MOUNTAINS OF HOPE MINI SURVEY ON Most Vulnerable Groups

**Status**

According to the stakeholders meeting which included children, senior administrative secretary, health centre in charge, Secretary Children affairs, Councillors LCIII, FBO leaders, head teachers and local government extension workers in Kammengo sub county, the most vulnerable group were children with disabilities, children living with HIV/AIDS, Children living near lakes/ fishing sites, Children living near quarries and sand mines, OVCs, those in trading centres, Children living with step mothers, Children from poor families and Children who live with drunkard parents.

It was noted that the above children are the most discriminated and have limited participation in development programmes at home and community. As a result their views are excluded from community development plans set by partners and local government.

**Analysis**

It was realised that such vulnerable groups are marginalised, neglected and abused compared to other categories of people. These vulnerable children most of them do not go to school because they cannot afford school requirement despite the fact that it is free where children should provide their own stationary, uniforms, lunch among other requirements. This situation is worsened by such groups not being able to afford medical treatment. Though medical treatment is supposed to be free of charge, according to research findings, it revealed that existing health centres do not have enough drugs, medical equipment are inadequate, and they are under staffed among other challenges. This means that these people pay for medical treatment from nearby clinics and private hospital. However, most of them cannot afford this meaning that they resorted to traditional practices for treatment which are affordable and in the end some of them have lost their lives.

Most of these children especially those living with HIV and AIDS, children with disability are marginalised by their own parents / caretakers and the community to the extent that they deny them access and utilisation of basic necessities and services such as treatment, education, food, socialisation and participation because of their conditions.