



Annual Report 2017/2018

A Future for the Child

endingchildpoverty.org

 **ARIGATOU** | End
INTERNATIONAL | Child Poverty
All for Children

Produced and Published by:

End Child Poverty

Arigatou International — Nairobi

P.O. Box 43546 – 00100 Nairobi, Kenya

Tel: +254 20 257 39020/1

Mobile: + 254 733 945 971/ 705 320 970

🌐 endingchildpoverty@arigatouinternational.org

✉ endingchildpoverty.org

March 2017 – April 2018.

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FOREWORD BY THE DIRECTOR

Poverty remains one of the most severe challenges facing our society today. Children in particular, are the hardest hit by these multiple deprivations and the long-lasting consequences of poverty. Despite the significant progress made towards reducing extreme poverty globally, an estimated 1 billion children still live in poverty – that is 1 out of every 2 children in the whole world. Further, statistics show that nearly half of all people living in poverty are younger than 18 years old. Such truths indicate a dire state of affairs for our children.

Arigatou International responds to global poverty, by recognising that these are more than just numbers. Rather, each number represents a child – a child that deserves dignity. A girl or boy who needs to have their rights upheld and respected, and is longing to live to their full human potential. For this reason, we envision a **World Free of Child Poverty** and as much as possible, seek to leave an impact for all children by addressing the root drivers of child poverty in society and the human heart.

This annual report covers our results and impact between April 2017 and March 2018, being the 6th year since End Child Poverty was established. The report includes an overview of our interventions to address child poverty, the results we have collectively realised and the impact we are aiming to achieve.

Throughout the reporting year, our work has significantly paid attention to the commitments made during the GNRC 5th Forum in Panama, 2017. These commitments are well anchored on ending violence against children and child Poverty.

Remaining firm to these commitments has been a strategic avenue through which we have built synergies with members of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) and other Arigatou International initiatives, as well as other collaborating partners with similar objectives. Such synergies have seen consolidated efforts for the good of the children worldwide.

Throughout our work in the year, we strived to contribute to the bold global efforts towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In this regard, we pay particular attention to Goal 1, which aims to end poverty in all its forms, and we give emphasis to investing in children's well-being.

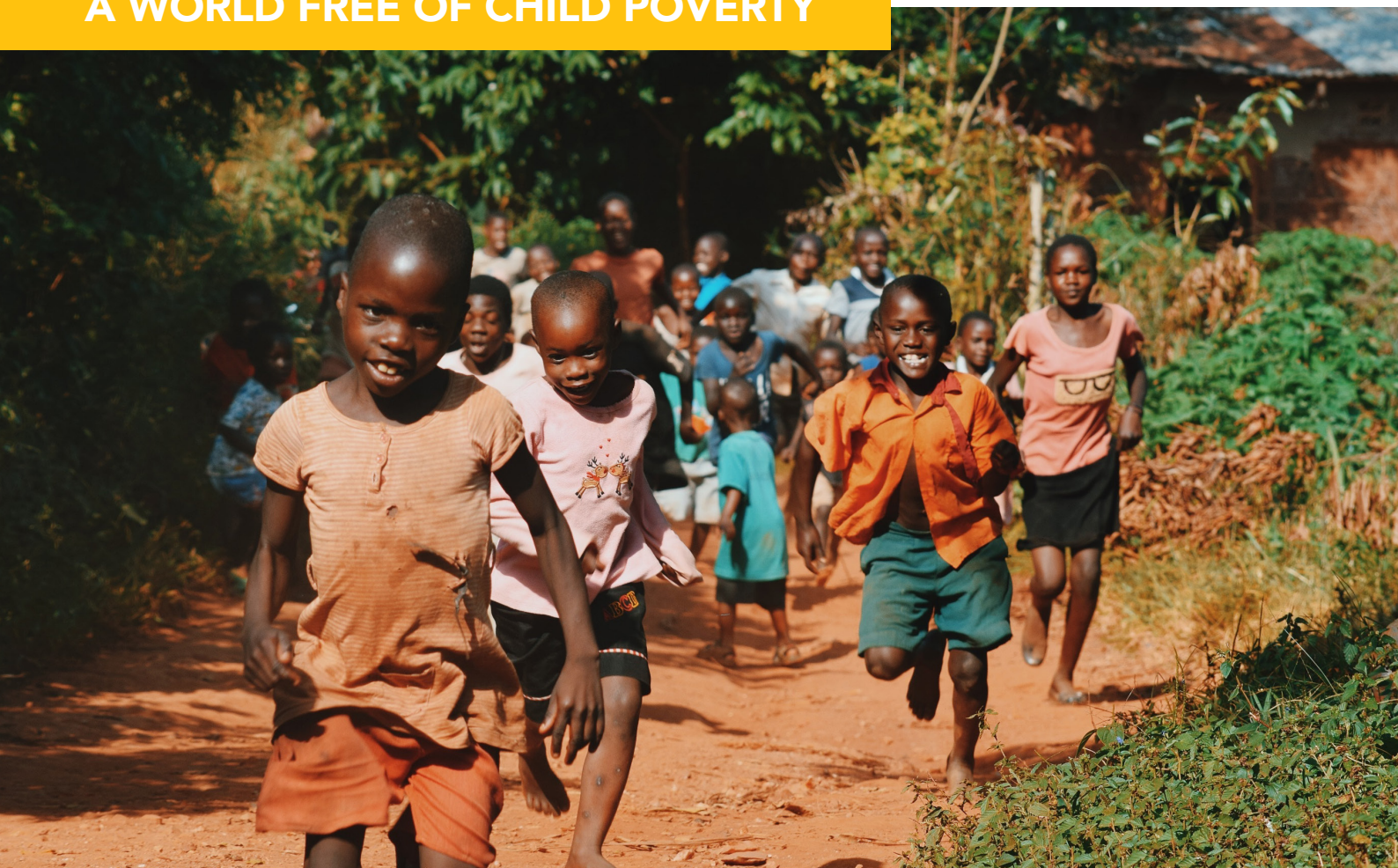
Our campaign, "Together We Can End Child Poverty Worldwide" has seen tremendous results, with heightened action witnessed during the 17th October International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (IDEP). As such, together with our partners, we mobilised grassroots actions towards ending child poverty and violence against children in over 25 countries, during the reporting year.

