

Human Life International Uganda Report for November 2015

Pro-Life Achievements & Collaboration with Global Life Campaign

1. Introduction

I am grateful to God for having successfully completed the month of November with a number of pro-life achievements. We have engaged in a number of prolife meetings with different Religious institutions and organizations appealing to them to join us in fighting against the passing of the upcoming abortion Bill.

2. Meeting between Human Life International Uganda team, Thomas Jacobson (CEO for Global Life Campaigns) and the team from Africa Life Youth Foundation.

On the 2nd of November, HLI-U team led by Fr. Jonathan Opio and Thomas Jacobson, the CEO for Global Campaigns met with the CEO of Africa Life youth Foundation and another staff Peterson. The purpose for the meeting was to share and discuss the challenges posed by the recently launched standards and guidelines by the ministry of Health titled 'Reducing Maternal Morbidity and Mortality from Unsafe abortion in Uganda' which many scrupulous medical practitioners rely on to procure abortions in various centers. In the meeting, Fr. Jonathan said, HLI-U intends to have the government withdraw the abortion guidelines by creating awareness and also to promote Natural Family Planning. Richard seconded the meeting and also encouraged us to focus on the medical team and lawyers. He said that in their programs, they involve schools where they teach students prolife issues and also get involved in marching for life. Thomas said Uganda and Africa have to take the lead on the family life campaign and urged us not to be afraid to take the lead. Fr. Jonathan said we need to feed the prolife groups with information so they can spread the same information in outreach programs.

3. Meeting between Human Life International Uganda team, Thomas Jacobson (CEO for Global Life Campaigns) and a team of Uganda Catholic Secretariate Nsambya.

On the 4th of November, HLI-U team and Thomas Jacobson met with the Uganda Catholic Secretariate team to discuss about the challenges posed by the standards and guidelines document. Fr. introduced HLI and Global Life Campaign as prolife organizations which educate people on life issues. He shared his concerns about the abortion document to Sister Stella (Secretary for the youth) and Angella (National Secretary for the holy childhood) mentioning that in the document, it says any woman who isn't comfortable with the pregnancy can go ahead and abort and that a child as young as 10 can be put on contraceptives or even opt for abortion once a method has failed. He added that the drafters of the document are from international organizations which promote abortion and contraceptives as a business and they don't care at all about people's health. CEHURD, IPAS, IPPF are some of the organizations mentioned that are responsible for the drafting of the document.

Sister Stella expressed her anger about the document saying that this is a serious silent war that needs urgent attention and added that this is a good message to take to the dioceses i.e.; pastoral dioceses, catechists so they can extend this message to the people they move to in all the 19 dioceses. Added that we should join efforts to outdo such evil acts by extending this knowledge such that everyone gets informed. Thomas urged Ugandans to stand strong and avoid such evil acts to be legalized in Uganda adding that once abortion is legalized, numbers of deaths will increase, a lot of complications and culture and values will go down.

4. Meeting between Human Life International Uganda team, Thomas Jacobson (CEO for Global Life Campaigns) and the team from Inter- Religious Council of Uganda Namirembe

On the 4th of September; HLI-U team and Thomas Jacobson met with the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda team to discuss about the challenges posed by the standards and guidelines document and in this meeting Fr. Jonathan suggested that in the bid to collaborate with Inter-Religious Council to stop the implementation of the abortion document and passing of the bill, we can facilitate research to them for any possible action considering that we share common values and so work for the promotion of these same values. He appealed to the members to speak out on these issues so that this document can be withdrawn.

Thomas also added that the definitions of terms in the abortion document just push for abortion meaning the people who drafted the document are not Ugandans but rather people from international organizations who undermine African values and so decide to impose abortion to us. He stressed that abortion on demand violates our constitution. A member from the Inter-Religious Council suggested that we can approach this through launching a research where information is gathered about anti-life organizations and their work/programs and also offering a forum where views and concerns can be heard.

