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# The Sexual and Reproductive Health of Orphans and Vulnerable Children

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**Gloria Kimuli Seruwagi**  
PhD Candidate

**Centre for Applied Childhood Studies**  
School of Human and Health Sciences  
**The University of Huddersfield (UK)**



# Presentation Outline

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- Introduction to OVC
- OVC sexual and reproductive health
- Key issues
- What role for healthcare systems?



# Introduction to Orphans & Vulnerable Children (OVC)

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- 'OVC' origin
- Definition of 'Orphan' and 'Vulnerable child' (UNICEF/UNAIDS, 1999)
- Age limit subject of debate
- ❖ *Does definition detract attention from the RSH needs of older adolescents?*



## OVC in Uganda

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- 56% of Uganda's population are children
- In 2007 OVC number was 2.3 million (15% of the total children in the country), which rose to 7.5 million (the equivalent of 46% of all children) in 2008
- An estimated 45.6% of all Ugandan orphans HIV/AIDS-related
- Number projected to increase to 2,500,000 by 2010

*(UNICEF 2007, 2006,2003;Wakhweya et al,2006; MLGSD 2004)*



# OVC Sexual & Reproductive Health

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- Sexual vulnerability
- Early sex and cross-generational sex
- Unwanted pregnancy
- Maternal & Infant morbidity/morbidity
- Early marriages

*"...If I stay here, I might be tempted to give in to these village men but when I get married to a hardworking man I shall be safe from getting AIDS and also live a better life in my own home..."*

*(Orphan girl, aged 16)*

- HIV/AIDS and other STI
- ABC message?



## Key Issues

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- Model of Childhood/Adolescence?
- Service planning and delivery, specifically relating to OVC needs
- Policy-research-practice gap
- OVC context
- Gender aspect (*sexual abuse 1.5-3 times higher among girls*)
- Power issues



## What role for health systems?

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- Responsive health services
- Consultation with children & young people
- Training and practice
- Child protection?
- Information, advice and guidance





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