This report gives an account of our collective work towards ending child poverty, and recognises the contributions you have made in building a better world for all children. We invite you to read and share these stories with the hope that, together we can end child poverty worldwide.



Fred Nyabera
*Director, End Child Poverty,
Arigatou International*

A WORLD FREE OF CHILD POVERTY



The Interfaith Initiative to End Child Poverty (End Child Poverty) is the multi-faith global initiative of Arigatou International that mobilises faith-inspired resources to overcome poverty that affects children.

We believe in a world free of child poverty, and we aim to address the root causes of poverty in the human heart, as well as the structural causes of poverty in society. We are a child-centered initiative that integrates positive religious values in our work, promotes faith-inspired actions, and cooperates with like-minded stakeholders towards ending child poverty.

Together with the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC), Ethics

Education for Children, and Prayer and Action for Children, we comprise the 4 global initiatives of Arigatou International.

Arigatou International — End Child Poverty utilises several approaches to realise our vision of *A World Free of Child Poverty*. These include:

- Engaging in theological reflection and action, so as to mitigate the root causes of poverty in the human heart.
- Supporting and engaging in interfaith advocacy and lobbying against structural causes of poverty in society.
- Advancing flagship and grassroots initiatives, which aim to: promote children's access to quality education; transform violent conflicts; and, promote the

empowerment of children affected by poverty and their caregivers – primarily women caregivers.

In addition, we address knowledge advancements, through our End Child Poverty Knowledge Centre, our website, various social media platforms, and the growing Arigatou International Online Community.

We further seek to build partnerships with individuals, communities and organisations and more so, the GNRC members, in an

effort to mobilise communities towards ending child poverty.

We measure our impact, not only by the number of people reached or even the number of projects implemented. Rather, we also look at the depth and quality of positive change we are able to bring to each child we serve. We value each child, their families, caregivers and communities. In this regard, we are “All for Children.” In all our work, all that we do, we do for the benefit of all children.



SNAPSHOTS OF THE YEAR IN REVIEW

May 2017

The 5th Forum of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) is held in Panama City, Panama 9th – 11th May 2017. Over 500 people from 70 nations participate, including 64 children. The GNRC 5th Forum Panama Declaration on Ending Violence Against Children, is issued on 11th May 2017, promising 10 key commitments to end violence against children.

August 2017

The End Child Poverty Knowledge Centre, in collaboration with the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement, conducts a youth consultation on Online Safety for school students on 2nd August 2017, Colombo, Sri Lanka.

April 2017

The 6th year of our work begins with plans for the upcoming GNRC 5th Forum. We specifically prepare to host a special thematic session on the 'Nexus Between Child Poverty and Violence Against Children', during this forum.

July 2017

The Global Coalition to End Child Poverty and World Vision organise a side-event during The High Level Political Forum (HLPF) meeting under the auspices of ECOSOC, on 12th July 2017, at the UN Headquarters, New York. The side event is held under the theme, 'Ending Child Poverty and the SDGs: Interactions for the Best Interest of the Child'.

September 2017

We convene a noteworthy side event during the 72nd session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), themed, "The Moral Imperative High Level Forum On Protecting Children At Risk Within The Framework of The Sustainable Development Goals", 18th September 2017, New York.

April 2017

May 2017

June 2017

July 2017

August 2017

September 2017

May 2017

We launch Arigatou International's *Interfaith Guide to End Child Poverty: Inspire. Act. Change*, on 10th May 2017, during the GNRC 5th Forum. It is a resource that can be used by faith actors, researchers, practitioners and civil society, for reflection and action to address child poverty. Over 500 copies are issued during the launch.



