

# GOVT TO ELIMINATE CHILD LABOUR

By Vision Reporter

The Government of Uganda has reaffirmed its commitment to eliminating child labour and protecting children from all forms of exploitation, with renewed efforts aimed at tackling the root causes that continue to expose thousands of children to harmful work.

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), child labour remains a pervasive and worsening crisis in Uganda today, with approximately 6.2 million children (40% of the child population) engaged in exploitative labor.

Speaking at the Uganda Media Centre in Kampala yesterday, during the commemoration of the World Day Against Child Labour 2026, the State Minister of Labour, Employment and Industrial Relations, Simon Mulongo, said government remains determined to build a Uganda where every child enjoys their rights, accesses education and grows up free from exploitation.

"This effort requires addressing the root causes of child labour, including poverty, limited



**Government pledges to address economic vulnerabilities that often push children into labour**



**Simon Mulongo, State Minister of Labour, Employment and Industrial Relations**

access to quality education, unemployment, inequality, violence against children, trafficking, weak enforcement of labour laws and inadequate community protection systems,"

Mulongo said. He added that the Government remains committed to strengthening labour administration, expanding social protection, improving access to education and enhancing enforcement mechanisms to protect children from exploitation.

Mulongo noted that while Uganda has registered important progress in addressing child labour, more work remains to ensure interventions deliver meaningful and measurable results. "Through efforts made by the gender, labour and social development ministry, we reaffirm our commitment to protecting children from exploitation, promoting decent

work, strengthening labour administration and supporting inclusive socio-economic transformation."

He emphasised that the ministry is shifting towards a results-oriented approach, where success will be measured by tangible improvements in people's lives rather than activities conducted.

"Success will increasingly be assessed not only by activities undertaken, but by outcomes achieved, including children protected from exploitation, workers safeguarded from abuse, jobs sustained, incomes improved, enterprises strengthened and workplaces made safer and more productive," Mulongo stated.

The minister revealed that government will continue strengthening labour inspection systems, occupational safety and health measures, labour dispute resolution mechanisms and child labour monitoring and response programmes across both formal and informal sectors.

He also highlighted the need to address economic vulnerabilities that often push children into labour.

"The Government will continue to strengthen efforts aimed at addressing the underlying drivers

of child labour; including poverty, unemployment, vulnerability, limited economic opportunities and inadequate access to skills development," he said.

Mulongo called for a whole-of-society response involving local governments, security agencies, employers, workers' organisations, civil society groups, religious and cultural leaders, development partners, parents and communities.

"I call upon employers, workers' organisations, local governments, development partners, civil society, communities, parents, guardians, religious leaders, cultural leaders and the media to work together in preventing and eliminating child labour in all its forms," he said.

He pointed out that together, we can build a Uganda where every child is free from exploitation, has access to education and opportunity and is empowered to realise their full potential.

"The final performance test for all of us must be clear: children protected, workers protected, jobs sustained, incomes improved, enterprises upgraded, workplaces made safer and labour mobility converted into a national development asset."