

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT



DECEMBER 27-30, 2018





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FOREWARD

Children and Youth Participation is a big part of the work we do at YOCEL and we are excited to see how much impact the Right Holders Network have created in Liberian communities since its inception. Children and Young people deserve their own space and those spaces are to be protected by all stakeholders and duty bearers. I would like to extend my deepest appreciation to Kids Rights for the long term partnership and the grassroot support they have provided us at YOCEL over the years. Moreover, I am so proud of what we have become as the result of kids Rights support, a vibrant youth-led movement putting youth and youth-led structures in charge.

As you read through the amazing work the Right Holders Network and its members have done with the National Children Education & Development Camp, kindly remember that children and youth groups can do much more better if they have the support system they need and we at YOCEL remain committed to putting children and youth in charge of transforming the lives of they and their communities. Our support to the Right Holders Network is the beginning of a new movement where children and youth are not just the center of discussions but are in charge.

BEYAN FLOMO PEWEE

Executive Director YOCEL

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The success and final outcome of the National Children's Education and Development Camp required a lot of guidance and assistance from many people and we are extremely privileged to have gotten this long awaited life changing event that became a reality.

We like to express our deepest appreciation to all of those who provided us the opportunity to successfully host this 2018 Camp. Special gratitude to our mother institution YOCEL, who has contributed in inspiring us, providing capacity building training, mentorship,

Special thanks to the Right Holders Advocates and members of the Special Organizing Team SOT, who help us coordinate the delegates and gave suggestions that led to making NACED Camp 2018 a success.

Recognition and gratitude go to Kids Rights International for providing us the needed financial support and mentorship through the Youth Coalition for Education in Liberia - YOCEL. Despite competing

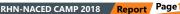
We owe our deepest gratitude to our partner institutions the Liberia National Children's Representative Forum and Kids Development Initiatives; both took keen interest in the Camp and worked along with us till the completion of the Camp. This event have led us to

We wholeheartedly thank the energetic and resourceful Senior Program Manager of YOCEL, Mr. Matthew S. Karley II for his mentorship and supervision role to the Right Holders Network throughout the course of the

We remain grateful and fortunate enough to have gotten constant support and guidance from all Staff of YOCEL which helped us in successfully completing our event goal. Also, we would like to extend our sincere esteems to all members of the Right Holders Network for your tireless support and courageous stand to join the advocacy for the protection and promotion of children's rights across our beloved country mama Liberia

BALLAH FLOMO SAYWALA

Chairman- Right Holders Networ





BACKGROUND

"Making Children's Voices Count" was the project that supported the hosting of the first ever National Education and Development

Over the last decade, children rights have been recognized as human rights and as such there has been a need to protect children from all forms of violence and promote their healthy well-being. Along the way, growing effects have shown that when children have the fundamental understanding of their rights and responsibilities, the fight to protect them can be

Over the period, there has been growing appreciation of information and communication technologies - Specifically social media that has massively increased the awareness of violence against children with children themselves helping the fight. YOCEL implemented the phase one of the project which was based on creating awareness about children's rights and having children informed about using social media for advocacy. However, while social media have been successful in ensuring that the rights of children are protected and promoted, we did recognize the need to invest more in the capacity development of children through the Right Holders Network and support them in community lead offline peer to peer learning methodology. Because when their capacities are strengthened, they can engage the community through dialogue and awareness and also share and learn from each other. They are also able to adequately fight against injustices and advocate

RIGHT HOLDERS NETWORK - RHN IN BRIEF

RHN is a child and youth led advocacy platform aimed at raising awareness on issues affecting children in rural & urban communities in Liberia and amplifying their voices in the fight against violence against children through the use of Information Communication Technology - ICT. In 2017, YOCEL was among four (4) partners selected by KidsRights to implement the International Children Peace Prize 2015 Project; YOCEL developed their project name "Making Children Voices Count (MCVC+) Project". Through the project, a network coined "Right Holders Network-RHN was also established; initially the Network had 20 passionate youth and children ages 15-25 who were involved in the Child Rights Advocacy. After the evaluation period a restructuring process took place and today we have 15 passionate Children