June 2017

We organise the Action! Seminar, bringing together 26 young leaders representing the African Children and Youth Network for Human Rights (REJADH network). 19th – 22nd June 2017, Naivasha, Kenya. This is the 2nd Regional Advocacy Training for the members of the network, which covers 5 countries, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Somalia and South Sudan.



November 2017

We carry out solidarity visits with the ICAN Malaysia to support children and families living as refugees, 15th – 17th November 2017, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. They include Rohingya mothers and children, who fled the conflict in Myanmar.

October 2017

Together with our partners and the GNRC network, we kick-start the 2017 'Together We Can End Child Poverty Worldwide' Campaign, reaching partners in nearly 25 countries. The world marks International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (IDEP), 17th October 2017, and we launch the End Child Poverty IDEP Photo Contest.

November 2017

We organised the 2nd Regional Youth Leaders Forum on Peacebuilding, 'Youth In Action', 14th – 24th November 2017, Sagana, Kenya. This forum brings together 65 people from 5 countries, for transformative leadership training and capacity building in preventing and countering violent extremism.



January 2018

We plan for the year ahead, inviting the GNRC members and other partners to share their plans for grassroots work addressing child poverty and violence against children in the upcoming year April 2018 to March 2019.

March 2018

Initial findings of our research study, 'Understanding Youth and Violent Extremism in the Horn of Africa: The Role of Faith Communities', are issued and validated by practitioners and experts.

October 2017

October 2017

The Global Coalition to End Child Poverty organises the seminal research conference, 'Putting Children First: Identifying Solutions and Taking Action to Tackle Child Poverty and Inequality in Africa', 23rd – 25th October 2017, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

November 2017

November 2017

The Day of Prayer and Action/ Universal Children's Day is celebrated across the world on 20th November 2017. The End Child Poverty IDEP 2017 Photo Contest Winner is announced, with 20 finalists identified, and the winner emerging from Mexico, with the first-runner up from Kenya.

December 2017

December 2017

We support youth to carry out awareness and advocacy campaigns during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence (GBV), from 25th November – 10th December 2017.

January 2018

February 2018

Together with the First Children's Embassy in the World – MEGJASHI (FCEWM), and the GNRC, we organise the 3rd Balkans GNRC-End Child Poverty Regional meeting, 26th February – 1st March 2018, Skopje, Macedonia. 51 participants from 9 countries; Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Germany, Romania, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro and Serbia; are involved. The theme of the meeting is, 'Mobilising Faith Communities to End Child Poverty and Violence against Children'.



February 2018

March 2018

OUR APPROACH TOWARDS ENDING CHILD POVERTY

Arigatou International — End Child Poverty mobilises faith-inspired resources towards preventing, alleviating and eradicating child poverty.

Our approach entails working with faith actors at local grassroots, national, regional and global levels. Together, we facilitate theological reflection, address the structural drivers of poverty in society, and carry out advocacy and lobbying. We also generate and disseminate knowledge and build alliances with other organisations. This collective work forms the programmes and project activities of End Child Poverty, and our programme results for the year 2017 - 2018 have been captured in this report.



Reasons Why We Work with Faith Actors to Address Child Poverty

- Faith communities, faith leaders and other faith actors have a long-standing historic and widely spread **presence** in society.
- A number of positive religious **teachings** and **practices** have the potential to promote children's well-being, and spur service to benefit children affected by poverty.
- Faith actors often have **influence** among their communities, including the ability to mobilise action, legitimacy and moral authority.
- Faith actors have wide **social networks**, including dedicated volunteers and far-reaching linkages to other organs such as development actors, humanitarian actors and government organs.
- Collectively, faith actors command vast **service delivery infrastructure**, including amenities and facilities. These can be used for religious practice, provision of education and health care, emergency relief, and meeting other socio-economic development needs.

1. THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION TOWARDS ENDING CHILD POVERTY

“Every child comes with the message that God is not yet discouraged of man.”

–Rabindranath Tagore

We engage in theological reflection and action so as to mitigate the root causes of poverty in the human heart including ignorance, greed, hatred and fear.

Our primary approach is in mobilising faith actors, to draw upon their spiritual, religious, moral and social assets, as a foundation for addressing child poverty and its root causes. Faith actors include faith leaders, faith communities, religious congregations, institutions of worship, faith-based organisations and other faith-inspired institutions. Together, faith actors have unique comparative advantages, which can positively impact children’s well-being.

We therefore aim to work with various faith actors from different religions, traditions and beliefs, in order to utilise these faith-inspired assets for the well-being of all children, and to overcome child poverty. Towards realising this overarching objective, we produced and launched Arigatou International’s **“Interfaith Resource Guide to End Child Poverty: Inspire. Act. Change,”** as a resource for faith actors, researchers, policy makers, educators and other practitioners. The Interfaith Guide was launched on 10th May 2017, during the **Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) 5th Forum**, in Panama City, Panama.

