



Social Survival Skills Training Report

Oturugang Girls primary school

Paidha, Zombo district

16th – 21st May 2016

Introduction

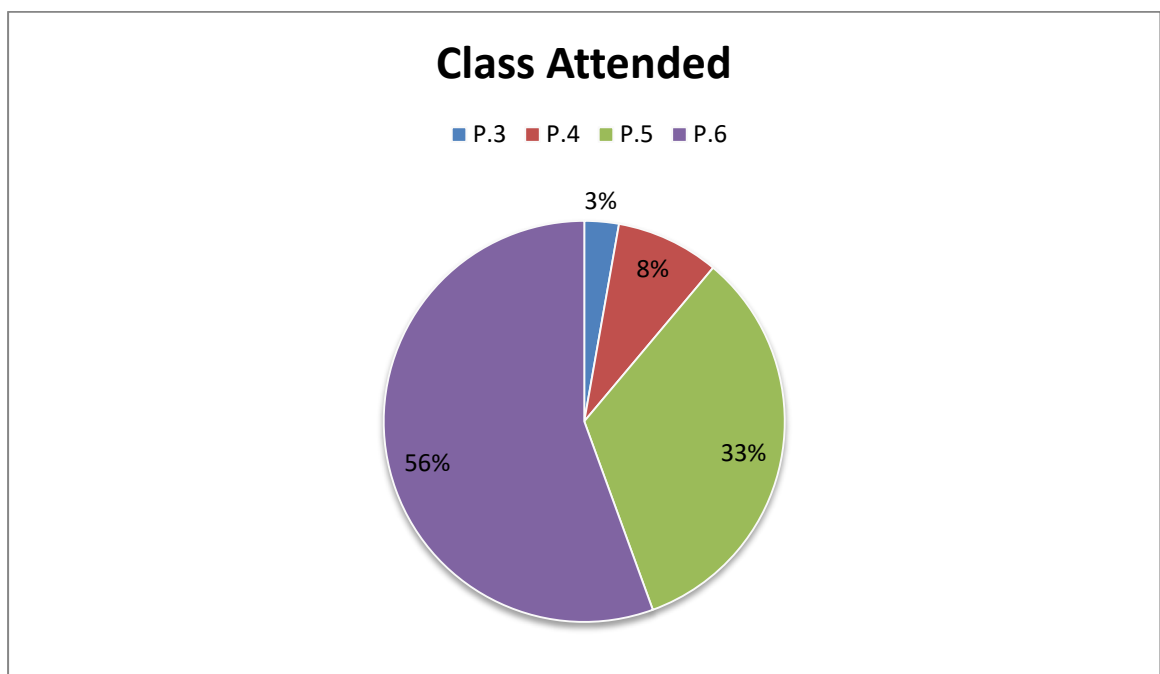
MEMPROW with support from Comic Relief organised a social survival skills training in Oturugang girls primary school. The training was attended by 39 girls between primary four and primary six. 16 Teachers were involved in a gender and children's rights session for a day after the training

The Headmistress Sister Yovita welcomed us to the school and wished us well. It was started with a pre training baseline whose results will be reported.