YOCEL is working with these passionate children rights champions to strengthen their capacity, further boost their online engagement and empower them to actively engage in national policy engagement dialogues, advocacy campaigns, community

The **Right Holders Network** is also a voluntary child rights network that is advocating for government to achieve the sustainable Development Goals 3, 4 and 16, which includes good Health, and Well-Being; Quality Education

The RHN members are children and youth who comprises of secondary school and university students that have some basic skills and experience but there are still room for more capacity enhancement, the RHN have been given an office space in the Head Office of

The network seeks for more supports to create an enabling environment that prohibits every act that is against the rights of the child and ensure that every child is provided the opportunity to access quality and affordable education and that child is provided that space for his/her voice to be heard and it given the chance to fully participate and get involve in

RHN PROGRAMS THEMATIC

SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN AND ADVOCACY:

We create, manage and update our social media pages with good contents, generate more followers and sustain our engagements with social media users on issues that protect and promote the rights of Children.

COMMUNITY ACTION INITIATIVES:

With mentorship from YOCEL, we design advocacy campaigns and carry out community outreaches on issues that relates to children and young people. We stand for all children and advocate for social justice and we constructively engage and dialogue with stakeholders at all levels of our advocacies.

MEDIA ENGAGEMENTS:

Based on our goal, the Right Holders Advocates use both Print and electronic media platforms to flag out issues affecting children and young people in Liberia, the advocates often use this as a platform to call on stakeholders and to gain the public attention for the redress of specific issues. With funding from YOCEL and her

HOST NATIONAL EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT CAMP:

Education is a human right and as such it is our priority as an advocacy network. Globally, Education has become a top development agenda at almost every gathering, the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and the focus of the 2018 World Development Report of the World Bank. The World Bank monitors views of development experts around the globe and finds consistently that education is perceived as key to development at different levels. Hence, our goal shall be to ensure that children and youth regardless of age, creed, belief, and social status get quality education that will propel them for a sustainable future. As such, Right Holders Network has initiated an annual National Children's Education and Development Camp as a means of providing the space for the children across the country to network, share information on the various initiative that they are involve and have the opportunity to visit important historical sit of the country and meet relevant stakeholders that are willing to support their vision and aspiration.



The Right Holders Network Mission and Vision are parallel to that of YOCEL that envisages a society where every child regardless of their status will be given equal opportunity to acquire quality affordable education and to

OUR CORE VALUES

We are dedicated to Service, Accountability, Honesty, Merits, Impartiality, Partnership, and Dignity & Respect for every child considering diversity.

LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

The Network is managed by a secretariat which is led by a Chairperson and assisted by a Co – Chairperson with the help of other officers to runs the day to day activity of the network.

GOOD WILL MESSAGES

"We are good at signing new laws and ratifying regional, sub regional and international instruments but we have a serious issue as a country in terms of So as we gathered here this morning I am challenging all of you in this room as child right advocates who have the energy to change the narrative to stand up for the rights of children in pursuit of their happiness and this advocacy can only start with you. "Mrs.



Now a day, I see many child right advocates emerging and I believe it is good for Liberia. There are many issues unfolding around us and people expect you in this room to stand up and say this is unacceptable and it must stop now. The country needs more fearless voices like you and not few voices that will speak all of the time. "Satta Sheriff"



Long ago, many advocacy struggles have been on the basis of self-gratification. Today, we have gathered here to change the narrative by designing new approaches and build stronger synergies with each other and change from the traditional way of advocacy to ensure that our advocacy intervention are



The panel comprised of four exceptional young change makers who provided an empirical experience on the theme of the camp "Strengthening Evidence Based Advocacy; Promoting the Use of ICT by Children Panelist include: Mr. Thomas Williams Fomba, Leneh Kiamu, Satta Sheriff and Valarie S. Johnson. During the panel Leneh Kiamu explained that as advocates struggle to build synergy to address contemporary issues, ICT has been used to make the process simple and faster as they can easily connect and also gather information through various platforms.