Interfaith Guide At A Glance

- Nearly **1,500 people** have received the *Interfaith Resource Guide to End Child Poverty: Inspire. Act. Change*, since it was produced.
- Representatives from **13 countries** participated in piloting the Guide
- The Guide includes reflections on child poverty, from **Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim** and **Sikh** faith perspectives.
- Over **20 Impact Stories** of how faith communities are addressing child poverty are included in the Guide, which contains **10 Chapters**.

Arigatou International — End Child Poverty developed the Interfaith Guide over a period of 3 years, with pilot sessions organised during the **Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) — End Child Poverty Regional Meetings** in Bosnia (2015), Serbia (2016) and Sri Lanka (2017). These interactive sessions brought together GNRC Coordinators and partners from 8 countries in the Balkans region, including Bosnia, Croatia, Moldova, Montenegro, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Germany; as well as 5 countries from the South East Asia region, including India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The rich feedback and information gathered during these pilot sessions, informed the development process and ensuing launch of the Interfaith Guide.



The Interfaith Guide has been used for education, training and building the leadership capacity of individuals and organisations. In addition to spiritual reflections on children and poverty, the Interfaith Guide provides a general overview of the nature, scope and drivers of child poverty. It further highlights the positive roles that faith communities and their leaders can, and in reality do, to serve in advocating for the eradication of child poverty, promoting interfaith collaboration, and advancing children's dignity and well-being. The Interfaith Guide also offers relevant data on child poverty, as well as success and impact stories drawn from various faith communities. It also offers suggestions on building networks and conducting interfaith advocacy.

Following the launch in May 2017, we have made concerted effort to popularise the Interfaith Guide and its use, through our website, our **End Child Poverty Knowledge Centre**, and by sharing it widely with our Arigatou International partners and members of the GNRC. In addition to distributing

numerous copies of the Interfaith Guide during relevant meetings in the course of the year, we also presented the Interfaith Guide as a library resource on the Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities (JLI)¹, a global knowledge-sharing platform.

In the coming year, opportunity shall be sought to prepare an interactive online version of the Interfaith Guide, for easier and wider access. It is envisaged that the Interfaith Guide to End Child Poverty will continue to be useful to our constituents and other actors, particularly in building the capacities of local communities and faith actors. Through this resource and other actions prompting theological reflection, we also aim to build momentum towards the realisation of the commitments arising from the **GNRC 5th Forum**, to end violence against children and child poverty.

¹ The Interfaith Guide on the JLI platform: <https://jliflc.com/resources/interfaith-guide-ending-child-poverty/>

2. INTERFAITH ADVOCACY AND LOBBYING

**“When spider webs unite,
they can entangle a lion.”**

–African Proverb

Arigatou International — End Child Poverty addresses the structural root causes of child poverty in society, through interfaith advocacy and lobbying for social and policy change. These societal drivers of poverty include inequalities, violence, war, corruption and poor governance.

How We Approach Interfaith Advocacy and Lobbying

- Engaging in collaborative platforms at global and regional levels to leverage advocacy opportunities
- Commemorating relevant International Days or observances established by the United Nations (UN) and other relevant bodies.
- Supporting relevant advocacy campaigns initiated by Arigatou International — End Child Poverty and grassroots actors, including the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) members, and our partners.

We believe that real, positive and sustainable change can only be experienced if all levels of community are empowered and included in building a world free of child poverty. For this reason, our advocacy and lobbying approach is grounded upon community organisation,

community mobilisation, and leveraging the efforts of collaborative networks. In turn, members of these empowered communities can take action to end child poverty.

We also work towards building increased understanding and awareness on issues concerning child poverty, with an emphasis on measuring impact and utilising evidence to support our actions. Furthermore, our advocacy and lobbying approach entails entering into spaces of decision-making and policy discourse, intervening to bring children’s needs to the forefront, and expanding these spaces to make them more inclusive and responsive. This is in a bid to ensure that ending child poverty and children’s well-being is integrated and mainstreamed in all facets of society, and that faith perspectives are taken into consideration.

Our lobbying and advocacy work has, thus far, focused on peace and conflict transformation, advancing sustainable development, and ending violence against children — all of which carry great import on ending child poverty.

2.1 COLLABORATING TO ACHIEVE THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

This year, Arigatou International — End Child Poverty engaged in the work of 2 global platforms: **The Global Coalition to End Child Poverty** and **The Faith-Based Action Framework to End Extreme Poverty and Realize the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, also known as the **Moral Imperative**

Framework. Through these platforms, we are collectively pushing for an end to child poverty, and for children's rights, dignity and well-being to remain a paramount priority in the global development agenda.

