

REPORT

THE DAY OF AFRICAN CHILD – 2009



THEME

“AFRICA FIT FOR CHILDREN: CALL FOR ACCELERATED ACTION TOWARDS THEIR SURVIVAL”

Celebrated on Tuesday, 16th June 2009
Venue: Msomi Academy, Migori District

BY

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JUNE 2009

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

HIV	Human Immuno – Deficiency Virus
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
DCO	District Children’s Officer
DC	District Commissioner
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
CBO	Community Based Organization
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
AAC	Area Advisory Council
MOSUP	Mercy Orphans Support Program
DK	Dala Kiye
RAPADO	Rural AIDS Prevention and Development Organization
DAC	Day of African Child

OVERVIEW

The African Union, in collaboration with the African Committee on the Rights and Welfare of the Child declared June 16th of every year “The day of the African Child.” This year’s theme was “Africa fit for Children: Call for accelerated action towards their survival.”

On June 16th therefore, Africa observes the Day of the African Child, in memory of, thousands of black school children who were maimed and killed in 1976 Soweto uprising, as they took to the streets to protest the inferior quality of their education and demand their right to be taught in their own language. It brings to the fore the grim reality of the brutality with which the police used to disperse the unarmed youths protesting for their rights.

Today children in Africa still suffer the same fate, as they are ravaged by hunger ,disease, malnutrition and all other forms of injustices visited upon them by those who should infact be taking care of them. Marking the day honors and celebrates the initiatives to improve the life chances of children throughout the African continent. The day serves as an instrument to encourage similar exemplary initiatives in promoting the rights and improving the well being of children.

The day has also become an opportunity to examine progress towards health, education, equality and security for all African children and on the implementation of the regional African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

Migori district joined the rest of the continent in marking the day. This year’s event was marked at Msomi Academy who also doubled as the hosting organization. The celebration brought together children from a number of schools in Migori District.

To oversee the success of marking the day was a steering committee that comprised of representatives from MOSUP, DK, DCO, World Vision, Blue Cross, Msomi Children’s Project, Mama Carols’ Children Home, Legal Resource Foundation, CARD and HOPE Centre Orphanage.

The organization of the day’s celebration was such that it was the children (under the guidance of adults) who steered the day’s program from the onset till the end.

The following were resolutions that were arrived at during this year’s celebrations:

- That there is need to invest in education for our children
- That all children of school going age must be enrolled and retained in school.
- That is the responsibility of parents and leaders to ensure that the rights of children are safeguarded.
- That children should shun activities that expose them to the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS.
- That adults should become good role models to the children.

Theme

This year's theme was, "Africa fit for children: Call for accelerated action towards their survival". Child survival, protection and development are not only universal aspirations enshrined in the MDGs but are also human rights issues ratified in the international Convention on the Rights of Children and African Charter on the rights and welfare of the child.

Objective

To enhance child survival.

Expected Results

- Trained and sensitized personnel working with children.
- Improved school enrolment and retention for all children of school going age.
- Proper education given to the children.
- Increased child involvement.
- Instituted legislations to safeguard the welfare of children.
- Increased networking for all the stakeholders working with the children in Migori district

ACTIVITIES AND ACTUAL RESULTS

1. Processions

This served to jumpstart the day's celebration. The Procession starting point was at Migori TTC stadium. The procession was flagged off by DCO Migori District at around 10.00 am. Participants in the procession were children drawn from various schools in Migori district. All the stakeholders working with and for children in the larger Migori district joined the children to commemorate the important day. Majority of the participants were children and they came in their hundreds as a sign of solidarity with the rest of African children. When the procession proper kicked off at around 10.00 AM, the participants chanted slogans and sang songs in rhythm with the drum beats that reverberated from the marching children. On the lead were a group of children carrying a huge banner and placards that bore the day's theme, "Africa fit for children: Call for

accelerated action towards their survival.” The procession snaked its way through Migori – Isebania Road and covered a distance of about 3 Kilometers to Msomi academy.