Also speaking Mr Thomas Williams Fomba stated that from 2007 – 2010 there were 395, 063 internet users in Liberia adding that 93.1 percent of those users focus on social media especially Facebook. Comparing this statistic up to 2018, there have been drastic increase of the number of social media users mainly Facebook most of whom are in Monrovia and its environs. One can clearly see and understand that the importance of ICT cannot be overemphasized.

"I love ICT especially social media because it is platforms were you interact with young people from across the globe, a platform where people get to know the kind of work you do and it has been helpful to me a lot".

Social media has enable me mobilize a lot of people for rallies and petitions. Through social media, I have been able to interact and pass messages over to a lot of people whom I have not met personally. At times I get criticized for my positions on certain issues on social media but I become motivated and use these instances as a platform to continue awareness and more



BEGAN WITH AN EARLY MORNING ARISE AND SHINE



We believe that physical fitness improves intellectual outputs. This is why at NACED Camp we encourage regular bodily exercise during the early morning hours of each camp day so as to improve sportsmanship and fitness of our delegates. This exercise

During this period, the participants normally leave the comfort of their bed and gathered at an open field for a series of body building and stress free



During the learning hub sessions, participants were divided into separate hubs (Small learning Groups) and each of these learning hubs was given a traditional name include the Kpatawi Waterfall, Wologizi Mountain and



This learning hub was facilitated by Mr. A Mervin Kandakai Sr., a social worker and Former Child Protection Officer of Plan International Liberia. He presented on the topic: **How can child right advocates used ICT to**

Mr Kandakai began his presentation by providing the definitions of advocacy and ICT. Through his presentation, he said ICT make children aware of major happenings in their environment on a daily basis and it challenge and develop research and analysis skills amongst children and young people as well as enhance their leadership skills and increase team work. He noted that with ICT, advocates can easily propagate their messages to a larger audience in a relatively short time. Mr. Kandakai cautioned them to be careful as to how



THE WOLOGISI MOUNTAIN N LEARNING HUB SESSION

During this learning hub session Atty. Foday Kawah presented on the legal framework of Child Protection. Atty. Kawah is the Executive Director of Defense

He admonished participants that Liberia practices two types of justice system in order to dispense justice for child rights violation and it is against this that a legal frame work such as the Children's law and other legal instruments are set up. According to him the two form of justice systems are the Formal and Informal systems. Being an Attoney at law he reveals to the participants that there are legal remedies in the law and this platform should call on government for the full implementation of the Children's Law and

During the third session Mr. Zebedee Saywanre Chief Investigator of the Women and Children Protection Session of Liberia National Police presented on the Juvenile Justice system of Liberia.



Zebedee explained that the best place for the child to grow up is the home. He further stated that under the laws of Liberia when a child comes in conflict with the laws, he/she is kept in custody with the parents in order to provide care and in the absence of the parents

MOUNT, COFFE LEARNING HUB SESSION

a social worker takes charge. Additionally he linked the slow paste in the juvenile justice in Liberia to the inavailability of courts to speedily try these cases as the entire country has only one specialize judge to deal with juvenile cases. Furthermore, the state has signed unto many regional and international treaties that promote child justice but they are not being implemented.

G HUB FACILITATORS



ATTY. FODAY KAWAH

Executive Director of Defense for Children International - DCI Liberia. LEARNING HUB FACILITATOR



MR. ZEBEDEE SAYWANRE

Chief Investigator of the WACPS Liberia National Police

THE MOUNT COFFEE LEARNING HUB FACILITATOR



MR. A. MARVIN KANDAKAI SR.

Former Child Protection Officer of Plan International Liberia

EARNING HUB FACILITATOR





HON. JUTOMUE DOETIEN

Speaker, Liberia National Children's Representative Forum & Presiding Officer Parliamentary Session

The parliamentary session convened all delegates to **General Congress** which was presided by Jutomue Doetein Speaker of the Liberia National Children's Parliament and deputized by Ballah Flomo Saywala, Chairman of Right Holders Network. The general congress had four separate committees namely Committee on early Marriage and child Abuse, Committee on Juvenile Justice, Committee on the effective use of ICT for the promotion and protection of the rights of children and Committee on the eradication of violence against children through the implementation of laws and policies. Each committee presented a resolution which was opened for parliamentary debate and adoption.

