



**ST. CAMILLUS
DALA KIYE CHILDREN WELFARE HOME**

REPORT

WORLD ORPHANS DAY 2007



**THEME:
“ORPHANS, OUR COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY”**

MAY 7th, 2007

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

HIV	Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ART	Anti-Retroviral Therapy
DO	District Officer
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
AEO	Area Education Officer
MOSP	Mercy Orphans Support Program
CBO	Community Based Organization
NGO	Non- Governmental Organization

OVERVIEW

The world orphans day is usually marked on 7th May every year to share and learn on some of the experiences and challenges that are faced by orphans in the world over.

St. Camillus Dala Kiye therefore, as a show of togetherness with other regions in the world, spared time to mark this very important day not only in the lives of orphans but the whole of the human race. The occasion drew participants mainly OVC from schools within Karungu division of Nyatike constituency.

This year's theme was, "Orphans, Our Collective Responsibility". The celebrations were marked at the St. Camillus Dala Kiye Children Welfare Home grounds as from 10.00am up to 4.00pm. The chief guest of the day was the District Officer, Karungu division.

The day provided an opportunity for various organizations and stakeholders to express their concerns and solidarity with the OVC whose number continue to escalate by day in the entire Nyatike constituency. It was therefore a time to reflect on some of the positive measures that have been implemented in the past to help address the situation of the OVC and come up with workable solutions to the problems facing the OVC.

The following were some of the resolutions that were passed:

- That every community member should take the collective responsibility of caring for the OVC
- That OVC just like any other human being deserve to be shown love and respect
- All stakeholders should take a leading role in the care and protection of the OVC
- That people should shun negative sexual practices that have escalated the rate of HIV/AIDS infection in the region.
- That the OVC should be enrolled and retained in school

Theme

This year's theme was, "*Orphans, Our Collective Responsibility*". Marking the day was meant to reflect on various challenges that have been encountered in trying to address the situation of OVC in the community and where possible to come up with general workable solutions to these problems.

Objective

To bring about holistic and compassionate care for OVC within Nyatike and Gwassii communities.

Expected Results

- Sensitized community that is able to respond to the needs of OVC
- Empowered children with skills necessary to navigate through life
- Improved care and support for OVC
- Reduced stigma and discrimination of OVC

ACTIVITIES AND ACTUAL RESULTS

1. Opening ceremony

The venue of celebration was the St. Camillus Dala Kiye Children Welfare Home grounds. The master of ceremony was Mr. Tobias Ogaga project officer with the mercy orphans support program (MOSP), a community based organization based at St. Camillus mission.

The celebrations kicked off with a word of prayer from Fr. Julius Morara, the Assistant Director, St. Camillus Dala Kiye Children welfare home. A number of pupils, students, teachers and other invited guests arrived in time ready to mark the occasion. In total the venue had around 1000 people.

2. Presentations by Children

The children presented different articles to mark this day. This consisted mainly of songs, choral verses, drama and dance that entertained participants present on the World Orphans Day. In total there were about 5 songs, 2 skits and 3 poems that mainly focused on the following:

1. Requesting the community members to take a leading role in care and protection of the OVC.
2. Sharing experiences and challenges on lives of OVC
3. Advocating for a fair society that will be free from stigmatization and discrimination especially to the OVC and their caregivers.
4. Lamenting and warning people against HIV/AIDS being the main cause of deaths that leave children behind in despair and desolation
5. Warning children to shun immoral practices that expose to risk of contracting HIV/AIDS and other STIs
6. Imploring the government and other stakeholders to come up with strategies that are geared towards enhancing better care and protection for the OVC.



B. L Tezza complex secondary school thrills the crowd with their drama addressing the plight of orphans in the society.

3. Sharing of experiences

Since this was the day that was earmarked for the OVC, it was therefore necessary to listen to life experiences of some 2 selected OVC that are under the Dala Kiye program

3.1 George Odhiambo Onditi

George Odhiambo Onditi is a total orphan enrolled at the Dala Kiye program under the foster-family care and protection for OVC model. He lost both parents at a rather tender age. George took the opportunity to share his life experience with fellow children. He said that before the demise of his parents, life was all bed of roses as he was at a position to get all his basic needs. He noted that after the death of both parents, things were never the same again as he was exposed to a very precarious situation. As for him, it was like being between a rock and a hard place. The community discriminated against him, grabbed all the family possessions and that the hallmark of all his problems was when he dropped out of school. But there is some light at the end of the tunnel as he is now back in class thanks to St. Camillus Dala Kiye program. He encouraged other children in his status never to loose hope in life, as God will never abandon them.