5. Meeting between Human Life International Uganda team, Thomas Jacobson (CEO for Global Life Campaigns) and Richard Oseku (aspiring MP)

The meeting with Richard took place on the 5th of November at HLI-U offices and Fr. introduced him as a friend and a very potential person in pro-life activities and an MP aspirant for the upcoming elections. The purpose for the meeting was to interact with Richard about the abortion document that was launched by Ministry of Health so he can lobby his fellow members of parliament into joining efforts to withdraw the document and not allow the passing of the bill that has already been tabled in parliament when he joins in the 10th parliament. Fr. added that since we are very sure Richard is going to be in the 10th parliament, a man of integrity he is, will be able to get issues at hand i.e. making research about things that protect life, safeguard the integrity of people and also to fill the gap in parliament since there is no one to strongly advocate for life. He stressed that we need to find people who are resilient enough, people without fear to advocate for life and also support others to build good grounds for our work.

Richard said poverty is one reason among others that forces women into abortion and therefore must be addressed. He added that a lot of sensitization and education on issues of life must be done so communities and their leaders can get informed, mentioning that, that way, opportunists like antilife organizations who just wait for uninformed people to impose their methods on, don't get the chance to do so.

Thomas also said that these reproductive health policies just encourage immorality outside marriage and reduce chances of giving birth and urged members to sensitize the public not to be quick in accepting international programs.

6. Meeting between Human Life International Uganda team, Thomas Jacobson (CEO for Global Life Campaigns) and the team of Holy Cross Family Ministries Nsambya.

At Holy Cross Family Ministries, the meeting took place on the 6th November. Here we got a brief introduction of the ministry as a religious institution which among others, promotes family values, focusing most on children, youth and family by creating awareness to them and encouraging them to pray and also do children, youth and marriage counselling.

Fr. Jonathan then introduced his team and also the purpose for the meeting, mentioning that the details in the standards and guidelines abortion document that was prepared mostly by international groups are against our customs, values and beliefs and so therefore the need to join efforts and stop it from being implemented. Fr. added that in Kenya, a similar document was launched but the strong opposition from religious and prolife groups forced the government to withdraw the implementation of the document. He expressed his concern saying that there's need to appeal to our own government to withdraw this document and not pass the bill, adding that our main needs aren't abortion but rather security, good roads, health facilities among others. He therefore urged HCFM members to join efforts with us to appeal to the people the ministry serves, make them aware of certain life threatening acts so they can get informed and not fall prey. He requested that they make a write up as family ministry about these issues and present to the ministry and parliament informing them that this is not what our family people need. He appealed to the members to see how to collaborate and stop the document from being implemented and also the bill from being passed.

Thomas also said the these anti-life organizations have laid strategies through their programs to separate children from their parents and take responsibility of them and

also to separate wives from husbands, give them authorities i.e. abortion, contraceptives and urged members to be aware of such tricks.

7. Meeting between Human Life International Uganda team, Thomas Jacobson (CEO for Global Life Campaigns) and the team of Malaria and Childhood Illnesses MACIS Mengo.

At MACIS, the meeting took place on the 6th November. MACIS as introduced by Dr. Patrobas is a network of different organizations fighting for the welfare of children and doing advocacy in children's rights.

Fr. Jonathan introduced his concerns as in reference to the standards and guidelines abortion document and urged the team to join efforts in appealing to the people the network serves through creating awareness of the document and also appeal to the government to stop/ withdraw the document.

Dr. Patrobas said that his pillars of life are similar to HLI-U pillars and added that for as long as we are standing for life, he is ready to join in the effort so we can destroy the agenda that wants to destroy life.

Thomas added that we have good laws in Uganda and a strong constitution that we shouldn't allow anyone to alter it for their own benefit. He stressed that the drafters of the document didn't show any mindset for protecting the life of the baby because their work is to promote abortion. He urged members to contact people, parliament to let them know that abortion is not our need.