This session was interactive and thought provoking as delegates struggled to convince their colleagues to pass their committees resolutions. During the deliberations there were several amendments made in some committee resolutions. After all of those amendments and parliamentary deliberation, each committees recommended the following:



COMMITTEE ON EARLY MARRIAGE AND CHILD ABUSE

Had a focus topic: how can children become active citizens in their communities to call on government attention for the protection of children against early marriage?

The committee premises their resolution be naming traditional and customary laws, religious norms & parental supervision, poor economy, lack of education, poverty, peer pressure and lack of children's involvement into decision making as some primary causes of early marriage.

The committee was also able to name some effects of child marriage which includes: health issues (death during child birth, phystula), economy issues (children unable to complete secondary education that will enable them to be productive citizens in society), increase in poverty, depression and low self-esteem on victims and decrease in girls retention and completion in school. Concluding this resolution they recommended the following:

- Government must ensure that full implementation of laws to protect and promote the rights of children.
- National government and traditional leaders of Liberia should harmonize the customary laws and statutory laws on early child marriage.
- Hosting of constant campaigns, workshops, seminars, and conferences on the danger of early child marriage.
- Government must ensure compliance on regional and international instruments that prevents early child marriage.
- Awareness to families and guardians on the danger of early reproduction/pre-mature reproduction.
- Formulating a special task force unit on early child marriage and the task force should consist of representatives from all child rights projection organizations.
- Massive awareness on present laws and policies towards ending early marriage.
- Recommends that monitoring and evaluation teams to be set up to monitor, evaluate and make sure that these laws are fully implemented.

COMMITTEE ON JUVENILE JUSTICE

Presented on "Access to justice for the rights of children". And also had the focus topic: how does building synergy of child protection institutions influence relevant stake holders to advance access to justice for children.

They identified the following issues:

- Children have been denied access to justice because of the poor implementation in the juvenile justice system of Liberia.
- Liberia is situated 141 place within a score of 101(38.47) in the global access to justice for children ranking. Reference: global access report.
- Looking at these poor and inadequate facilities along with * delay in reporting cases, investigation and adjudication, the child protection institutions will not effectively function in rendering justice to children.

BASED ON THESE ISSUES THEY RECOMMENDED THE FOLLOWING:

- * Government should provide more capacity and logistical support to the Women and Children Protection sections of all police stations around the country in handling cases of child protection
- Training of more judges who will specialize in the adjudication * of juvenile cases and ensure speedy justice.

COMMITTEE ON THE EFFECTIVE USE OF ICT. FOR THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

Had focus topic: how can ICT play an important role to enhance the protection and/promotion of the rights of children.

This group identified tools to promote the rights of children:

- Political dialogue offers an opportunity to discuss bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual concern with partners countries in a formal setting on a regular basis. Although these dialogues are not focused exclusively on human rights there are mechanisms in place, such as structured dialogues to raised awareness on human rights issues including the rights of children.
- Human and child rights dialogue, the main objectives is to enable children through the use of ICT to share their concerns on human and child rights violations with partner countries to which seek to promote and improve human and child rights issues in their countries.
- The rights of children are also reflected and addressed through the use of ICT to communicate to the government of child rights and democratic country strategies. The government delegations can prioritize certain issues and in many strategies to show that the rights of children are highlighted as a priority. Even if this is not the case, government recognizes that this is a cross-cutting issue. Country strategies give the opportunity through the use of ICT in fulfillment, promotion, and protection of child's right.

THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED THAT:

- Government should address the need to expand children access to ICT and encourage the use beyond the educational sphere; promote activities oriented towards using the internet safely and identify threats among all the actors involved; recognize the role and influence of peers in the development of programs related to these technologies; and compile empirical and contextualized evidence in the country.
- Government should review ICT policies by taking into considerations the interest of children and young people and ensure that they stay safe online.
- Government should equip the relevant institution responsible for child protection including the security services on how to deal with cyber-crime and online abuse.

NITTEE ON THE ERADICATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST. CHILDRE THROUGH | THE | implementation (of Laws) and Polcies

The committee had focus topic: Implementation of laws and policy.

