

REPORT WORLD ORPHANS DAY – 2009



THEME

“FAMILY AND HOPE FOR EVERY ORPHAN”

Celebrated on 7th May 2009

At St. Camillus Dala Kiye Children Welfare Home,

Migori District

BY

ST.CAMILLUS DALA KIYE CHILDREN WELFARE HOME

MAY 2009

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

HIV	Human Immune – Deficiency Virus
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
DO	District Officer
DCO	District Children Officer
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
AEO	Area Education Officer
CBO	Community Based Organization
NGO	Non – Governmental Organization
AAC	Area Advisory council
MOSUP	Mercy Orphans Support Program
DK	Dala Kiye

OVERVIEW

The World Orphans Day is an international event marked on 7th, May every year. The day was first commemorated in New York on 7th, May 2002 with an aim of raising awareness and advocating for the needs of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC)

In Kenya the day was first commemorated in 2006. This was out of a growing concern to the crisis of millions of children who have been orphaned or made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS among other factors.

The intentions behind the day is to appeal for global solutions to the plight of orphans and vulnerable children by focusing public and media attention on social and economic exclusion of the OVC; Lobbying governments, Development partners and other stakeholders to take urgent measures to re-integrate the orphans and vulnerable children into the society.

In Kenya, the situation OVC is an issue of National concern. Currently it estimated that there are over 2.4million orphans in the country.47% are orphaned as a result of HIV/AIDS and many more remain vulnerable due to several other factors.

Children affected by HIV/AIDS become vulnerable long before their parents die. Girls in particular, assume responsibilities for their ailing parents besides parenting for their siblings. With the weakening extended family systems in our society, most children find themselves without proper social support with incapacitation and death of their parents. This would deny the OVC a chance to access their basic needs such as proper health care, education, shelter and nutrition. Orphans suffer stigma, stress and trauma in addition to loss of the parental love, care and protection and more often they are disinherited.

HIV/AIDS scourge compounded with high poverty level and the recent post election violence have aggravated the situation of OVC in Kenya.

On this day therefore, we are called upon as communities, families and individuals to have a responsibility to provide appropriate care and protection to all orphans and vulnerable children.

St. Camillus Dala Kiye Children Welfare Home and Mercy Orphans Support Program, two organizations working with and for orphans in Karungu and Gwasssi divisions joined hands to commemorate this very important event at St. Camillus Dala Kiye Children Welfare Home grounds.

The occasion therefore provided an opportunity for various stakeholders to join hands together so as to alleviate the OVC from suffering and despair brought about by the loss of their loved ones.

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

- That there was need to strengthen the community to protect and care for OVC.
- That OVC should have access to essential services including but not limited to education, health care, birth registration, psychosocial support and legal protection.
- That OVC have a right to basic needs like clothing, food and shelter.

- That children should desist from activities that expose them to the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS.
- That the government should put in place policy and legislation geared at protecting the most vulnerable children.

Theme

This year's celebration brought the children together and provided a platform to deliberate on issues affecting the OVC, under the theme; ***A Family and Hope for Every Orphan***".

Objective

To mobilize and support community based responses towards the support of OVC.

Expected Results

- Sensitized community on OVC care and support.
- Reduced discrimination on OVC within Karungu and Gwasssi communities.
- Trained and sensitized personnel working with children within Karungu and Gwasssi Communities.
- Improved capacity of families in Karungu and Gwasssi communities to protect and care for OVC

ACTIVITIES AND ACTUAL RESULTS

1. Opening Ceremony

The opening ceremony started after a word of prayer from one of the religious leaders in attendance and was presided over by the master of ceremony, Mr. Tobias Ogaga of Mercy Orphans Support Program. A number of pupils, students, teachers, and other invited guests arrived in time ready to mark the occasion. In total the venue had around 2000 people.

2. Presentations by the Children

The day was of great significance to the OVC and so it was opportunity for children from the invited primary schools to communicate their ideas through song and dance. The children presented very entertaining items that took the form of songs, dances, skits and choral verses. The items presented basically called for:

- Demystifying the myths associated with OVC in the community.
- Equal treatment for all the children in the community.
- Provision of basic needs like food, shelter, clothing, education and health care to the OVC in the community.
- Educating the children on the dangers of engaging in premarital sex.
- Community involvement in the care and protection of OVC.