8. Meeting between Human Life International Uganda team, Thomas Jacobson (CEO for Global Life Campaigns) and the Arch-Bishop of Gulu Archdiocese

On 9th November, the meeting took place in Gulu with his Grace John Baptist Odama As introduced by Fr. Jonathan, the purpose for this meeting was to appeal through the arch-Bishop's office to the people to be aware of the abortion document and join efforts in appealing to the government to withdraw the document. The main concerns in the document were introduced to the arch-bishop, mentioning to him that this

document wasn't drafted for the health of the people but rather to promote abortion in Uganda.

9. Meeting between Human Life International Uganda team, Thomas Jacobson (CEO for Global Life Campaigns) and the Chaplain of St. Francis Chapel

The meeting with the Chaplain of St. Francis Chapel took place on the 10th of November. The purpose for the meeting was to share the challenges posed by the upcoming abortion bill and the launched standards and guidelines abortion document by Ministry of Health and also to appeal through his office to contact other people or followers in a bid to stop the abortion bill from being passed. During the meeting, concerns in the document were raised to the chaplain and an appeal was made to use his position and contacts to reach out to many different people to make them aware of the document and its dangers.

10. Meeting between Human Life International Uganda team, Thomas Jacobson (CEO for Global Life Campaigns) and the Chaplain of St. Augustine Chapel

The meeting with the Chaplain of St. Augustine Chapel took place on the 10th of November. The purpose for the meeting was to share the challenges posed by the upcoming abortion bill and the launched standards and guidelines abortion document by Ministry of Health and also to appeal through his office to contact other people or followers in a bid to stop the abortion bill from being passed. During the meeting, concerns in the document were raised to the chaplain and an appeal was made to use his position and contacts to reach out to many different people to make them aware of the document and its dangers.

11. Meeting between Human Life International Uganda team, Thomas Jacobson (CEO for Global Life Campaigns) and the Orthodox Church (His Eminence Metropolitan Jonah Lwanga and Fr. Emmanuel Ssekyeewa).

Meeting took place on the 10th and the purpose was to introduce the standards and guidelines abortion document and expose its dangers to His Eminence Jonah Lwanga and to the entire Orthodox Church and therefore join efforts with the church in opposing such a document from being implemented and also make a write up as church to the ministry and parliament about these issues, mentioning to them that abortion is not one of your needs. Fr. Jonathan exposed some details in the document to his Grace mentioning a 10 year old young girl being free to be put on contraceptives and abortion in cases of contraceptives failure which angered his Grace. He added that these pro-abortionists couldn't rely on this document to effect abortion and are now working on a bill which is soon going to be presented for opinion. On this note, Fr. urged the Bishop to call the influential people he knows in the government to appeal to them not to rush accepting the abortion bill.

Thomas took his Grace through the statistical history of abortion in UK, USA and other countries and said these international pro-abortion groups are striving hard to make Uganda a pro-abortion country.

12. Meeting between Human Life International Uganda team, Thomas Jacobson (CEO for Global Life Campaigns) and the Speaker of Parliament (Hon. Rebecca Alitwala Kadaga)

The meeting with the Speaker of Parliament (Hon. Rebecca Alitwala Kadaga) took place on the 11th November. The purpose for the meeting was to share the challenges posed by the upcoming abortion bill and the launched standards and guidelines abortion document by Ministry of Health and also to appeal through her office to contact other people in a bid to stop the abortion bill from being passed. During the meeting, Hon. Rebecca said she didn't know or even come across the abortion document and promised to follow the matter up.

13. Meeting between Human Life International Uganda team, Thomas Jacobson (CEO for Global Life Campaigns) and Uganda Joint Christian Council team

The meeting with UJCC took place on the 11th November. Rev. Fr. Dr. Silvester Arinaitwe introduced UJCC as an ecumenical faith joint organization which was formed by arch-bishops of the Catholic, Anglican and Orthodox Church and founded to promote unity among Christians, advocate for human rights and good governance, peace building and reconciliation among others.

