



Using Interactive community Drama to address online bullying

Organised by Vocalise Africa Venue: Kakuma 2, Kakuma Refugee Camp, Turkana County

Background and context

The rapid growth of the internet and increased access to mobile phones, social media and other digital communication platforms has transformed the way young people interact. While digital technologies have created opportunities for learning, communication, and social connection, they have also tremendously increased exposure to online risks, including cyberbullying, online harassment, hate speech, misinformation, and digital exploitation.

Young people, including those from the refugee community are increasingly using online platforms without adequate knowledge of digital safety, a move that predisposes them to harm and harassment. Recognizing this need, Vocalise Africa organized a Cyberbullying Radio Drama Community Engagement session in Kakuma 2 within Kakuma Refugee Camp. The activity formed part of the organization's commitment to promoting safe digital spaces through creative communication approaches.

The session utilized an interactive drama to present realistic scenarios illustrating different forms of cyberbullying, the emotional and psychological effects on victims and practical actions individuals and the community can take to prevent online abuse. The radio drama was followed by a facilitated community discussion where participants reflected on the issues presented, shared personal experiences, and explored practical solutions for creating safer online environments.

The engagement aimed to increase community understanding of cyberbullying, promote responsible digital behavior, strengthen awareness of reporting mechanisms, and encourage collective responsibility in preventing online abuse.

The community engagement attracted an enthusiastic group of youth and community members who actively participated throughout the session. The event commenced with an introduction to the objectives of the activity and a discussion on the increasing use of digital platforms within refugee and host communities.

Participants then listened to an interactive drama developed to portray real-life situations involving cyberbullying. The drama highlighted common forms of online abuse, including insulting messages, online humiliation, spreading false information, harassment through social media platforms, and intimidation in digital spaces. It also demonstrated the emotional impact cyberbullying can have on individuals, particularly young people.

Afterwards, participants engaged in a facilitated discussion where they reflected on the issues raised. The discussion was lively and highly participatory with participants openly sharing personal experiences and observations regarding online interactions within their communities.

Several participants acknowledged having witnessed or experienced forms of cyberbullying but admitted that they had not previously recognized such behaviors as reportable offences. Others expressed concern about the increasing use of social media by young people without adequate guidance on responsible digital behavior.

The session provided a safe environment for participants to ask questions, seek clarification, and discuss practical ways of preventing cyberbullying. Facilitators emphasized respectful online communication, responsible use of digital platforms, and the importance of supporting victims rather than remaining silent.

Additionally, participants demonstrated strong interest throughout the engagement and repeatedly emphasized the importance of expanding similar awareness initiatives to reach more young people within Kakuma Refugee Camp.

Community conversations on the Effects of Cyberbullying

Moderators asked participants to mention examples of the effects of cyber bullying. One participant said *"Cyberbullying can have serious emotional, psychological, social, and even physical consequences for victims. Individuals who experience cyberbullying often suffer from stress, anxiety, fear, humiliation, and low self-esteem, which can affect their confidence and overall mental wellness."*

Another participant said, *"Prolonged exposure to online harassment may lead to depression, social isolation, poor academic or work performance, and withdrawal from family, friends, and community activities."*

Asked to mention the effects of cyber bullying on mental health, one participant said, *"Victims of cyber bullying may experience long-term mental health challenges and become reluctant to use digital platforms for learning or accessing important services in future."*

Responsible Digital Behaviour

Participants were asked to mention digital behaviors that can result in ethical use of digital spaces. One participant said, *"It involves treating others with dignity and respect during online interactions, avoiding the sharing of harmful, offensive, or misleading content, and thinking carefully before posting or forwarding information."*

Another participant said, *"Responsible citizens protect their personal information and privacy while respecting the privacy of others, use strong passwords. They also verify information before sharing it to reduce the spread of misinformation."* Another participant said, *"By practicing responsible digital behaviour, individuals contribute to safer digital spaces where technology is used to promote social inclusion rather than division with people in a community."*

Reporting Cyberbullying

Participants were instructed on legal reporting mechanisms whenever they encounter cases of cyber bullying. These reporting mechanisms include Security authorities such as the police, community protection strictures, humanitarian organizations, and platform-specific reporting systems. Participants indicated that they were previously unaware that cyberbullying could be formally reported, making this one of the most significant learning outcomes of the session.

Key Outcomes and Learnings from the conversation.

Increased Knowledge

Participants gained a better understanding of cyberbullying, including its different forms, consequences, and preventive measures. Many demonstrated improved awareness during the discussion by identifying behaviors they had previously considered normal, but which constitute cyberbullying.

Improved Awareness of Reporting Mechanisms

One of the most notable achievements was increased awareness of reporting pathways. Participants learned that victims of cyberbullying have options for seeking support and reporting incidents through relevant authorities and protection actors.

Active Community Participation

The open discussion created an inclusive environment where participants confidently shared experiences and exchanged ideas. The high level of participation reflected the community's willingness to engage in conversations around online safety and responsible digital citizenship.

Increased Demand for Awareness Activities

Participants expressed a strong desire for additional community engagements, particularly targeting young people. They recommended organizing larger awareness campaigns, school-based activities, and regular community dialogues focusing on digital safety.

Strengthened Community Dialogue

The activity encouraged community members to view cyberbullying as a collective issue requiring shared responsibility among families, youth, community leaders, humanitarian organizations, and government institutions.

Conclusion

The Cyberbullying Radio Drama Community Engagement successfully achieved its objective of increasing awareness about cyberbullying and promoting responsible digital behaviour among participants in Kakuma 2. The use of interactive radio drama created an engaging and relatable learning experience that encouraged open discussion, reflection, and community participation.

Participants left the session with a stronger understanding of the harmful effects of cyberbullying and greater awareness of available reporting mechanisms. The discussions also revealed a growing demand for continued education on digital safety, particularly among young people who increasingly rely on digital platforms for communication and information.