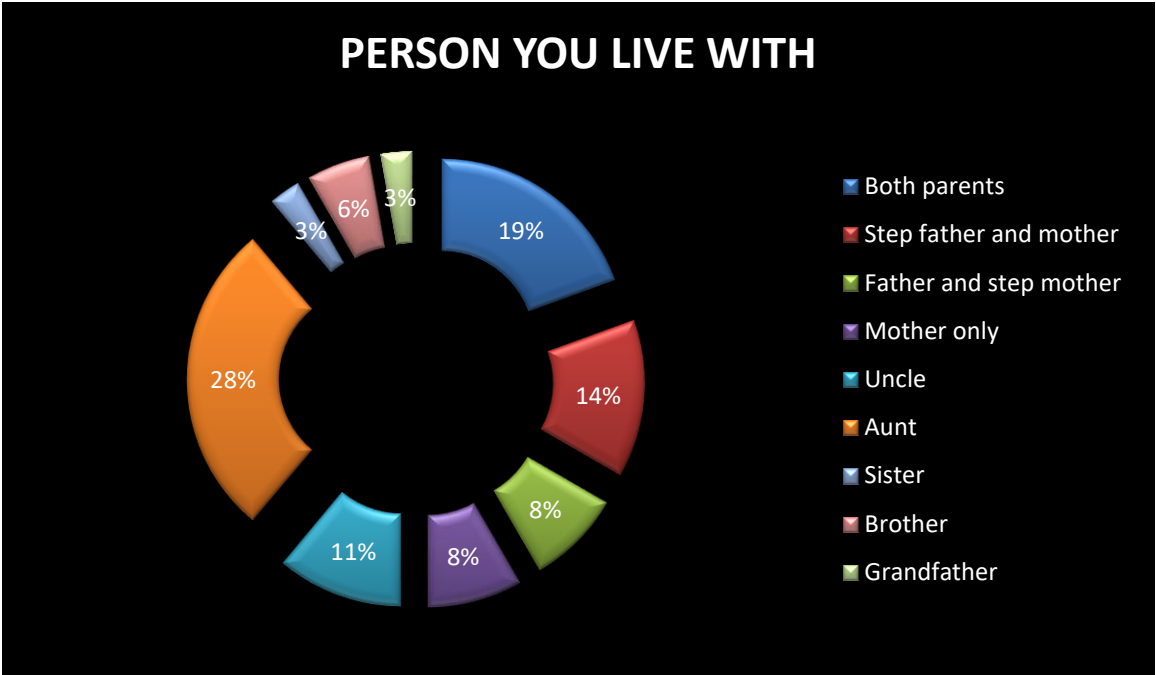
The following establishments were made. Girls where asked who they live with and what they want to be when they grow up and their ages.

Characteristics of participants

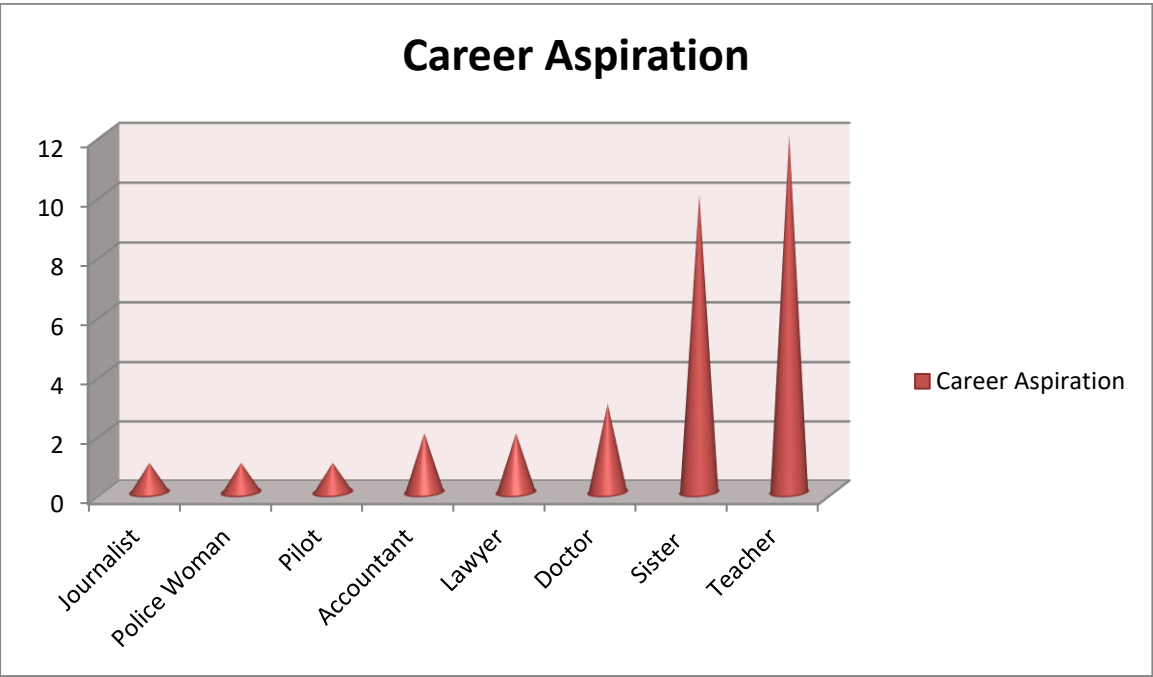
a) Class attended



b) Who they live with



7 live with both parents	3 girls live with father and step mother	4 girls with uncle	10 with aunts	2 with their brothers
5 with mother and step father	3 with mothers only	1 girl lives with her grand father	1 only a sister	



