up and have fun. You said; *life is precious and sometimes we ought to celebrate it with dance.* We love you Carol, We will miss you.

FACT FILE:

Carol passed away on the 8th January 2010.

She is survived by 2 beautiful boys.

Carol trained 60 girls in Tae-kwondo who completed their course and graduated in December 2009.

She still had over 200 girls she was training for 2010 graduations, and a vision to train a total of 900 girls this year.

30 years ago, the meeting places for the women were the well, the market and the garden.

My first advice centre was the garden. There I secretly advised and counselled women on domestic violence.

When the violence increased, I would walk to the family members, clan leaders and LCs with problems in our community; top on the list was violence against women.

Soon my home became a secret refuge and a stopping point for hundreds of women seeking mediation, advice, reconciliation, redress and justice for various marital problems.

I was one of the happiest people when MIFUMI was established. The women and children can now access all the services the organization can provide; like justice through community dialogue and legal aid, economic empowerment, resettlement to a violence free life, counseling and education.

I was once called names like Nyeko-mon- 'women spoiler' but today am called the Care taker.

Just to see a woman smile when I saw her on the verge of death a few weeks or months ago reassures me that this is my calling and I will die doing this job.



Carol Dorothy Bongomin

MIFUMI rolls out 11 New Advice Centers in Tororo district to curb violence



MIFUMI has moved out to cover the 22 sub-counties in Tororo district in an effort to reach every woman and child and bring her services closer to the people.

MIFUMI is establishing 11 new domestic violence, counseling and referral centres in the sub-counties of Paya Sop -Sop, Petta, Magola, Osukuru Bison Malaba, Rubongi Kisoko, Kwapa and Merikit.

MIFUMI has been operating in 10 sub-counties with 11 advice centres in Mella, Molo, Mukuju, Nabuyoga, Milanda, Kirewa MIFUMI, Nagongera, Iyolwa and Tororo municipality. Women from other sub-counties had to walk miles to these advice centres. Starting March 2010, women will have these services in their sub-counties

Many of the sub-county chiefs and LC IIIs received MIFUMI with open arms saying that their sub-counties were overwhelmed with cases of violence and abuse against women and children with many

cases stopping at the village level because the women and children did not have the knowledge, means and resources to access justice at higher level.

22 Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) have been identified in these sub-counties to handle and counsel all cases of domestic violence and abuse brought forth by their community members.

These IDVAs were elected by MIFUMI survivor groups which are women groups comprising of women who have suffered domestic violence and have reported their cases to MIFUMI.

In total, MIFUMI will now have twenty two domestic violence Advice centres across Tororo district reaching as many as 800,000 people with her services that include, advice, counselling, legal aid, economic empowerment, property rights and education.

Can we give her a future Free of Violence?



Stop Violence Against Women

MIFUMI

For Advice Call: 0753 781 122 / 0757 781 122

www.mifumi.org

MIFUMI's mission is to protect women and children from domestic violence and abuse and secure for them basic rights through Education, Health Care and economic self sufficiency.

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