In addition, we supported 2 regional advocacy platforms: The African Interfaith Initiative on the Post 2015 Development Agenda/SDGs and The African Children and Youth Network for Human Rights, also known as *Réseau des Enfants et Jeunes Africains pour les Droits Humains (REJADH)*.

These platforms provided opportunity to amplify the voices of African youth and faith leaders, concerning sustainable development and more so Goal 1, Goal 5 and Goal 16; which aim for ending poverty, promoting gender quality, and building peace, respectively. Further, we mobilised action around key international days, primarily the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (IDEP). These advocacy actions have been described in the following section.

2.1.1 The Global Coalition to End Child Poverty

Child poverty is both a global and local concern. The drivers and root causes of child poverty across various countries are interconnected, as are actions to alleviate poverty. Moreover, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) promote an end to all forms of poverty, as well as collaboration to end poverty, as captured in Goal 1 and Goal 17 respectively. Together, these reasons form the impetus for Arigatou International to be a member of The Global Coalition to End Child Poverty, represented by its Interfaith Initiative to End Child Poverty.

The Global Coalition to End Child Poverty At A Glance

- The Coalition focuses on **Goal 1** of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- The Coalition emerged as a response to a **research, advocacy and policy** gap in addressing child poverty.
- More than **20 organisations** are part of the Coalition.
- The Coalition members have produced numerous publications on child poverty, available on the Coalition's website.
- Our biggest success has been, collectively, firmly placing child poverty in the 2030 development agenda.
- Find out more on the Coalition website: endchildhoodpoverty.org



The Global Coalition to End Child Poverty is a global initiative to **raise awareness** about children in poverty across the world, and support global and national **action to alleviate child poverty**. It comprises over 20 organisations which aim to work together, as well as individually, to achieve a world where all children grow up free from poverty, deprivation and exclusion. Through the Coalition, Arigatou International can contribute towards knowledge advancements, advocacy and mutual cooperation aimed at overcoming child poverty.

Within the year in review, we participated in the Coalition's international conference, 'Putting Children First: Identifying Solutions and Taking Action to Tackle Child Poverty and Inequality in Africa', 23rd – 25th October 2017, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Our aim was to contribute to the repertoire of knowledge on ending child poverty in Africa, as well as inject faith perspectives in the discussions. For this reason, we deliberately incorporated representation from the African Interfaith Initiative on the Post 2015 Development Agenda, in the conference.

During the conference, the Coalition developed and disseminated the "Putting Children First" Conference Communiqué, which outlines **6 priority measures to combat child poverty**. As a result, we have now a shared compass by which to align and gauge our collective efforts in ending child poverty.



Also as the Coalition, members produced seminal briefing papers and other publications², including **"A World Free from Child Poverty: A Guide to the Tasks to Achieve the Vision"**. This Guide provides 5 milestones to support national processes to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 on Ending Poverty. Other notable publications produced were the briefing paper on **Child Sensitive Social Protection** and another on **Child Poverty and Adolescent Transitions**, which are intended to serve as resource tools for governments and their partners. Going forward, Coalition members will seek to continue generating relevant information in similar fashion, so as to inform policies and actions geared towards ending child poverty.

The Coalition, led by World Vision, organised a side-event during The High Level Political Forum (HLPF) meeting under the auspices of ECOSOC, on 12th July 2017, at the UN Headquarters, New York. The side event was held under the theme, 'Ending Child Poverty and the SDGs: Interactions for the Best Interest of the Child'. The event aimed to provide Member States with a more in depth analysis on how poverty disproportionately affects children, as well as offer a platform to

Putting Children First: 6 Priority Measures to Combat Child Poverty

1. Recognise child poverty as an explicit priority area in national strategies, policies and programmes.
2. Develop programmes specifically targeted to address child poverty
3. Measure child poverty in its various dimensions.
4. Strengthen existing national information systems
5. Strengthen research and analysis on the many dimensions and causes of child poverty.
6. Establish an African Child Poverty Centre.

² Publications from the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty: <http://www.endchildhoodpoverty.org/publications>



listen to children as they share their views and perspectives on issues affecting their lives, and solutions to improve it.

Lastly, the Coalition developed and launched an online child poverty discussion forum, for researchers, policy makers and practitioners from across the world. The online forum is hosted by the Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP), a member of the Coalition. The online forum is open to the public and will cover a wide-range of discussions moderated by various members of the Coalition, in line with Goal 1 of the SDGs on ending poverty. This forum welcomes contributions including policy briefs, articles, newsletters, commentaries and other publications, as well as questions relating to policy research on child monetary poverty and child multidimensional deprivation. It is geared towards generating constructive debate and offering a wide range of perspectives and solutions curated from different fields.

As part of our work within the Coalition, Arigatou International — End Child Poverty committed to listen to young people – children and youth – and engage them in addressing stereotypes surrounding child poverty. We also committed to work together with young people in addressing violence against children, as a driver of child poverty, in line with our GNRC 5th Forum Panama Commitments.