Pilot 1	Accountant 2	Sisters 10	Journalist news anchor 1	
Doctor 111	Lawyer 2	Teachers 12	Police woman 1	

Topic: Personal Empowerment and Social Survival skills

Session one: Me, Myself and I

Facilitator: Dr. Hilda Tadria

This facilitator emphasised that this was a personal reflection session. Girls were focusing on who they are and what they want to be in future.

Highlights from the training

Knowing who I am	Personal reflection exercise 1/2 things that girls hate about themselves About 5 girls mentioned that they have been insulted by step mothers/fathers and sisters on the size of their head, the color of their skin		

A teacher who was a food prefect; said that the boys said that in that school they are only two girls who have conning eyes. It made her feel bad

One of my brother in law called me a witch about two years ago and it made me feel bad

Yesterday I told my father what we learned and he asked for my book, then he asked me what I want to be in future and I told him I want to be a doctor. Then he said I should study hard because he will pay for my school fees.

I dropped out of school because my mother fell sick and there was no one to look after her. So when she died I first dropped out of school

My father used to pay school sometime when my mother does not have money I first stay at home until she gets money then I come to school.

I dropped out of school because the mother said she cannot make it now its her uncle who is paying her school fee

I dropped out of school because I was seriously sick. So I took one year without being in school.

I dropped put of school because both my parents passed away now it is my aunt who is paying my school fees.

What pupils say about teachers

Sometimes when you put up your hand the teacher instead responds with abusive language like for you why don't you get married

Some teachers give a lot of notes and are in a hurry they do not explain

Sometimes teachers do not complete the syllabus and yet they set questions from what you did not study

Sometime when you come late the teacher keeps you outside the until the lesson is ended.

Day Three

Key lessons learnt and sharing of experiences

I learnt about my strength, weaknesses and opportunities

When I went home yesterday, I found my step father and I told him can I share with you what I learnt. He told me he is busy yet he was reading an old newspaper. So I went to the house and kept my work but I also know that this man does not want me to continue with school. Every day I come to the MEMPROW training by force... Shamim

When I went home yesterday, I shared with my mother my mind map and she encouraged me to read hard the subjects that will make become who I want to be. She also started crying and when I asked why, she did not answer me... Fosca

When I went home, I shared with my uncle my mind map and he was so impressed and he decided to photocopy my mind map so he will keep looking at it... Scovia

When I shared with my father that I want to become a nurse in future, he pledged to support my education and he promised to keep encouraging me to study hard... Shimira

Yesterday when I went home, I tried to share with my step sister what we had learnt and she slapped me. This is because she was jealous because for her she got pregnant in primary six... Scovia

Topic: Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs)

Facilitator: Dr. Bramali Mark Bonny

Dr. Bramali defined an STD and some examples of common STDs among young women e.g HIV/AIDS. He shared the statistics of Nyapea Hospital where 46 children less than 15 years are HIV positive and are under treatment. He mentioned that the number is higher in Paidha but people do not go to hospitals. One in four teenagers in Paidha has an STD. He attributed the statistics to high levels of risky sexual behaviours which include; engaging in multiple sexual relationships, having unprotected sex, traditional marriages and introduction, Drugs/alcohol use, watching pornographic films and other bad pictures and disco dances.

Dr. Bonny shared the common symptoms of STDS among girls such as Sores, blisters on genital areas, anus, mouth, burning or pain when urinating, itching and bad smell or unusual discharge from your vagina or anus, bellyache, vaginal bleeding.

He cautioned participants that prevention is the key and is better than cure. For example having the virtues of chastity; sexual self-control, saving sexual intercourse for marriage, the context in which God intended for sexual union.

The girls were encouraged to see a health care provider once they see the above symptoms.