They named violence against children such as: physical, sexual, mental violence, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, harm or abuse including commercial and sexual exploitation, trafficking and child labor, and harmful traditional practices such as Female genital The committee further mutilation and early child marriage. recommended the following:

- Government should support child protection organization to promote and protect the rights of children.
- ❖ With identity theft and cyber bullying, keeping children safe online is key.
- Create child friendly places for learning.
- Creating community based child protection committees aimed at ending child trafficking and sex trafficking of young girls.

DELEGATES TESTIMONIES



Princess Elexa **VANJAH-KOLLIE**

My Experience at NACED Camp was wonderful and exciting. It is rare to see everyone obey rules governing an event without hesitation especially one that is organized by your peers. The organizers did well by including many discussions on the

rights of children and the accompanying duties and responsibilities. It was indeed a privilege for me to attend the camp because it enhanced my knowledge on the work I am involved with (Advocacy). While at the camp, I was motivated by the fascinating speakers and activities. As a result of the teachings at the camp, I return home and redeveloped my vision, values and purpose for children's Rights in my community and country. It was really an amazing moment at the camp and i miss the engagement with fellow campers and It's my wish that the event will happen annually.



Junita **SANGARE**

Wow!! What a great camp it was. Let me start by saying a very big thanks to Right Holders Network-RHN, YOCEL and KidsRights for planning and organizing NACED_Camp2018 held in Kakata, Margibi County at the Booker Washington

Institute (BWI) for the purpose of education. NACED Camp indeed was wonderful because everything we did falls directly in line with the theme including networking, fun making, beauty pageant, camp fire and sports.

We learned, we laughed, we had a Parliamentary Congress and all was fun and learning. Out of hundreds plus, I was adwarded certificate as the best delegate for the explicit role I played during the camp. NACED camp, how badly I miss you. I missed the eating, the laughing, the numerous jokes, the networking and most of all the learning. I can now tell my friends a little about advocacy and Information Communication and Technology (ICT) on how it can be used and maintained.

Writing about NACED camp will be a whole article. So I am just calling on my peers to join us next year, let's make it happen because it was really fun and amazing.



Mosisalah A. TURAY

I was overwhelmed with joy and excitement when I first received a confirmation from the Special Organizing Team of NACED Camp 2018 informing me that I have been selected to attend the Camp.

At the camp I met and interacted with close to 100 delegates from different communities and counties in Liberia. Through the camp I gained a better understanding of Information Communications Technology - ICT and the role ICT plays in protecting and promoting children's rights.

The camp enables me to become more passionate for advocacy in child protection. I am now an Ambassador of the camp and I have already begun engaging peers in my community and shearing my experience with them.

DELEGATES TESTIMONIES



Mohammed Essah **DUKULY**

Thanks to NACED_Camp 2018.I have experienced something great in my life that haven't happen to me. Since I came from the National Children's Education and Development Camp I have been able to organize a small group on my campus to

talk about child Protection and how we can establish a child right club on the campus. The different networking sessions have inspired me in taking the lead in my community. I know my county Lofa will carry the highest number of participants to the 2019 NACED camp Thanks to the Right Holders Network-RHN, and her sponsors KidsRights & YOCEL for this unique event.

NACED CAMP 2018 ENGAGEMENT

Statement of Call to Action

By Us, For Us

The children and adolescents of Liberia through a child and youth led advocacy platform; Right Holders Network, convened for the first time through a National Children's Education and Development Camp from December 27 to 30, 2018 at the Booker Washington Institute in Kakata City Margibi county. The event attracted more than 100 children and adolescents below the age of 24 years from Montserrado, Lofa, Bomi, Cape mount, Bong, Grand Bassa, Gbarpolu and the host, Margibi County.

