

*Dear Partners, Welcome to the sixth Issue of the UYDEL Newsletter. This is the first edition of the newsletter this year and we appreciate the feedback we have received from our partners.*

## 1. News

### a) YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AT UGANDA YOUTH DEVELOPMENT LINK (UYDEL)- MAKINDYE DROP-IN-CENTRE

#### Makindye Drop-in-Centre

**M**akindye drop-in-centre is one UYDEL youth centres located in the slum areas of Nabisaalu zone in Makindye Division,<sup>1</sup> which is in southern part of the city of Kampala; and is one of the five divisions which make up Kampala City. Administratively, the division is made of 21 parishes in which there are 15 of informal settlements. The slum settlements in this part of Kampala.



*About 200 vulnerable young people aged 12-24 years come to the centre daily to receive psychosocial support, vocational skills training and rehabilitation from social workers, artisans and volunteers. These young people are mainly slum dwellers whom majority have been victims of child abuse, drug and alcohol abuse, street children, sexually exploited young people, scrap/plastic collectors and domestic violence victims. As a result of their location, young people like the rest of the residents of the slums in Makindye must cope with informal and slum settlement challenges including high alcohol consumption , drugs , homelessness, violence, petty crimes.*

#### Identification and mobilization of street and slum youth people in Makindye

**T**he slum youth of Makindye centre are gotten through identification and mobilizing the young people, different methodologies are applied and these include:

Working hand in hand with local leaders, referrals from community structures, facilities and other stake holders. Also use trained peer educators; Former and continuing beneficiaries and through conducting community dialogues.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.mcgill.ca/mchg/pastproject/edible-landscape/kampala/info>

There is also Moonlight identification where teams of social workers go visiting hotspots in the evening hours in search for young people especially young girls carrying out age as (13 - 24 years) in commercial sex in order to let them know about UYDEL programs and how they can benefit from them. Community SRHR sessions are organized in various zones and they are aimed at passing on SRHR information to the young people in the society. This encourages safer sex practices, avoiding unwanted pregnancies, STDs and STIs and other activities community HIV Counselling and Testing.



**Joanitah** - UYDEL young researcher interviewing one slum girl during a home visit.

### Centre based nature of activities:

**a) The young people engage in co-curricular and self-care activities at the Centre.** The nature of activities they do at the center contributes and can enhance sharing and help in the recovery and social adjustments. The several activities that they participate in to help them recover including talks, counseling, sports, and music dance and drama. These activities

that the young people are involved in are very helpful in building resilience, developing their talents and supports them to interact with their peers. It builds their self-esteem and assertiveness. We have both indoor and outdoor games, music dance and drama, and the young people enjoy participating in all. To enhance their thinking and reasoning capabilities, brain boosters like debates and quiz on various SRHR topics are organized and the winners are applauded and given gifts sometimes.

### **b) Psychosocial support and mentorship:**

The young people receive individual/person centered sessions and group counseling which is more participatory that help them to deal with stress, family issues, anxiety, relation issues and sexuality. This is done by social workers and health service providers through self-assessment and re-evaluation. Young people mention this several times as a helpful activity that helps in identifying personal and social barriers that prevent them from performing positive behavior. This creates awareness and sensitization. As part of the psycho-social therapy, the young people are handled depending on the problems faced by each of them since every individual is unique. Hence extending love, care and restoring their lost hope, encouraging them to have positive attitude towards themselves in life.



UYDEL Executive Director - Mr. Kasirye Rogers talks to young people at Makindye Centre during a motivational talk session.

## Socio-economic empowerment (vocational skills training)

**Vocational skills:** The young people are so grateful for the vocational skills training offered to as part of the rehabilitation packaged, geared towards economic empowerment for self-reliance. Among the skills imparted is catering, hair dressing, knitting, jewelry and tailoring. The young people are also empowered with knowledge to be able to startup businesses in the skills learnt hence they are able to earn a living, provide basic needs for themselves and their families thus living better lives.