George speech highlighted some of the malevolent experiences that most orphans like him are subjected to after the demise of their parents. For him, he did live to share his experience but the general concern is that, how many such orphans are in our society and are wallowing in the valley of despair, their bright voices gagged and their future tarnished by the very own people who are entrusted with their care and up keep?



George Odhiambo Onditi, one of the OVC enrolled in the Dala Kiye Program shares his experience as an orphan with those who turned up for World Orphans Day 2007

3.2 Sharon Awuor Oguda

Sharon is one of the orphans enrolled in the Dala Kiye program under family-based care model. She is pursuing her education at the B.L. Tezza complex secondary school. She is currently in form three and is always among the top 3 in her class. Her experience is a mixture of fortitude and hope. She said that after the demise of her father who was a teacher, life became harsh, as her mother who was a housewife could not meet all the family needs. Hers have been a life of struggling to achieve her dream goal of being an accountant and therefore grabbed the opportunity to thank the Dala Kiye program for making this possible by covering all her education expenses. She challenged all those present and especially her female counterparts to call a halt to behaviors that could expose them to the risks of contracting HIV/AIDS.

For her, hope, self-discipline and determination are the ultimate gate pass to a bright prospect.



Sharon Oguda, one of the OVC enrolled in the Dala Kiye program shares her experience as an orphan with those who turned up for World Orphans Day 2007

4. Speeches

After hearing the life experience of various orphans, it was time for some educative speeches from selected speakers. The speeches were in line with this year's theme of world orphans day dubbed, "*Orphans, our collective responsibility*".

The speeches were delivered in this order:

4.1 Program Coordinator - Dala Kiye Program

The program coordinator of the Dala Kiye program took the opportunity to welcome all those present. The coordinator gave a general overview of the Dala Kiye program that highlighted on the organization's vision, mission and the strategic objectives.

The coordinator then stated to those present the need to celebrate the world orphans day as it was a time that all the stakeholders should reflect on the steps and achievements made in the care and protection of the OVC. He called upon the churches, schools and caregivers to work jointly and harmoniously to ensure that the OVC are well taken care of.

4.2 Head teacher, B.L. Tezza Complex Primary School

Thanked the organizers of the day and welcomed all those present. He extended his gratitude to the Dala Kiye program for its continued support for the OVC within Karungu and Gwassi. He challenged the children to appreciate the support they are being given by the Dala Kiye program by working hard in school so that they can realize their future aspirations.

4.3 Principal, B.L Tezza Complex Secondary School

Thanked the program for extending psychosocial support to the OVC in Nyatike and Gwassi constituencies especially in terms of nutritional and educational support.

He enlightened the children that orphans are just like any other children and therefore should not see themselves as any special or unique group in the community. They should reciprocate the good work of the Dala Kiye program by excelling in their academic endeavors. He further elaborated the role that the school is taking to ensure that the children are modeled into complete individuals capable of meeting all the life challenges.



The principal B.L Tezza Complex Secondary speaks to the crowd.

4.4 The Area Education Officer (A.E.O.)

The AEO emphasized that the primary education is free and compulsory and that parents and caregivers should ensure that all the children that have attained the school going age are enrolled and retained in school irrespective of their status in the community.

He cautioned the parents and caregivers not to go against this directive and that the law will deal firmly and squarely with those who violate the directive.



The area AEO speaks to the children during the World orphans day 2007 celebrations

4.5 The area assistant chief

The assistant chief promised that the local administration will take a leading role in sensitizing the local community on the need for care and protection of the OVC.

4.6 District Officer-Karungu Division (Guest of Honor) Mr. David M. Kungu

Thanked the organizers of the celebration for inviting him to be the chief guest in the event.