Session two: HIV/AIDS

It was clear that participants could not define these acronyms. The facilitator defined AIDS and HIV and engaged participants in understanding this disease, how it's contracted and its signs and symptoms. He mentioned that thousands of teens in Uganda become infected each year

DR. Bonny encouraged the girls to abstain from sex. He mentioned that condoms donot prevent certain STDS such as HSV- 2

Questions after the session

There is a teacher who took out all the girls then he told those who have developed breasts to remain in class. Then he asked how many of you have had sexual intercourse and none of us put up our hand. But then he said some of us have hysteria and that if you get hysteria you should find a boy, now what should one who has no boy do?

1. *Conversion disorder (false pretence) seeking attention. There is no disease that attacks one because of prolonged abstinence*
2. *Of all the diseases that have talked about but there are girls in school here who have not had sex but have similar symptoms how do they come about?*

3. Some of these diseases like chlamydia; candida can be spread by sharing utensils or bathing basins. That could be one of the causes of the symptoms.
4. My elder sister said that white discharge is a sign of maturity is it true?
5. Out of the common diseases you talked about you said you can still get them even if you use a condom how does that happen? (this question was asked three times in different ways
6. My young sister's private parts are always itching, what can that be?
7. There is a girl who parents are not HIV positive and yet she has HIV how did she get it
8. How else can one protect themselves from HIV because you said you can still get it when you use condom?
9. What could be wrong with my periods because they are not constant?
10. For me I get my periods twice in a month what could be wrong with me?
11. When I go to the toilet, I do not pass stool and I feel like I have to pass but it does not come. What could be the problem?
12. Sometimes I get rashes between my inner thighs what could be the problem?

Session: Violence

Facilitator: Ms. Doreen Kyasimire

This session focussed on violence, its manifestation in different settings that girls live in such as at home, at school, in the community and in their relationships. The girls shared experiences of violence and acted drama on the violence they seen.

The experiences shared include

- ✚ When you are in your period and you miss class even if you explain to the teacher they will still cane you.
- ✚ If a girl is asking for scholastic material and school fees the parent becomes violent, they almost beat you
- ✚ The male parents tell them to get married that they are wasting their time in school.
- ✚ If you want pads from your dad he tells you to go the boy friend
- ✚ When the male parents come back home when they are drunk they start abusing everyone at home
- ✚ I stay with my stepfather and when they sent me back for exam fee he instead started abusing me and he wanted her to stop schooling. However I talked with the sister and he allowed me to study
- ✚ Sometimes a teacher comes when they are annoyed and won't even listen
- ✚ One day my friend Ruth was fasting and she came with a sugar cane in class. The teacher asked her to bring the sugar cane and she refused. Then he said look at your head why is it not shaved? Now if it is not shaved how about down there?

- ✚ Teacher told Ruth that you girl, these days you are very smart and beautiful. You no longer look like you were in P.5. Who can do your thing?
- ✚ We have a teacher called Mr. Smith; he is very tough he beats you anywhere and everywhere. Some teachers are always very annoyed and angry they do not let us talk about issues.
- ✚ You have big breasts
- ✚ If you want something go and ask the person who does your thing
- ✚ One of the teachers likes drawing the girls' vagina when he is discussing something else
- ✚ Sometimes they abuse your parent that your behaviour is like your parents
- ✚ Go to your grandparent to teach you
- ✚ Some teachers do not mark your papers and they give to P7 and then those pupils write abusive words on our papers
- ✚ Some teachers say they are going to erect you

Topic: Managing menstruation

Facilitator: Nurse Oroma France Romana

This session focussed on how Girls should keep safe and clean during their period. The nurse explained that it is important for them to eat a balanced diet and have enough rest especially during this period. She also emphasized the need to keep clean; i.e ensure that the pads are changed when full and properly washed and dried before reusing.

She then demonstrated how the reusable pads can be made out of cloth and or by using cotton wool covered by gauze.

Girls asked questions on how they can tell their next period and why their stomachs hurt more while in their period.

Peer pressure

In this school we have people who love sitting at the back. Now for and my friends we like sitting at the front and we put up our hands. But the back benchers abuse us and say that for us we are posing “ we know more”

Shamim when I had just come to this school I scored 65 per cent in English. Then I showed my friend who had got 25 % instead she got so annoyed and said that I was showing at her.