### January - May, 2017 enrollment at Makindye

AGE	SEX		TOTAL
	Females	Males	
14 - 18	120	43	163
19 - 24	44	26	70
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>223</b>
Hair dressing	105	1	106
Catering	15	10	25
Electronics	2	57	59
Tailoring	39	4	43
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>223</b>



*Slum youth affected by CSEC, homelessness and unemployment training in a variety of Vocational Skills.*

Unlike boys, girls tend to respond faster to help rendered compared to boys who would rather struggle than cry out for help. The influence of cultural norms and beliefs imparted on boys to **“Act like men”** somewhat deters them from seeking help with claims that it’s the weaker sex-girls to be helped. Hair dressing and cosmetology take the biggest attendance by girls and a few boys between the ages of 13-24 years because they believe it is easier to learn and get employment in the slum settings were most of our girls reside. One’s capital is as little as 5000/= and on their home verandah. Electronics class is believed to be more of a male course thus most dominated by boys and a few ‘unique’ girls. Other courses like tailoring, catering and knitting also have both sexes yet still girls dominate more.

UYDEL centre has registered remarkable numbers of success stories from many of the young people who have gone through the program, been evaluated and graduated after the 6-10 months period of undertaking vocational skills. Many young people appreciate the efforts put in by UYDEL and its partners for supporting them in changing their lives through availability and access of the skills attained which have been a motivation to their developmental change hence making a world a better place for them to stay.

The Centre has adopted a multi-level approach to youth problems by addressing relevant individual and family/community issues through Behavior Change Communication (BCC) sessions, community dialogues



*Slum youth affected by CSEC, substance use, homelessness and unemployment training in a variety of Vocational Skills.*

Like so many institutions in Uganda, girls take three quarters of our center’s population. This comes as a result of them being part of the most at risk population and their vulnerability level is high compared to boys.

to address commercial sexual exploitation of children and peer-led sessions on self-protection against sexual abuse and SRHR. All attempts help to prevent STDs and HIV transmission by providing vulnerable groups with access to accurate HIV/AIDS-related information, and ensuring the availability, accessibility of condoms. All the sessions engage a KAB (knowledge, attitude, behavior) approach that highlights risk-reduction strategies.



*Sports is key ingredient in the rehabilitation cycle at UYDEL centres.*

**b) Resilience among children and young people in impoverished urban areas in Kampala:** Strengths and the importance of context.



For social workers working with at risk populations, understanding the dynamic process of resilience presents an opportunity to enhance positive adaptation and provide adequate, contextually sensitive

policy and practice to help fulfil the capacities of children and young people. Resilience is the process whereby individuals are able to positively adapt despite the adversities they face. Yet there are limited studies examining this construct in the Ugandan context, particularly the pathways navigating towards resilience.

The following study was conducted among UYDEL beneficiaries as part of a Master's thesis at Makerere University, Kampala in 2016. The study aimed to find out more about resilience as it relates to children and young people in Kampala. It looked at the factors that influence resilience processes and also documented the understanding of resilience as a construct among key stakeholders.

### **Objectives:**

The overall objective of the study was to explore the unique and dynamic process of resilience among children and young people in impoverished urban areas in Kampala, Uganda.

### **Method:**

The study used a mixed-method approach through dialogue sessions, administering a survey called the Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM-28) and key informant interviews. Dialogue sessions were held at Bwaise, (n= 17) and Masooli (n=19, n=18) where children and young people were asked about how they were able to overcome adversity and what it means to grow up well despite the many challenges that they face. The CYRM-28 was administered at all UYDEL facilities, and a total of 79 surveys were collected from 53 girls and 29 boys. Key informant interviews (n=8) were conducted with a total of eight people, both social workers from UYDEL facilities as well as key informants in more policy and programme areas.

### **Main findings:**

The findings support the need to be aware of socio-ecological approach and strengths perspective of the adolescents in understanding resilience processes. Unique pathways towards resilience and ways to navigate and negotiate resources were found in this context. Resilience as it relates to children and young people in the sample suggests individual skills, capacities, beliefs and attitudes are most important for

securing economic stability and overcoming social stigmatization to adapt positively to their circumstances.

Children and young people in the sample rely frequently on their own abilities and skills to find the resources that they need, such as cooperation, problem solving, and sense of belonging and social and practical skill development. The family/caregiver scores were not found to be significantly different to the normative data. This was an interesting finding and suggests that family/caregivers were not contributing as much to resilience processes as expected.