He thanked the Dala Kiye program for its continued comprehensive care and support to the OVC especially to those in Karungu division, which is his area of jurisdiction. He went ahead to clarify that the government has come up with child friendly legislations that help to ensure that the right of all children are respected and protected by all and sundry irrespective of age.



The guest of honor, D.O. Karungu division Mr. Kungu addresses the gathering during World Orphans Day 2007 celebrations

He advised the children to work hard in school so that they could fulfill their future dreams and desist from behavior and practices that might expose them to high risks of contracting HIV/AIDS and other STIs. He implored upon the orphans not to see themselves as a disadvantaged lot in the society but rather to live their lives positively just like any other child with the parents.

He noted that there is need for both intensive and extensive sensitization and mobilization of the local community so that they can recognize and appreciate the magnitude and importance of such very important days especially in the lives of our children.

4.6 The Director, Dala Kiye program-Fr. Emilio Balliana

As the director of the St. Camillus Dala Kiye program, he was tasked with giving the votes of thank. He started off by appreciating all those present and thanking them for having spared time from their busy schedule to show solidarity with not only the orphans but with children as a whole. He went ahead to observe that children are very vulnerable members of the society and therefore they need a lot of care and protection. He clarified that it is in the basis of this that the organization found it necessary to support the OVC whose number was escalating by each passing day in Nyatike constituency as a result of deaths occurring from HIV/AIDS related illnesses.

He noted that the leading role of care and support of OVC should be shared by all beginning with community members themselves. He clarified that the program will continue to support the OVC and challenged the government to come up with OVC friendlier legislations and ensure that as government, they are at the forefront in addressing the needs of OVC.

He concluded by advising the children to work hard in school so that they could grow up as independent and responsible citizens of this country.



*The Director, St. Camillus Dala Kiye children welfare home,
Fr. Emilio addresses the crowd during World Orphans Day 2007 celebrations*

Issues that arose from the speeches were:

- That community members should take a leading role in care and protection of OVC
- That orphans should not be subjected to any forms of discrimination

- That care and support of orphans is our collective responsibility
- That all parents and caregivers should ensure that orphans just like any other children are enrolled and retained in school
- That the government should be at the forefront in advocating for the rights of OVC.
- That people should restrain from behaviors that expose them to high risks of contracting HIV/AIDS.
- That despite the continued existence of most organizations addressing the plight of OVC, a good number of the OVC were still wallowing in despair.

5. Provision of meals and refreshments

Around 1000 children and other invited guests were treated to a sumptuous lunch and refreshments that comprised of 300ml bottle of soda, biscuits, juice and sweets.



6. Football match

This was the last event of the day and it pitted teams from Kopala primary school and B.L Tezza complex primary school. The match was played at the Dala Kiye sports ground and was watched by hundreds of enthusiastic supporters. At the blow of the final whistle, it was B.L. Tezza primary school who had gunned down Kopala primary school by a score of 2-1. The trophy was therefore given to B.L Tezza primary school.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The following achievements were made based on the objectives:

- About 1000 children and guests were able to converge at Dala Kiye to mark the world orphans day.
- There was adequate information that was shared on care and support of OVC.
- Children got plenty of pieces of advise from various speakers on the need to work hard in school.
- The OVC were able to share their experiences freely without fear or intimidation.
- The OVC discovered that they too are recognized and respected.

CHALLENGES

- Most schools still do not comprehend the magnitude of the World Orphans Day and were therefore reluctant to release the children to attend the celebrations.
- Level of awareness on the enormity of World Orphans Day is still very low.
- Time management on the side of participants and other invited guests was poor.

- Due to financial constraints, the event was somehow lean and quiet.

LESSONS LEARNT

- That care and support of OVC demands a collective responsibility.
- That OVC are just like any other human beings and hence should not be discriminated against.
- That there is usually a day known as, “ The World Orphans Day”
- That HIV/AIDS is the leading cause of death in the region and people should therefore uphold their morals or risk being swept away by the scourge.

THE WAY FORWARD

- There is need for extensive sensitization on the local community on the existence and importance of world orphans day.
- The budgetary allocation for marking the day should be scaled up.