Moreover, we offered to mobilise faith leaders in Africa to address child poverty, through our existing initiatives and GNRC partnerships.

Indeed, the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty offers a rich and unique platform, through which faith communities and their leaders can work together with other civil society actors to combat child poverty.



Milestones to End Child Poverty

1. Build a national pathway to end child poverty, by **prioritising** child poverty and producing national child poverty measures.
2. **Measure** child poverty routinely, at national level.
3. Put child poverty on the map through broad child poverty **advocacy** and **communication**.
4. Reduce child poverty through **policy** and **programme** change – ranging from cash transfer programmes to improving access and quality of education for the poorest children.
5. Achieve the **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs) by ending extreme child poverty and halving child poverty by national definitions.

2.1.2 The Moral Imperative Framework

Arigatou International joined the Faith-Based Action Framework to End Extreme Poverty and Realize the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in April 2015, after endorsing the “Ending Extreme Poverty: A Moral and Spiritual Imperative” statement³. Also known as the Moral Imperative Framework, this global platform was initiated as a faith communities’ response towards realising the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Faith leaders and the World Bank Group, among other actors, convene the platform.



generating evidence; engaging in advocacy; and fostering more effective collaboration between religious and other development actors, including governments, the World Bank Group, the United Nations and the private sector.

The Moral Imperative Framework formed 3 working groups within the platform: **Collaboration, Evidence and Advocacy** working groups. In 2017, the Arigatou International — End Child Poverty Director was elected as the Chair of the Advocacy Working Group. The Advocacy Working Group has since developed The Moral Imperative Advocacy Strategy focused on **Early Childhood Development**.

Furthermore, Arigatou International — End Child Poverty served a key role in organising a noteworthy side event during the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). This event dubbed, **The Moral Imperative High Level Forum on Protecting Children at Risk** within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals, took place

The Moral Imperative Framework At A Glance

- The Moral Imperative Framework comprises over **60 organisations**.
- The platform was formed in 2015, to realise the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.
- We focus on faith-driven **evidence, advocacy** and **collaboration**.
- We have organised **3 major advocacy side-events** alongside the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), New York, in 2015, 2016 and 2017.
- Advocacy to secure **Early Childhood Development** and **Land Rights**, were identified as priorities in 2017.

The Moral Imperative Framework provides faith-driven strategies to eliminate extreme poverty and advance sustainable development. The Moral Imperative Framework is able to accomplish this through

3 Ending Extreme Poverty: A Moral and Spiritual Imperative: <https://bit.ly/2SCEggU>

at the Church Center for the United Nations, 18th September 2017, New York. The Directors of the Arigatou International initiatives, being Prayer and Action for Children, the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) and End Child Poverty, participated in the event. As such, Arigatou International's engagement strengthened faith communities' commitment to ending child poverty and violence against children. Furthermore, the 2018 Moral Imperative Framework advocacy agenda and evidence-gathering strategy was developed during this forum.

These opportunities created through our engagement in the Moral Imperative Framework, provide a global space where we can communicate and push for the agenda on ending child poverty, even as we cooperate with others in meeting its overall objectives. The platform also fosters greater interaction and collaboration between faith actors, government organs and civil society, which is a core proponent of accomplishing our work. In addition, through the Moral Imperative Framework, we are able to cascade efforts to end child poverty and violence against children, both downwards to the grassroots level, and upwards to the highest echelons of decision-making.

In the year to come, we seek to bring the needs of children, particularly those affected by poverty, closer to the forefront of global policy development and enactment. We will also continue to explore and lead relevant advocacy concerns, which tackle child poverty and violence against children. The Moral Imperative Framework stands as bridge to these prospects.

2.1.3 The African Children and Youth Network for Human Rights

The African Children and Youth Network for Human Rights/*Réseau des Enfants et Jeunes Africains pour les Droits Humains* (REJADH), was initiated by Arigatou International — End Child Poverty and our partners, the Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) and Changemaker-Oslo, in October 2016. Since its formation, the REJADH network continues to advocate against gender-based violence and its negative impacts on children and women. The REJADH network comprises of young persons – children and youth – from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, South Sudan and Somalia.