The differences between girls and boys was also analyzed in the study. It was found that there are different types of adversities that girls and boys face, and therefore resilient pathways are different between these two groups. The gender differences in adversity, as well as coping or positive adaptation were described as a reason that there were more girls than boys in the sample. The findings suggest that girls experience multiple levels of discrimination and vulnerability that are structural as well as cultural. The understanding of resilience as a construct found to be high among the key stakeholders through the interview discussions, despite the fact that resilience as a term was not well known.



### **c) Building resilience among adolescent girls and young women engaging in transactional sex in rural Uganda.**

Girls living in rural areas face unprecedented levels of gender based violence; the case is worse for those involved in transaction sex and girl child prostitution. It is inflicted on girls out of school

in rural areas of Uganda has largely remained undocumented. Gender based violence inflicted on girls who are out of school in rural areas of Uganda has largely remained undocumented. Data is too limited and scanty to understand the far reaching consequences on the girl's physical health, psychological, economic conditions. Many services as such miss out reaching the girls with GBV problem while others are not accessible due to distance.

UYDEL is implementing a two year DREAMS project supported by PREFAR/CDC/MILDMAY aiming at empowering 2,000 young girls to recover from transactional sex, alcohol and economic empowerment activities in rural Uganda.

A cross-section survey working with young researchers was conducted among 150 girls coming and seeking services at UYDEL drop in centers using face to face and focus group discussions. The results showed girls presenting unprecedented levels of Gender based Violence (GBV) including rape (30%), stress and depression arising out of abuse, and multiple social and economic exploitation. There are high levels of alcohol (90%) and drug use.

### **Interventions:**

Girls who are involved in transactional sex can face a myriad of problems; psycho social and economic partly because of poverty and family breakdown. These adversities can act as an impediment in their rehabilitation and can seriously affect their recovery to live a normal and successful life. One girl from Mityana sadly narrated,

*"..... one historic evening a client called me to his home for 'business' to which I agreed because I urgently needed some money to pay my landlord who wanted to throw me out of the house. When I got to the room, the client requested to have sex in total darkness which I granted since it was a common imploration from most of the clients. I gave the service as expected but was overwhelmed by the fact that the client was not stopping after spending more than 30 minutes uninterrupted. I got really disturbed by the variance of his size and body form that I sought out for the switch and turned on the light and to my shock there were three other*

*males in the room that had used me without my knowledge."*

She desolately narrated.

The UYDEL youth safe spaces have undertaken individual and group based activities, sports and experience-sharing, counseling by social workers as the most helpful in their mental recovery. Economic empowerment and spiritual enhancement also reinforced recovery and successful adjustment.

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*The need to address psychological social problems keeps coming up again and again. To help young girls also in active coping, cognitive flexibility, positive attitude (optimism and sense of humor). We did established that these activities need further development especially enhancing social support, looking out for good community role models. Access to material resources like capital. The need for Cultural adherence, Physical exercise and Social justice are key areas that need further support.*

(Lunkuse 2017).

## **Conclusions:**

Resilience building is a gradual process that cannot be rushed especially among the vulnerable adolescent girls and young women whose life styles and livelihoods have has been seriously maltreated. Part of a comprehensive response to violence against adolescent girls and women involves building a child protection system right from the villages to the sub county including stretching family and child family units at Police and the probation departments. Ensure that critical information about violence is passed on to the families and the communities through radios and other mass media opportunities. Additional information on child protection, legal regimes, sustainable livelihood practices, child nurturing and general reproductive health information. There is need to develop a strong pathway towards total recovery for adolescent girls and young women facing violence, physical and emotional abuse.

### **D) Why we do 'Those' things - Adolescent rural girls.**

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Among the many social or economic problems facing developing countries,

commercial sexual exploitation of children and Adolescent girls to be exact, is currently a major growing human concern not only in Uganda but across the globe. Uganda as a country is experiencing an upsurge in the number of children engaging in the sex trade from 12,000 in the year 2004 to 18,000 in 2011 (UYDEL, 2011). Extensive work on sexual exploitation principally prostitution has been reported more in the urban situation yet little has been heard from the rural areas. The Adolescent girls in the rural areas are also living difficult lives and experience many hardships including Gender based Violence, unwanted pregnancies and becoming young mothers. Investigative high- risk behaviors among these rural Adolescent girls fundamentally calls for instantaneous intercessions.

