



Doctor Chivunga from Chongwe Basic Boys Network club, speaking at the Boys Network Press Conference at Kapingila House

BOYS NETWORK CONDEMNS SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST GIRLS

By Nelson Banda

Doctor Chivunga, a grade nine pupil at Chongwe Basic School, 45 KM east of Lusaka, has urged the government to stiffen punishment against penetrators of sexual violence against children.

Speaking at the Boys Network Press Conference held at Kapingila House, in Central Lusaka, Chavunga, who is chairperson of the Chongwe School Boys Network club, bemoaned the many cases involving sexual violence against girls.

‘Since the beginning of the project, we have learnt that sexual violence is rampant in Zambia and that it hinders their participation in development’, Doctor said. ‘We have noted that girls are not safe both at home and school, and that sexual violence come in different

forms. As members of the Boys Network, we have been empowered with knowledge, information and skills to speak out against gender based violence and sexual violence against girls in particular’.

The fourteen year old male pupil said the through the school network boys would endeavor to fight sexual violence against their female counterparts.

‘We will participate actively in the struggle to fight sexual violence against girls in schools and gender based violence in general. We commit ourselves to report cases of sexual violence that we will come across both at home and the communities we live and the schools,’ Doctor said.

‘We also want to encourage parents to be open to their children and speak about sexually. Zambia being a Christian nation, we appeal to the public to abide by the Christian values and the advancement of girls.

He appealed to the government to partner with stakeholders in sensitizing the communities on the dangers of sexual violence against girls.

We appeal to the government to set up rehabilitation centers for survivors of violence. Non Governmental organizations should work with schools to enlighten pupils on their rights as gender violence hinder the advancement of girls in leadership in their schools and communities’, said Doctor.

The Boys Network project comprises five schools in the Zambian capital, Lusaka namely Kamwala High School, Munali Boys High School, Kamulanga High School, Chanzanga and Chongwe Basic Schools. In all these schools, the Boys Network school clubs work together with the Safe Space clubs for girls to promote gender equality and fight injustices against girls through drama performances and debates. The project is part of the Tisunge Anna Athu Akazi Coalition (Lets keep our girls children safe) a coalition of organizations working to empower girls in schools.

Nelson Banda is the Coordinator of the ZNWL Men and Boys Network Project in Zambia