Part of the procession of DAC 2009 snaking its way through Migori – Isebania Road.

2. Opening Ceremony

The procession reached Msomi Academy at around 10.30 am to a rapturous reception from hundreds of participants who were already seated at the celebrations venue. Tens of invited guests had also arrived ready for the ceremony.

The opening ceremony was presided over by a student from a neighboring secondary school after a word of prayer from Bishop Okinda. The student master ceremony took the participants through the day’s program.

Presentations by the Children

Children from various schools in Migori District made thrilling presentations that ranged from skits, choral verses and poems that educated those in attendance on the needs to safeguard the rights of all children. An open forum for networking and collaboration with all stakeholders working with and for children was realized as all the informative, educative and communicative presentations focused on:

- Exploring the year’s theme that stressed on enhancement of child survival
- Provision of basic needs like food, clothing and shelter to the children
- Child rights and child protection
- Cultural, social and economic impacts of HIV/AIDS
- Access to all forms of care and support for the children

- Strengthening community responses towards mitigating child labor and other related malpractices



Children reciting a choral verse



Children from St. Gabriels, Nyatike presenting their item.

Speeches

At the end of the thrilling presentations by the children, it was now time for the gathering to be entertained by speeches from various invited guests. To ensure that children were adequately represented in the celebrations, there was the presence of two child guests who also graced the occasion. Those who gave speeches on this important day included

the Director RAPADO, Program Officer - MOSP, DCO Migori, DC Migori and the two child guests.

The speeches from the invited guests focused on the following areas:

- Reflection on the importance of marking the Day of the African Child and the importance of this day to the life of our children.
- The role that leaders and guardians need to play in promoting child survival.
- The various challenges facing the African child
- Government's role in safeguarding the rights of all children through enactment of children friendly legislations.
- Need for organizations to network and collaborate on the issues of child protection.
- The important role education plays in the life of children and the need to ensure that all children of school going age are enrolled and retained in school.
- Provision of adequate health care services to all children
- The serious problems that HIV/AIDS pose to the lives of children and the need for children to shun activities that would expose them to the dangers of contracting HIV/AIDS

The guest of honor during this year's celebrations in Migori District was the District Commissioner.



DCO Migori addresses the participants during DAC 2009 celebrations.



Sharon Angwanga, one of the child guests during DAC 2009.

Provision of Meals and Refreshments

After the end of speeches, the organizers of the event saw into it that the participants were well fed. The cost of meals and refreshments including all the costs incurred in organizing the event were distributed evenly by the following groups and agencies:

- GOK
- MOSP
- DK
- RAPADO
- Msomi Children's Project
- World Vision,
- Blue Cross
- Mama Carols' Children Home
- Legal Resource Foundation
- CARD
- HOPE Centre Orphanage

At the end of it all, the participants were well fed.

Games

This marked the final event of the day. It was an entertaining football match pitting Migori Boys High School against B.L Tezza Complex Secondary School from Karungu Division. At the end of the match; it was Migori Boys who emerged victorious after a hard fought 1-0 win over their opponents. Besides soccer there was also tug of war that preceded the football match.



Group photo of B.L Tezza and Migori Boys football teams.



Trophy presentation to the best team in tug of war

Achievements

Having marked the day, the following achievements were made based on the objectives;

- Over 1500 people, most of them children, were able to converge at the venue on time ready to mark the day.
- All the invited guests turned up for the celebrations
- Participants were well entertained, educated and well fed
- Adequate information on care and protection for children were passed to those present
- The children, under the guidance of adults, had the opportunity to guide the entire event.

Lesson Learnt

With effective coordination, all the stakeholders working with children are able to marshal their resources towards ensuring that various open days that are aimed at promoting child welfare are marked successfully.



The D.C, Migori District giving a speech during DAC 2009.

Way forward

Need for continued sensitization of adults on the importance of marking community open days such as world Orphans Day, World AIDS Day and the Day of the African Child.



The D.C acknowledges the role played by the child guests and child masters of ceremony.

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