Power inequities are predominantly obvious in rural and semi-urban, where women stereotypically experience more violence, poverty, attain lower education levels, and have less prospects for employment in the formal economy than males. Reduced access to information for many females further marginalizes them and carrying risky consequences for women's ability to protect their own health.

High-risk groups, such as female sex workers, including those in the rural areas, reflecting the increasing female focus of HIV/AIDS prevention strategies youth board members help to promote and develop leadership skills, responsibility among them, communication channels and feedback modalities, peer support and the youth said these were very helpful through weekly sessions on HIV/AIDS-related topics, such as the effectiveness of condoms in preventing the transmission of HIV. In addition, BCC peer educators encourage individuals to take ownership of their health and improve their health related attitudes and behaviors. Participants had limited formal education, having left school between grades four and eight for various reasons including poverty and family circumstances.

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*"I was forced to join transactional sex at 14 after the death of my father and abandon my childhood ambition to become a nurse because I had no fees. One time, I got a client who invited me to his home and assured me that he would give me some bigger amount of money compared to my usual payment.*

*At first he was good but later became violent and not before long was coercing me to have sex with his friends. Then, like a toy, I was passed on to other members of his gang. I was raped by four other men in the house. I was brutally and severely raped and damaged and after that they terminated me without any recompense,"*

She tearfully retorted.

Due to unemployment with no consistent source of income, and lack of skills with which they could secure an alternate source of income, many adolescent girls resort to sex work in order to earn a living.

*"I do this for my kid because he has to feed yet I have no income apart from sex work"*

confessed one of the girls in Mityana.

Regardless of all the push factors into transactional sex, adolescent girls in rural areas expressed severe frustration in this kind of work. Many of these cases have not been adequately addressed in homes or by the local community and other law enforcement mechanisms. Girls confessed that they did not report because they had no means to do so and did not expect much would be done to punish the culprit whom they did not know. Girls appear to be still going through traumatic experiences and this can slow down the change process. Therefore, staff who help them need to build their capacities to identify girls' experiencing these adversities.

#### **e) UYDEL Attends Strategic Capitalization Workshop Hanoi – May 2017**

The UYDEL Executive Director and Deputy Director attended and participated in the Strategic Capitalization Workshop in Hanoi – Vietnam from the 8th to the 13th of May 2017. The workshop aimed at focusing on the most promising projects to maximize the impact of dedicated resources and help share best practices among leaders in traditional charities or social enterprises. During the workshop Participants shared challenges and recommendations on: How to better engage disadvantaged and vulnerable youth; How to engage different employers and businesses and; How to engage Social Enterprises to maximize sustainability.



#### **UYDEL was selected to attend the SVRI Young Researchers Program in Brazil**



*Apofia, Diana and Joan who will be attending the SVRI Forum in Brazil.*

Two young researchers and a facilitator from the NGO Uganda Youth Development Link (UYDEL) were selected to attend a young researchers program as part of the SVRI Forum 2017 to be held from 18 - 21 September in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil. A key theme of this year's Forum is participatory research, including a focus on children and young people's participation. As such, Ms. Joan Lunkuse and Ms. Apofia Nabirye of UYDEL (*accompanied by their facilitator Ms. Diana Namwanje*) will join a selected group of young researchers from other parts of the world to engage in dialogue and share their experiences in using the Self Protection Program and conducting participatory research activities on violence against children in order to facilitate learning on how best to enable young people to play active roles in undertaking research on sensitive topics, especially in the area of sexual violence.

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*"This is a great opportunity for the two young researchers and the facilitator to share their experiences and challenges as young people conducting research on sexual exploitation in peri-urban and rural slum areas in Uganda, including how they have managed to involve other children and young people in research,"*

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stated Ms. Anna Nabulya, Deputy Director of UYDEL. She also indicated plans to

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*"translate and integrate the learnings, knowledge and skills attained by the young forum participants into current social research projects being undertaken by UYDEL to enhance and increase the involvement of young people in conducting research on sexual exploitation and drug and substance abuse in Uganda."*

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The organization, which is also a RISE network member, has used several participatory approaches in the implementation of project interventions for various at-risk groups of children such as the Participatory Inquiry in Practice methodology, which directly involves beneficiaries in project design and implementation, including research and advocacy activities. This young researchers program is part of **"Being Heard,"** a project of SVRI and the University of Bedfordshire's International Centre: Researching child sexual exploitation, violence and trafficking. The project aims to promote the ethical and meaningful engagement of young people in research on sexual violence.