Fig 1: B.L Tezza Complex Primary School present a dance during World Orphans Day 2009.



Fig 2: Pupils from Kaduro primary school recite a choral verse during World Orphans Day 2009.

3. Sharing of experiences

Since the day was earmarked for the OVC, it was therefore in order to give opportunity for their representatives to share with the audience their experiences.

3.1 Winnie Adhiambo Komalla

Winnie Adhiambo Komalla is a total orphan and is enrolled in Dala Kiye Program under community foster family care and protection for OVC. She lost her parents while of a very tender age. She was enrolled into the program in the year 2005. Currently she is in form four at B.L Tezza Complex Secondary school and owing to her high level of self discipline and good academic record she is the school captain. Her speech on this very important day captured some of the challenges that the orphans undergo but was full of praise for the Dala Kiye Program and MOSUP for the work they are undertaking in restoring hope to the OVC.

3.2 Joseph Oluoch Malit

Joseph Oluoch Malit is a form four student at B.L Tezza Complex Secondary school. He also lost his parents while still in primary school. He was enrolled in Dala Kiye Program in the year 2005 under community based care model for OVC. He was full of praise for the

two organizations for championing the rights of OVC. He called upon his colleagues to work hard in school as this was the only gate pass to a brighter future.



Fig 3: Winnie Adhiambo Komalla of B.L Tezza C. Secondary



Fig 4: Joseph Oluoch Malit of B.L Tezza C. Secondary

4. Speeches

After almost one and a half hours of entertainment session, it was time to get speeches from invited guests. Those who gave speeches included the DCO Migori district, D.O Karungu division, Dala Kiye Program Director, MOSUP Program Coordinator, Dala Kiye Program Coordinator, Area chief, Area Education Officer and Volunteer Children's Officer.

4.1 MOSUP Program Coordinator

MOSUP Program Coordinator Mrs. Mary Jamwaka started by thanking all the participants for taking their time to attend this year's World Orphans Day. She thanked all the stakeholders working with the OVC in Karungu for their efforts in protecting and caring for the OVC. She urged all the children to reciprocate the good work that Dala Kiye and Mercy Orphans were doing by ensuring that they work hard at school and shun behaviors that are likely to jeopardize their lives. She observed that there has been a big change in the community noting that this was because of continued sensitization and mobilization being

undertaken by Mercy Orphans Program Staff. This she said can be observed in reduced death rate as a result of HIV/AIDS. Being a day earmarked for remembrance of orphans she called upon community members to take time and reflect on the critical challenges faced by the OVC in the community.



Fig 5: MOSUP Program Coordinator addressing the participants

4.2 Program Director, Dala Kiye Program

The Program Director Fr. Emilio Balliana started by thanking all those in attendance. He decried the poor global economic situation. The Director noted that the global economic crisis meant that donors were not at a position to fulfill all their promises. He cited a situation where Dala Kiye had to scale down her feeding program that was initially running in five primary schools. He was however optimistic that despite the little resources, Dala Kiye Program will strive to provide for other basic necessities to the orphans. The Director however noted that Karungu community was yet to embrace positive behavior change noting that the situation of HIV/AIDS is yet to improve for the better. He advised the children to take their lives seriously and embrace positive behavior change as the Program was doing everything possible to safeguard for them a bright future. He called upon the teachers to help the children so that they could become responsible citizens in future.



Fig 6: St. Camillus Dala Kiye Children Welfare Home Director addressing the crowd that attended World Orphans Day 2009.

4.3 Project Coordinator, St. Camillus Dala Kiye Children Welfare Home.

The Program Coordinator, Dala Kiye Program, Mr. Richard Ogutu, took the opportunity to welcome all the visitors and the children that had converged to mark World Orphans Day 2009. He then proceeded by briefly elaborating that St. Camillus Dala Kiye Children Welfare home was an initiative of the Camillians “servants of the sick” and that it was founded way back in the year 2002. He briefed the audience that currently the program reaches its clients through three models of care and support for OVC namely;

- Foster family care for OVC with special needs.
- Community based foster family care model
- Community based care for OVC.

He noted that currently the Program is reaching out to 2800 OVC in Karungu and Gwassi communities.