This National event discussed issues affecting Children and adolescents ranging from evidence based advocacy, legal framework of child protection, juvenile justices, health, education, ICT to girl's rights amongst others. The 2018 event was graced by prominent personalities includes: Mrs. Aisha Bruce, Executive Director for HOPE, Mr. Zebedee Saywrayne Chief Investigator WACPS LNP, Mr. A Mervin Kandakai, Executive Director Capacity for Youth and former child protection specialist of PLAN International Liberia, Satta Sheriff Child Rights Advocate, Jutomue Doetein Speaker of the Liberia National Children's Parliament and Atty. Foday M. Kawah, Executive Director Defense for Children International Liberia.

The delegates hereby announce their issues and now call on the government and Child protection stakeholders and the International Community to the urgency of the below issues:

Note: All actions are meant to be children and youth-led with support from relevant stakeholders.

GOAL 1

An Urgent call to Action to develop ways to educate children and young people on their Sexual & Reproductive Health and Rights, Child marriage, Sexual abuse as well as harmful practices all forms of violent that affect the growth, survival and development of children and youth.

KEY ACTIONS

- Create challenging social norms to tackle female genital mutilation.
- Initiate school and community based awareness on sexual and reproductive health and Rights for children and young people
- Work with young people to develop material and messages to promote the reproductive health and prevent causes of rape and sexual abuse of any type of violence/abuse of women and children especially girls.
- National governments and traditional leaders of Liberia should harmonize the customary laws and statutory laws on early child marriage and setting 18 years as a minimum age for marriage.

FOCUS PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS:

- Right Holders Network, Liberia national Children's Parliament
- Kids Development Initiative
- Plan International
- **UNICEF**
- Governments etc.

GOAL 2

An Urgent call to Action to ensure massive awareness and implementation of present laws and policies towards protecting and promoting children rights.

KEY ACTIONS

- Empower and Promote children and youth as driving forces in the publicity of these laws.
- The Ministry of education should include the teaching of the children's laws into the curriculum to be taught in high schools, universities and other training and education institutions to deepen citizens understanding of the law.
- Religious and traditional leaders should allot time during their assemblies to teach the children's law.
- Government must increase budgetary allocation for ministries and agencies cloth with the statutory responsibility of providing care and protection for children.
- Work with industry and schools to identify local skill shortage areas and look at study options available to young people to gain skills in these areas
- Advocacy institutions Like Right Holders Network and Liberia National Children's Parliament and others should be supported by national government and they should pressurize national government to develop ways (online and offline platforms) to teach the various laws that protect children's rights.
- Strengthening the effectiveness of juvenile justice system by training more judges to specialize in handling juvenile cases.
- Work with the Ministry of Post and Telecommunication to popularize the cyber policy and put in place measure with telecommunication company to monitor their platforms by ensuring that cyber-crime is eradicated

FOCUS PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS:

- Religious and Traditional Leaders
- **O** NGOs, INGOs
- Yocel
- Government etc.

GOAL 3

An Urgent call to Action to address the need to expand children access to ICT, encourage the use of ICT by children and ensure their safety online.

KEY ACTIONS

- Government should review and popularize the internet safety policy if there is any or develop one taking into considerations the best interest of children and young people and ensure that they stay safe online.
- Government should equip the relevant units responsible for child protection including the security services on how to deal with of child online abuse.
- School authorities, local and National Child friendly organizations and INGOs should invest in training programs directly toward the mass education of the Liberian children on the use ICT.

FOCUS PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS:

Protect the children online Liberia, Right Holders Network,
Liberia national Children's Parliament. Kids Development Initiative,
Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection, Ministry of Education,
Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Post and Telecommunication,
Schools, Student Leaders and national youth institutions, YOCEL Etc.

The above recommendations and action points are holistic and reflect the views of a cross session of Liberian children and adolescents and constitute a national call to action for building synergy for the realization of Children's rights in Liberia.







DELECATES AT CAMP FIRE

ORGANIZERS AND GUESTS
GROUP RHOTO AFTER
OPENING CEREMONY





GROUP PHOTO AFTER OPENING GEREMONY

DELEGATES GROUP PHOTO







DELEGATES HAVING DINNER



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DELEGATES SPEAKING DURING GENERAL CONGRESS

SOT HAVING PLANNING MEETING





PANELIST SPEAKING DURING PANEL SESSION

PANELIST







MATTHEW & KARLEY LEADING ICE BREAKER