The purpose for the meeting was to share the challenges posed by the upcoming abortion bill and the launched standards and guidelines abortion document by Ministry of Health and also to appeal through UJCC office to contact other people in a bid to stop the abortion bill from being passed. During the meeting, UJCC team said they had not seen the document anywhere and thanked us for having brought it to their awareness. It was revealed that the document wasn't written by Ugandans but rather by people from organizations like IPAS, IPPF, MARIE STOPES, CEHURD, RHU which are best known for abortion promotion. An appeal was made by Fr. Jonathan to appeal to Fr. Arinaitwe through UJCC office to contact other people, institutions and collaborate with different leadership to do something to stop the passing of the abortion bill because the people promoting this do not mean well.

14. Meeting between Human Life International Uganda team, Thomas Jacobson (CEO for Global Life Campaigns) and Pontifical Mission Societies

Meeting took place on 11th November. The purpose for the meeting was to share with Fr. Phillip Balikudembe and also Chaplain of Parliament, the challenges posed by the upcoming abortion bill and the launched standards and guidelines abortion document by Ministry of Health and also to appeal through his office to contact other people in a bid to stop the abortion bill from being passed. During the meeting, Fr. Phillip said it was the first time he was seeing the abortion document and promised to use his position as chaplain to talk about these issues to parliamentarians and also to invite us one day to talk to the members of parliament about pro-life issues.

15. Meeting between Human Life International Uganda team, Thomas Jacobson (CEO for Global Life Campaigns) and Uganda Muslim Supreme Council team

Meeting took place on 12th November. The purpose for the meeting was to share the challenges posed by the upcoming abortion bill and the launched standards and guidelines abortion document by Ministry of Health and also to appeal through UMSC office to contact other people in a bid to stop the abortion bill from being passed. During the meeting, Members said it was the first time they were seeing the abortion document and promised to use their positions to talk about these issues to fellow Muslims.

16. Meeting between Human Life International Uganda team, and the Pro-life Group of Kampala arch-diocese

Meeting took place on 12th November between Human Life International Uganda team, and Dr. Sandra Nabachwa. The purpose for the meeting was to share the challenges posed by the upcoming abortion bill and the launched standards and guidelines abortion document by Ministry of Health and also to appeal through PROLIFE office to contact other people in a bid to stop the abortion bill from being passed.

17. Meeting between Human Life International Uganda team, and Uganda Catholic Medical Bureau (UCMB) team

Meeting took place on the 13th, between Human Life International Uganda team, and Uganda Catholic Medical Bureau (UCMB) team. The purpose for the meeting was to share the challenges posed by the upcoming abortion bill and the launched standards and guidelines abortion document by Ministry of Health and also to appeal through UCMB office to contact other people in a bid to stop the abortion bill from being passed. In attendance were Dr. Sam Orach, Dr. Ronald Kasyaba and Sr. Catherine Nakiboneka. In this meeting, Fr. Jonathan explained the details in the abortion document mentioning that the document targets mainly young people between 10-24 years, adding that a child as young as 10 years old is free to be put on contraceptives and abortion in cases of pregnancy without the consent of their parents.

Dr. Orach thanked Fr. Jonathan for having come out to tackle such issues of life, mentioning that for too long the church has been blamed for not coming out to talk about life issues. He said the good thing was that Fr. Jonathan was talking already to

the converted and promised to join us in the efforts to fight the document from being implemented.

Conclusion

The month of November saw a number of prolife meetings and building of strategies on how to stop the upcoming abortion bill from being passed. I wish to thank HLI Central for supporting our programs and for guiding us always. As we embark on new programs this coming last month of the year, we pray to God to guide us in all that we do so we can be able to defeat the powers of the culture of death in our Country, Uganda.

Compiled by Joseline. N

(Secretary, HLI-U)

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