#### **f) Strategies for Implementation of DREAMS Activities: a Focus on community engagement**

##### **❖ Community Mobilization and Engagement:**

Uganda Youth Development Link (UYDEL) team has utilized the selected Stepping Stones modules to engage both the young girls themselves and the wider community for dialogue and reflection and address critical HIV related behaviours including consistent condom use, and multiple concurrent partner reduction. These interventions have been carried out in the target areas of UYDEL namely; Bukomansimbi, Sembabule, Mubende, Mityana, Gomba and Mukono. Stepping

Stones<sup>2</sup> (SS) is an evidence-based, internationally recognized, age-appropriate, and culturally sensitive community mobilization intervention aimed at changing norms and behaviours for HIV prevention and strengthening relationship skills. Stepping stones modules take between 4-6 hours but this can change according to community type, but wider dialogues play a valuable role in consolidating the learning process and promoting community buy-in. The process involves young girls separated in small groups selected according to age, gender, or other criteria work and learn together, then meet with other small groups in a larger community formation. The main steps in the process include:-

- Use of role-playing to identify local constructs of gender and key local drivers of HIV. These are based on participants' own experiences; the idea is that the group collectively identifies the problems and the solutions.
- Group discussion of health outcomes and social consequences of role-played behaviors.
- Group reflection and development of strategies/solutions for improving outcomes.
- Group planning and practicing behaviours for achieving alternative outcomes.

##### **❖ AGYW Engaged in Transactional Sex:**

For Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) engaged in transactional sex, the UYDEL-DREAMS team uses a screening tool to identify the population engaging in transactional sex. In addition to the screening tool, peer groups identify the AGYW for this group. The tool is administered to all AGYW to minimize focus on the wrong population. Confidentiality concerns are taken into consideration to ensure safety of the AGYW. AGYW at the centres are provided with the following services;

- Vocational Skills Training
- HIV Testing and Counseling in hotspots and at the centers including moon light testing

- Risk-reduction counselling and they are linked to the appropriate HIV prevention services
- Contraceptive provision including condom distribution and demonstration
- STI and Gender Based Violence Screening

❖ **Pregnant, Married and Given birth, 15 - 24 Year old AGYW:**

In the community, pregnant, married and those girls who have given birth between 15-19 are identified and actively linked to ANC and HIV-testing/PMTCT services, as well as provided additional support within the community setting, with targeted HTC, DREAMS interventions and pregnancy support services in hotspots. The DREAMS Team will work with community based organizations as well as with the peers of these AGYW, including community members to ensure access as well as adherence to core package of services for the young women, including male and female condoms, HTC and linkage to VMMC and ART services for their sexual partners, and STI screening and treatment per Ministry of Health Guidelines.

**Summary of Girls reached under DREAMS Core Package in Mukono by UYDEL**

SERVICES RECEIVED	Transactional Sex		TOTAL
	15-19	20-24	
Condom promotion & provision	478	343	821
VMMC	0	0	0
HIV Testing and Counseling	509	409	918
Linkage to ART	0	0	0
Community mobilization and Norms Change	429	228	657
Post Violence Care	0	0	0
Parenting/Caregiver Programs	50	3	53
Expand and improve the contraceptive mix	360	268	728
Cash Transfers	0	0	0
Combined Socio-Economic Approaches	450	313	863

**Key Achievements**

- ❖ 6 formal and 7 informal safe spaces where AGYW in TS converge, socialize, and access the Dreams HIV Prevention Core packages. 918 AGYW in TS enrolled and services updated in the DHIS2 system. Graduated 47 AGYW; 29(15-19) & 18 (20-24).
- ❖ Partnerships with VHTs and Health Centers revealed valuable lessons and responses on influencing AGYW for positive behavior change to utilize family planning services & HCT. Continuous capacity building of Dreams Staff has been one of the enabling factor in hastening the roll-out and implementation of Dreams Programme in Mukono e.g. AGYW Case management, Provision of SOPs, Hands on support in Data DHIS2 Management and analysis, laying of services. Retests conducted so far showed that all AGYW tested negative and so there is need to continue with the BCC conducted by their peers. Retention observed at static/formal spaces than informal