REJADH Advocacy Against Gender Based Violence in 2017 at a Glance

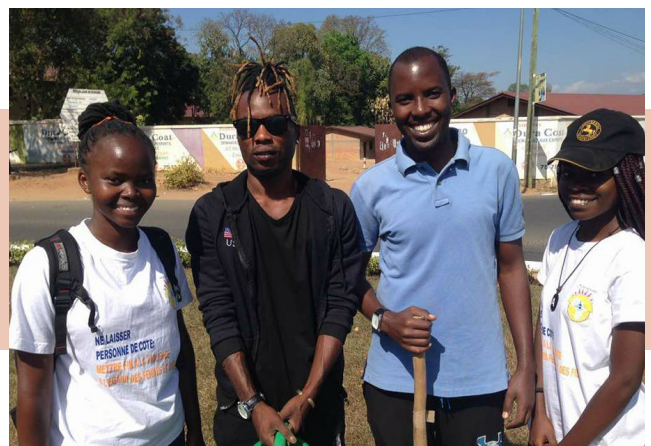
- REJADH is a children and youth **advocacy network** formed by Arigatou International — Nairobi and our partners.
- It brings together young people from **5 countries** in Africa.
- **116 young leaders** were trained in advocacy through the REJADH network in 2017.
- Over **14 organisations** partnered with us and in supporting the REJADH network members advocacy actions.
- Our advocacy against gender-based violence is based on **Goal 5**, on Gender Equality, and **Goal 16**, on Peace and Justice, of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



These 5 countries particularly suffer the effects of gender-based violence, including violence against children, due to protracted conflicts and instability. These conflicts have also exacerbated child poverty and its effects, in each of the countries. In view of this, we sought to empower young people as agents for positive change in their local communities, using targeted advocacy as our primary vehicle. By so doing, we serve a role in addressing violence as a structural cause of child poverty.

Currently, we are supporting the REJADH network to run the **Myth of Maputo Campaign**. This campaign advocates for the ratification and universal implementation of **The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa** (otherwise known as the **Maputo Protocol**), as well as other relevant laws and policies. The Maputo Protocol is a human rights instrument formed under the African Union, focusing on the rights and dignity of girls and women. Consequently, members of the REJADH network use this instrument as the backbone to mount their advocacy campaign, community mobilisation and social activism.

In 2017, we organised and convened the 2nd Regional Youth Seminar for the core REJADH network leaders from the 5 countries. This dialogue and training seminar, dubbed, **Action! Seminar**, took place in Naivasha, Kenya, from 19th to 22nd June 2017. In addition, we supported the REJADH network to carry out youth-led trainings and community in their respective countries. We also facilitated the REJADH network advocacy trainings in Mogadishu, Somalia and Juba, South Sudan, together with staff from Arigatou International — End Child Poverty and the Norwegian Church Aid (NCA). Similarly, we supported the REJADH network leaders to participate in crucial regional meetings, including the African Union (AU) pre-summit meeting, “Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investments in Youth: Empowering Young People, Especially Young Women, For Leadership and Civic Participation”, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 22nd – 27th January 2017.



On a related note, together with our partners, we continued to support the REJADH network members to carry out community sensitisation and awareness events throughout the year, with heightened action during the **16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence**, from 25th November – 10th December 2017. Some of these actions

included advocacy seminars based on the Maputo Protocol, a human rights summit for boys and girls, and media outreach events.

These various capacity building processes have resulted in the growth of leadership and advocacy skills among the young people, as well as building their self-esteem and confidence. Through participation in the REJADH network activities, we have also witnessed the young people developing valuable networks with media, senior religious leaders and government officials, schools and other community stakeholders. Most importantly, together with the REJADH network members, we have steadily pushed forward policy and social advocacy in their respective locales. Going forward, we aim to support scale-up of the REJADH network advocacy work, strengthen the sustainability of the REJADH network, and foster closer linkage among the REJADH network and the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) members.



2.2 ADVOCACY THROUGH COMMEMORATING INTERNATIONAL DAYS

Arigatou International — End Child Poverty marks key international days and supports members of the GNRC and our partners to take action to alleviate child poverty in their communities, during those occasions.

Why We Commemorate International Days

1. To increase understanding of the **drivers of child poverty** and what can be done to prevent and **alleviate child poverty**.
2. International Days are opportunities to **urge governments** to take the lead in developing and implementing relevant policies addressing child poverty.
3. It enables us to **engage more stakeholders** towards promoting children's rights and ending child poverty.
4. We are able to **build commitment** for effective policies and practices and their implementation to end child poverty.
5. International Days provide unique opportunities to **listen to children** and amplify their voices regarding ending child poverty.

During the year, we mobilised the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) members and other partners through campaigns to observe the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict (19th June 2017), the International Peace Day (21st September 2017), the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (17th October 2017), and the World

Day of Prayer and Action for Children/
Universal Children's Day (20th November
2017). Each of these opportunities zeroed

in on the nexus between child poverty and
violence against children, and the role of faith
communities in ending both.

2017 International Days At A Glance

As build up to the **Day of the African Child**, End Child Poverty partnered with the Sri Lankan High Commission in Kenya and the Riara University, to celebrate the day under the theme, "Accelerating Safe Spaces for Children in Kenya; Opportunities and Challenges". Held at the Riara University, Nairobi, Kenya, on 10th June 2017, the event served to popularise the commitments made at the GNRC 5th Forum, on ending violence against children.

