

August 2016



Children Stand Up Against Child Abuse in Ghana

"My confidence level has increased. I can stand anywhere, in public to express myself well. I don't feel shy anymore", said Gloria Seidu.

Gloria had had her confidence built through a top-notch child-rights centred programme known as Savana Signatures Young Reporters.

The Savana Signatures Young Reporters' clubs formed in 10 basic schools in the Savelugu/Nanton

Municipality was a direct response to the high incidence of child abuse and molestation in the Municipality.



Gloria Seidu

A 17-year old girl and student of Pong-Tamale M/A Junior High School

has been a member of Savana Signatures Young Reporters club for a year now.

"We are being exposed to issues of child rights and now, we are standing up against such abuses in the community", she said.

Describing child abuse as unacceptable, Gloria said the Savana Signatures Young Reporters club in Pong-Tamale M/A JHS has been speaking publicly against early and forced marriages, child

labour and sexual abuse using digital platforms including radio and UNICEF's Voices of Youth platform.

"I am now aware of my rights and responsibilities as a child. I have been passing this information to my colleagues and friends", she said.

Aside being aware of issues of child rights and what constitute child rights abuse, Savana Signatures young reporters have been

empowered to conduct community mapping, create and share content through an online platform.

"I have also become a creative writer and child rights advocate thanks to the Savana Signatures young reporters club programme", Gloria said.

Gloria since joining the programme a year ago has been actively engaging her colleagues and parents in discussion about issues of child rights and child

abuses. She said "I also share cases of child rights abuses with parents at home".

She thinks "sharing the word about child rights abuses" with parents and children would help reduce cases of child rights abuses in the Savelugu-Nanton Municipality.

"If children were aware of their rights and responsibilities, some of these



Members of Pong-Tamale M/A JHS Savana Signatures young reporters club

abuses will not even happen. People take advantage of children's ignorance to abuse them", she said.

Gloria thinks, child rights abuses can only end in the Savelugu/Nanton Municipality if people begin to talk about it.

She thanked Savana Signatures for putting children at the centre of this programme and that many a time, children's programmes do not involve them directly like



Alhassan Adamu, reporter the Savana Signatures young reporters' programme.

The Young Reporters concept is a component of Savana Signatures' project called the Integration of ICT in Education Project (IIEP) which has been implemented in the

Savelugu/Nanton Municipality since 2012 with funding support from EDUCO.

The project is aimed at equipping teachers and students with requisite ICT knowledge and skills for improving the quality of learning outcomes in schools.

The IIEP is focused on the provision of ICT infrastructure to schools, training of teachers, school administrators and students on the use of ICT

tools to design and deliver lessons.

Through IIEP, Savana Signatures has been able to provide 11-seater computer laboratories to 13 basic schools in the Savelugu/Nanton Municipality and trained over 450 teachers, school administrators and Circuit Supervisors in basic computer maintenance skills and ICT pedagogy in the Northern and Volta Regions of Ghana.



The Young Reporters programme targets children, parents, teachers and local authorities and aims to change their attitudes towards children's rights.

The programme uses sensitization, training and education to reach stakeholders with child rights information.

Members of Savana Signatures Young Reporters clubs are using local radio stations and online platforms to reach stakeholders with the messages of child rights.

In 2015, a child rights study commissioned by Savana Signatures indicted parents' caretakers and stepmothers and fathers as perpetrators of child rights abuses in the Municipality.

Some of the abuses that were reported by the research include child labour, forced and early marriages, child beatings, denial of food, shelter, education and healthcare



which are essential to the development and growth of children.

The prevalence of these abuses and their effects on children's education in the Municipality informed Savana Signatures to initiate the programme to reduce the incidence of the abuses in the Municipality.

Subsequently, 100 children were trained as child rights advocates to stand up against child rights abuses in the area.

Also, 10 child rights clubs were formed, with members of these clubs using face to face discussions, radio discussions and posts on online platforms to disseminate information about child rights. "This has already triggered discussions among parents, teachers and local authorities about children's rights in the Municipality", the project officer, Simon Eten said.

He said, "the only way to reduce child abuse is to

train children themselves to stand up against the menace".

He urged teachers, parents and local authorities to desist from cultural and traditional practices that affect children's rights.



**Akpanja Francis, reporter
Pong-Tamale M/A JHS**

Meet Some Young Reporters and Mentors



Sumaila Wasila, reporter, Pong-Tamale Exp. Prim Sch.



Seidu Jamima, Reporter, Pong-Tamale Exp. Prim Sch.



Morgan Awugyei, Mentor, Pong M/A JHS



Iddrisu Haruna, Mentor (Pong-Tamale Exp. Prim Sch.



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