

# NEWSPAPERS IN EDUCATION

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CLASSROOM



## CHILDREN BELONG IN SCHOOL

BY AGNES KYOTALENGERIRE

**U**ganda will join the rest of the world to celebrate the World Day Against Child Labour on June 12, 2026.

The day is aimed at increasing awareness and action against child labour.

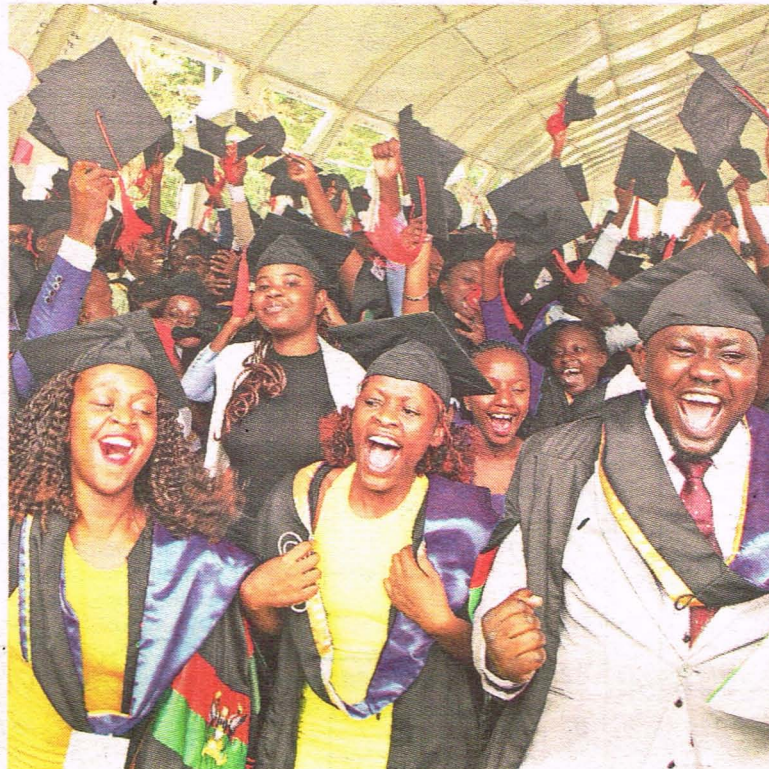
For example, 16-year-old Ismail Waboya sorts through heaps of garbage in Mbale city for used plastic water bottles. He is among several children who regularly search for plastic and metallic waste to sell. Such activities that put the lives of children in danger and make them miss school are against the law and the rights of children.

### WHAT IS CHILD LABOUR?

Child labour means making individuals below the age of 18 do work that is harmful to them. Such work can cause children physical or emotional harm, says a senior child protection and child rights specialist at Save the Children, Kevin Mubuuke.

Mubuuke notes that child labour could also be any kind of work that interferes with children's education, development or survival.

Often, children have responsibilities of helping with domestic chores, but even this turns into child labour if it interferes with the child's education. For example, if while other children are in school, the child is at home helping with chores, baby sitting their siblings, on the streets hawking merchandise, picking used plastic bottles, or working in the mines, then they are being subjected to child labour.



**Graduands celebrate as their names were being read at Makerere University. Completing school enables children grow up to contribute to the development of their communities and country**

"As long as work is harmful, exploitative, interfering with the child's education, or threatening their survival, it is regarded as child labour," adds Stanley Opio, a programme advocacy officer at Save the Children.

### DANGERS OF CHILD LABOUR

Mubuuke says children should not be involved in child labour because they belong in school.

"Anybody below the age of 18 should be in school or a tertiary

institution, not in the mines.

Children do not have the wisdom or tactics to avoid the dangers that come with working. As a result, they can be sexually exploited, physically hurt or emotionally abused, she says.

Exhaustion from work and inadequate rest can also affect the physical growth and development of the child.

Staying in school will enable children grow to contribute to the development of their communities and country.

### WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

Protecting children from labour requires the involvement of parents, communities and government institutions.

Mubuuke advises parents to keep children in school and get them involved in safe work after school or during holidays.

It is the responsibility of the community to support families that need help, especially single parents and also create awareness about child labour.

Additionally, communities can make a decision not to employ children and to report anybody who employs and exploits children.

The Government has put in place laws against child labour and conducted sensitisation, says Opio. However, it should increase the level of enforcement against child labour, involve labour officers within districts and provide them with resources needed to enforce the laws and guidelines.

### WHAT CHILDREN CAN DO

If you are forced to do work that prevents you from attending school or is harmful to your health, report to a trusted adult such as a teacher or the LC chairperson.

Also report if your peers miss school to work in mines and quarries, sell goods on streets or do any other work.



**Save the Children**

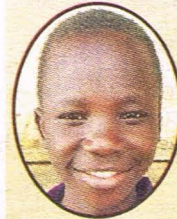
## Children's Platform

### YOUR VOICE MATTERS

**This is what we would do to stop child labour**



**Views from LOMORIMOR P/S, NAKAPIRIPIRIT**  
**Moses, 13, P4:** I'd report those who force children to miss school for work to the headteacher. Adults should not exploit children.



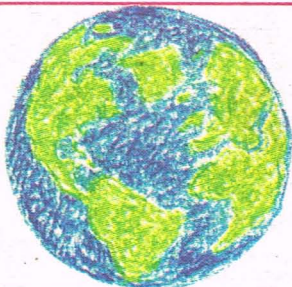
**Francis, 16, P5:** If a parent sends a child to work at the mines or graze cattle during school time, I will report to the Police or the chairman.



**Josephine, 16, P7:** I'd write a letter to the DEO asking him to talk to our community about the dangers of child labour and punish those who encourage it.



**Esther, 13, P6:** I would explain to the child the dangers of working instead of going to school. If they don't listen, I'll report to our teacher.



### SAVE OUR PLANET: JOIN THE COMPETITION

New Vision, in partnership with Save the Children, is running a campaign to sensitise the public on the causes of climate change and the measures for mitigation and adaptation.

All children in primary school

are invited to participate in a writing and drawing/painting competition.

To enter the climate change competition, write a poem or article, or draw/paint a picture that gives a message about

climate change and caring for the environment. The written piece should not exceed 200 words. Prizes to win include school backpacks, readers and textbooks. Send your poem or drawing to [nle@newvision.co.ug](mailto:nle@newvision.co.ug).



For newspaper bookings,  
call 0782 800840

**NEXT WEEK'S QUESTION:**  
Mention one children's right.



Send us your views & photo  
on [nle@newvision.co.ug](mailto:nle@newvision.co.ug)