

# 60 teachers, lecturers cited in sexual harrasment

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The Parliamentary select committee of inquiry into allegations of sexual violence in institutions of learning has recommended that 60 teachers and lecturers, who have repeatedly been mentioned by learners for engaging in sexual violence in schools and universities, be investigated and prosecuted.

Robina Gureme Rwakoojo, the chairperson of the select committee, on Thursday presented the report of the committee to Parliament. She mentioned the schools where learners named teachers and lecturers for engaging in sexual violence, but did not reveal the names of the teachers. However, she said they were sent to Police for further investigations. Debate on the report and a response from the education ministry are expected this week.

Rwakoojo said the committee discovered that sexual violence is prevalent in institutions, although the actual magnitude is hard to determine as many of the cases are not reported.

"The vice is mainly perpetuated by male teachers and lecturers, as well as male learners against female learners. However, male learners, too, are vulnerable, although most of them do not report due to gender

- Busitema University (5)
- Busitema College PS (4)
- Serere SS (7)
- Moroto Municipal Council PS (1)
- Maryhill Girls HS (3)
- Mbarara University of Science and Technology (2)
- Kisoro St. Paul Mutolere SS (2)
- Ntoroko PS (2)

- Kanara Seed SS (3)
- Bubukwanga SS (2)
- Kibogo PS (4)
- Nateete Muslim PS (6)
- Kibuli Muslim SS (1)
- Kyambogo University (2)
- Makerere University (7)
- St Lawrence HS (3)
- Ediofe Girls SS (3)
- Islamic University in Uganda (3)

## INSTITUTIONS, NUMBER OF TEACHERS CITED

stereotypes that are prevalent in the Ugandan society. Sexual violence permeates every facet of learners' lives, impacting not only their education, but also their physical and mental health," she said.

The report stated that the vice is caused by a myriad of factors, ranging from social, cultural, economic and institutional, to environmental factors. The committee findings indicate that poverty and moral degeneration are the key driving factors of the vice.

Rwakoojo said while the Government has undertaken legislative, policy and institutional measures to address the problem, the current system does not sufficiently protect learners from continued sexual abuse.

"This situation is compounded by the culture of silence and impunity surrounding sexual abuse, which discourages learners from reporting. In the few cases where learners report, they confront powerful obstacles to achieve administrative and legal redress," she said.

The committee recommended that the education ministry formulates a policy that prevents and manages sexual violence and harassment in schools.

It asked the ministry to annually update Parliament on the scale of sexual violence in institutions of learning in the country and the actions taken to mitigate the vice.

The committee said sexual violence in institutions of learning

manifests in various forms, including defilement, rape, verbal and non-verbal sexual harassment.

At university and tertiary level, the committee discovered that it is common for lecturers to intentionally fail students or withhold their results under the guise of "missing marks" to increase the students' vulnerability to yield to their sexual demands. This form of sexual exploitation is commonly known as "sexually transmitted marks" or "sex for marks".

The committee recommended that the Education Act, 2008 be amended to give effect to the right of pregnant girls to be retained and reintegrated in education institutions after giving birth. In addition, they asked the ministry to fast-track the formulation and implementation of policy guidelines for the retention and re-integration of pregnant girls in schools not later than December.

The committee asked Parliament to fast-track the passing of the Sexual Offences Bill, 2015, considering sexual violence in schools. It said the Government should consider amending the Education Act, 2008 to explicitly prohibit sexual relations between learners and teachers, whether consensual or not and to reinforce existing provisions in the Teachers' Professional Code of Conduct, classifying sexual violence as a serious form of professional misconduct.