

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT URGING GOVERNMENT TO ESTABLISH AND IMPLEMENT POLICIES AND STRENGTHEN EXISTING LAWS TO STOP TEENAGE PREGNANCIES IN UGANDA

(Moved under rule 55 and 56 of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament)

WHERE AS Article 34 of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda recognizes the rights of the child that include; right to health, right to education, and right to protection from exploitation;

AND WHEREAS Uganda in 1990 ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) which imposes an obligation on government to ensure that all children, without any form of discrimination benefit from special protection measures and assistance, have access to services such as education and health care, have the ability to develop their personalities and talents to the fullest potential and participate in achieving their rights in an accessible and active manner;

AWARE THAT Uganda's population has drastically grown from 34.6 million in 2014, to an estimated 40 million thus an annual growth rate of 3% which reflects a high fertility rate of 5.4 and one of the contributing factors is teenage pregnancy which according to the Ministry of Health statistics increased from 24% in 2011 to 25% in 2016 among women aged 15-19 years;

AND AWARE THAT more than 600,000 teenagers become pregnant annually with 3 in 10 teenagers becoming pregnant before they reach 20 years of age, 10%-40% of young girls having unintended pregnancy and over 300,000 babies born in Uganda to adolescent aged 15-19 years;

FURTHER AWARE THAT teenagers in rural areas are more likely to have started childbearing (27% of women aged 15-19 years) than those in urban areas (19%); for instance 45% of uneducated girls have a child before their 18th birthday, compared to 16% of girls who have attained secondary education;

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COGNIZANT THAT the main driver of teenage pregnancy is a large sexually active youthful generation with limited access to contraceptives and sexuality education; according to Uganda Demographic and Health survey of 2016 among women and men aged 15-19 years, 10% of women and 17% of men had sexual intercourse by age 15;

FURTHER COGNIZANT THAT the risk of death during childbirth is 2-4 times higher among teen mothers wherein teenage pregnancy accounts for about 70,000 deaths annually, the mortality and morbidity rates are higher among infants born to teen mothers and it is believed to be at 30% or more among babies whose mothers were aged 15 –19 years;

NOTING THAT in developing countries like Uganda where health care is limited, teenage mothers are at a greater risk of experiencing negative consequences because of their physical immaturity, vulnerability to older men, and limited education, skills, finances, and other resources; teenage pregnancy accounts for about 25% of the 20 million unsafe abortions in Uganda every year;

FURTHER NOTING THAT teenage mothers are unable to support themselves and are most likely unable to support their children in terms of providing for their needs like education, health care, housing and other basic needs and also teenage pregnancy leads to devastating health consequences for girls as adolescents are not yet physically ready for pregnancy or childbirth, and are therefore more vulnerable to complications like fistula;

CONCERNED FURTHER THAT the absence of a robust stream lined government strategy to establish and implement National policies, strategies and programmes on reproductive health and sex education to eradicate teen pregnancies as well as weak relevant laws against cultural practices that encourage child marriages, have greatly contributed to the challenge of teenage pregnancy;







CONVICED THAT there is urgent need to conclude and pass the National Policy on Sexual and Reproductive health and Rights and the National Frame Work for Sexuality Education as a means of reducing on the burden of early pregnancies;

NOW WHEREFORE be it resolved by Parliament that Government;

1. Fast tracks the passing of the National Policy on Sexual and Reproductive health and implements the recently approved age appropriate sexuality education National Framework
2. Fast tracks the effective implementation of the National Strategy on ending Child Marriages and Teenage Pregnancies in Uganda 2015.
3. Develops a comprehensive multi-sectoral strategy to avert the challenge of teenage pregnancy and harmonizes legislation on marriage to provide for 18 years as the minimum legal age to marry
4. Strengthens the enforcement of laws against defilement, rape and other forms of child abuse and establishes youth friendly corners at health units
5. Increases the efforts in meeting women's contraceptive needs as a critical strategy to help women and teenagers avoid unintended pregnancies
6. Reviews the adolescent health policy to update issues of adolescent health policy to update issues of adolescent health in national and global development trend and context
7. Expedites the development of the school health policy to guide and rejuvenate school health programmes

Rt. Hon. Speaker, I beg to move





Mover: Dr. Bukenya Micheal IGA (Hon)
BUKUYA COUNTY AND CHAIRPERSON COMMITTEE OF HEALTH



1. **Secunder:** Hon. Spellanza Baguma (MP)

DISTRICT WOMAN REPRESENTATIVE KYENJONJO



2. **Secunder:** Hon. Robinah Sentongo (MP)

DISTRICT WOMAN REPRESENTATIVE KYOTERA