The coordinator also underscored the importance of marking this day and stated that this was a time when all the stakeholders were expected to express solidarity with the OVC all over the world.

4.4 District Officer – Karungu Division

The D.O noted that he was delighted by the large turn up and praised the hosting organizations for job well done. He informed the gathering that the government has put in place measures that will ensure that the OVC are cared for and protected. He stressed that OVC just like all other children have a right to equal participation on various issues ranging from education, role definition among a host of other things.



Fig 7: D.O Karungu Division addresses the gathering during World Orphans Day 2009.



Fig 8: Dala Kiye Program Coordinator giving his speech

4.5 Guest of Honor – DCO, Migori District.

The guest of honor for this year’s event in Migori District was the DCO. He started by commending the organizers of this year’s event for job well done. He also thanked those who took their time to come and celebrated with the orphans. He reminded those in attendance that the theme of this year’s event was, “a family and hope for every orphan.” He noted that it was not an easy task to mobilize people to converge together for a particular

event. More so he was impressed by the large number of people who had turned up for the celebrations adding that this was a sign of solidarity with the OVC who need our care and support. He called upon every individual to restore some hope to the Orphans.

The DCO called upon the children to make good use of the support they were getting from the two Programs. The DCO observed that in traditional African society, the extended family provided a safety net for the orphans but with changes in socio –cultural and economic changes have weakened the extended family structure to the detriment of orphans. He also noted that the numbers of orphans have continued to rise and that a third of the total orphan population is found in Nyanza Province and that many more children are rendered vulnerable because of the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS. He also noted that the enactment of children’s act 2002 was a government initiative to promote the welfare of OVC country wide. In addition, he talked about the OVC cash transfer that currently is operating in Migori district as an initiative that will help subsidize the needs of various households and this will go along way in helping to improve the well being of the OVC in Migori District.



Fig 9: D.C.O Migori District addresses the gathering

Other guests who gave speeches during this day were area Chief. Karungu Location, Area Education Officer (Karungu Division) and Volunteer Children’s Officer (Karungu Division)

The following issues were highlighted by a number of speakers:

- That the government was taking an active role in promoting OVC welfare through the cash transfer program.
- That more opportunities should be availed to the OVC.
- That the OVC should be treated just like all other children with parents.
- That community members should take a leading role in OVC care and support.
- That all children have the right to education
- That most children are deprived of their rights owing to the antiquated traditional practices that tend to disinherit the OVC immediately after the death of their parents.

5.0 Provision of Meals and Refreshments

This formed yet another very important event of this day. After the end of speeches, it was now time for the organizers to see into it that the participants are well fed. About 2000 participants received a 250ml packet of milk and a half a loaf. The cost of the meals and refreshments were shared equally between MOSUP and DK. At the end of it all, the participants were well fed.



Fig 10: *Children await to have their meals*



Fig 11: *Children have their meals*

6.0 Football Match

This formed the last event for the day. The match pitted B.L Tezza Complex Primary school versus Rabuor Karungu Primary School where after one and a half hours of nerve racking contest, B.L Tezza Complex Primary School emerged the winners by trouncing Rabuor Karungu Primary Schools by two goals to one.



Fig 12: *B.L Tezza Complex Primary School ready themselves for World Orphans Day 2009 football match.*



Fig 13: Section of the crowd that turned up to cheer up the two teams

Achievements

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

- Over 2000 (most of them being children) were able to converge at the venue on time to mark the occasion.
- All the invited guests turned up for the celebrations.
- Adequate information on OVC care and support was passed to all those present.
- Children took a leading role through out the celebrations.
- The children had the opportunity to showcase their talents
- Participants were well entertained and well fed.

Challenges

- Most schools could not present all their items due to overwhelming number of schools that turned up to mark World Orphans Day 2009.
- There was a general time lag in the program owing to the late arrival of guests.

Lessons learnt

- That OVC deserve community support.
- That OVC rights are also human rights.
- That there should be equal treatment for all children irrespective of race, status, age, sex and religion.
- That OVC should be provided with basic care and support.
- That society should shun practices that tend to violate the rights of OVC.

The Way Forward

- Extensive mobilization and sensitization still needs to be done to bring out the significance of World Orphans Day.
- The invited guests and all the participants must always be time conscious.
- There is need for extensive networking with all the stakeholders prior to marking such occasions.

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