Some pupils do not like girls who speak good English. They say that they are showing off and that they should be chased away from the school.

One day I had gone early to bed and then the neighbour sent for me and told me to go to a certain house so for me I thought I was going to my brother's house. However when she reached there she found there many different men and asked why they called her. They now denied that they did not call me because they know my uncle is tough. Now one day there was a conference and asked my uncle to allow me to go but he refused. So when she came back. So that woman again came to me and told me to stop bothering my parents and instead find boyfriends. Scovia

One day as I was going home a certain man tried to cone me. However our teachers had just told us about not allowing relationships with boys and men so I refused.

One night my cousin with whom I share a room woke me up at night to go to a boys house. I refused and went back to sleep. Now when my aunt was away that cousin of mine again called the boy to come home I refused and reported both of them to my aunt.

One day my mother and father had gone to the lake. They left me with my cousin. She used to be a good girl but she changed later and started misbehaving. One time she called her boyfriend home when the parents were not around. She even got pregnant but she aborted. Now she started bringing for me boys and I refused daisy. She did it the second time and I reported her to my father he sent her away from home

When my father passed away. A man came to me and said that I was looking so lonely. He told her that now she was an orphan he would take up the responsibility of paying her school fees. One day her mother sent her to go and buy something and she met the man who told her the same thing but she refused. Now the man ordered my friends to come and beat me up so that he could do what he wanted to do but still she defeated all of them.

One time I went to my aunt's place. There are two big boys who stay in that same house. When the aunt went to Zulu they started saying that they will break my virginity. Now both boys and girls were sharing the same room with me. One night the boy woke up in the middle of the night and wanted to have sex with me even the following night. She then reported the issue to the father of the boy but he did not listen. She now reported to the headmistress and the issue was resolved.

There is a man who usually rapes girls in our area. One time he came and started undressing my sister and I. Then she woke up and woke her sister up too then he took off. Now he came again the second time this time he injected my sister with something and he put on a condom. Now at this point I woke up and started screaming and the man took off.

Children's rights session by Enid Nambuya

Discussion centered on who is in charge at the different places i.e at school, home and in the community.

Discussion on the school rules

Under which situation do student dodge class

Protection against exploitative work

Children said that they are beaten and abused because of the following reasons at home;

Not attentive in class failed examinations

Caned for refusing to do a punishment

Failure to fetch water in time

When they refuse to cook making noise at night

When they refuse to go to the market

Lack of respect

At school they are beaten and abused for the following reasons

Failure to listen while in class

Making noise in class

Teachers' session

In this session the facilitator aided the teachers through the government secular that outlawed all sexual and gender based violence against pupils and learners. They also revised a report that was launched by the unicef which clearly talks about punishment especially corporal punishments

Children's rights and responsibilities

Commitments made by the teachers

1. Improved performance by the girls
2. An active MEMPROW club

3. Reduced drop out of girls
4. Improved performance by the girls
5. Better relationship between teachers and pupils
6. Teachers are no longer going to cane pupils unnecessarily
7. Teachers will be intentional role models for the girls

In addition the teachers reported that they are going to create a safe and welcoming environment for the girls to report cases of gender based violence. In addition to the suggestion box, they are going to make a form that pupils will use to report culprits

Regarding the different mode of punishments; teachers we were tasked to think whether the punishments

Are

Non punitive

If the punishment fits the crime committed

If the punishment is empowering or harming the pupil

If the teacher is fulfilling their duty by rendering the punishment

Closing remarks:

The headmistress and teachers appreciated MEMPROW for the wonderful opportunity. She said that as a headmistress she would do that within her power to ensure that the mempro girls who graduated enrol and mentor their peers. She also said that she is going to task her teachers to pay more attention to these girls so that they can get at least a few first grades.

She challenged the girls to be the mentors they have become and pledged full support to the MEMPROW Girls club.

“I am very grateful to MEMPROW for coming to our school. This is the first training of its kind, she said that it’s not only the girls but even they as teachers benefited a lot from the training”

“You are the luckiest girls in the whole district. The trust has been put in you and now the work begins. We want you to change not only in the school but even in the communities where you come from. We will put up a suggestion box for you to put their comments but we will also change our school together in different ways. You who are here will be the first to get first grades and second grades only”.