**UYDEL staff Train in Universal Treatment of Substance Use Disorders**

UYDEL has put in great efforts to fight Substance Use Disorders (SUDs) among youths in Uganda. Basing on the DREAMS project report, December 2016, over 1,833 young girls had ever used alcohol. One UYDEL staff Kulsum Birungi got an opportunity to train one of the social workers on relevant skills on how to handle youths with substance use disorders .The social worker has familiarity with UYDEL work in the prevention of substance abuse and support of people affected by Substance Use Disorders (SUD) in Uganda. The social worker was trained by the International Colombo Plan and acquired the International Certificates in the Universal Treatment of SUD. The UTC Programme will be passed onto other UYDEL staff to help youths with SUDs effectively. The trainees will be made aware that Ugandan laws, policies, structure are not strong enough to prevent drug abuse and ensure effective service delivery to people affected. A comprehensive and sustainable approach to preventing and responding to the drug problem should focus not only on children

and youth at high risk, but also those at low risk. Essentially the system should aim at creating a secure environment for the youth to appreciate the dynamics, fight and prevention measures. Measures include different public campaigns and influencing duty bearers through advocacy, awareness raising, training, research and documentation.

## THE BOOK LAUNCH FOR RAW TESTIMONIES. NO MORE, NO LESS CHILDREN SURVIVING PROSTITUTION

French Embassy in Uganda. The book amplifies voices of Children Surviving Prostitution. These young women and men found freedom through their words to express their feelings, to assume their past and to construct their futures. This book is also a way to raise awareness about the necessity and possibility of helping society's most vulnerable populations. The book also encourages other teenagers to escape silence and suffering by going to local organizations that make tangible such work. The launch was held on 16th March 2017 at Piato Restaurant, Kampala.

Ms. Virginie Leroy, the AFD Country Representative who represented The French Ambassador in Uganda noted that AFD is the French development agency which acts for the French government to support a sustainable and inclusive development



L-R: Mr. Kaboggoza James; Ms. Anna Nabulya; Ms. Virginie Leroy; Mr. Ahabwe Venacio and Mr. Kasirye Rogers

**U**YDEL organized a launch of the book titled; **RAW Testimonies No more No less, Children surviving prostitution.**

The launch was attended by 48 participants (22 females and 25 males) including the team from the

in Uganda. She also said that this project is particularly of interest because it brings a holistic approach to some practices that are detrimental to most vulnerable within our communities, the civil society, the private companies, the governments as well as anyone around the world to protect them.



*Above: A cross section of the participants with copies of the RAW Testimonies book after the launch.*

**Experts' meeting on the protection against Sexual Exploitation of Children Online (SECO) due on 20th June 2017 at Hotel Africana:**

UYDEL in collaboration with ECPAT France have organized an expert's national workshop to disseminate good practices against Sexual Exploitation of Children Online (SECO) that have worked in other parts of the world but could be adopted to suite the Ugandan context. The workshop will provide an overview of the international efforts with regard

to accurate terminology, harmonized legislation and identified good practices and how Uganda can participate in the global efforts.

The workshop will also provide an opportunity to learn about the efforts to fight against Sexual Exploitation of Children Online (SECO) in Uganda by the Ministry of Internal Affairs; Ministry of Justice; the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development; Uganda Police cyber-crime unit; Uganda Communications Commission, National Information Technology Authority and from International Development partners. The State Minister for Youth, Hon. Nakiwala Kiyingi and The French Ambassador of France in Uganda will officiate at this workshop.

# Upcoming Events

- 1. IOGT-NTO partners Regional meeting to be held in Arusha  
12th - 16th June 2017.**
- 2. SVRI Forum to be held from 18th - 21st September, 2017 in  
Rio De Janeiro, Brazil.**

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please visit **website [wfad.org](http://wfad.org)**



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