In Naivasha, Kenya, we observed the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict on 19th June 2017, together with the REJADH network youth leaders. The youth were drawn from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, South Sudan and Somalia. The observance was guided by the theme, 'End Rape in War: Preventing Sexual Violence Crimes through Justice and Deterrence.' The event was part of our larger campaign to end gender-based violence.

In the month of October, we mobilised action related to marking the **International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (IDEP)**, 17th October 2017. The universal 2017 IDEP theme was "Answering the Call of October 17 to End Poverty: A path toward peaceful and inclusive societies." Over 30 organisations from 25 countries organised awareness, community mobilisation and advocacy action during this period. We also organised the first global End Child Poverty IDEP photography contest, "Defining a World Free of Child Poverty through Photography." The contest ran for 1 month, from IDEP, 17th October 2017, to the Day of Prayer and Action for Children (DPAC), 20th November 2017. The contest aimed at increasing awareness on child poverty and highlighting positive contributions by community members, towards tackling child poverty.

On 20th November 2017, we mobilised youth leaders from Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Somalia and Tanzania, in observing the **Day of Prayer and Action for Children**. The event was held in Sagana, Kenya, during the Regional Youth Forum on Peacebuilding. In this observance, the youth renewed commitment to promote peace, end child poverty and end violence against children.



2.3 SPECIAL FOCUS: TOGETHER WE CAN END CHILD POVERTY WORLDWIDE – IDEP 2017 CAMPAIGN

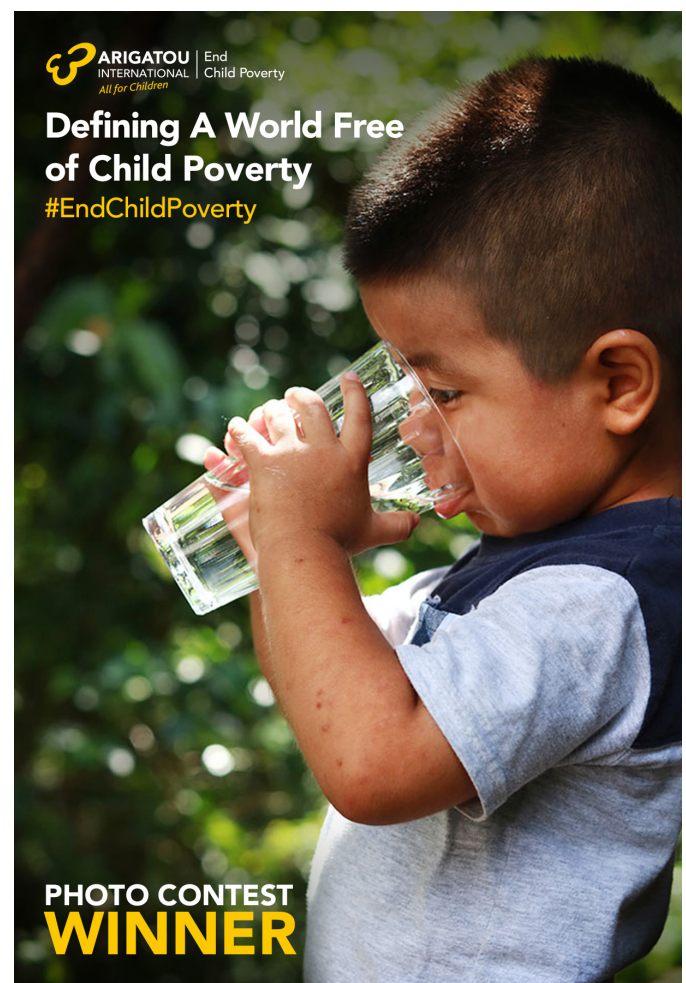
The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (IDEP) is a global awareness event celebrated every year on 17 October. It is an opportunity for reflection, advocacy and action to end child poverty and all other forms of poverty.

End Child Poverty IDEP 2017 Campaign At A Glance

- The Campaign took part in the entire month of October, with greater emphasis on the **International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (IDEP), 17th October 2017**.
- Our theme was **'Together We Can End Child Poverty Worldwide'**.
- We mobilised nearly **30 organisations** in over **20 countries** to take part in the IDEP Campaign.
- An estimated **38,810 children** participated in our IDEP Campaign actions.
- An average of **1,000 people per day** were reached through our online IDEP Campaign messages.
- **20 photographs** were shortlisted as finalists in our 1st End Child Poverty IDEP photo contest.
- The photo contest winner was from **Mexico** and the 1st Runner's Up was from **Kenya**.
- We provided an End Child Poverty IDEP **Campaign Toolkit** and **Media Kit**.
- More information on IDEP can be found on our website: <https://endingchildpoverty.org/en/idep>

Arigatou International — End Child Poverty mobilises communities towards marking the IDEP 17th October, because we believe that together, our voices, our giving and our actions can draw attention to this problem and help solve it. Our IDEP Campaign entails engaging with governments, non-governmental organizations, civil society and individuals, in a shared effort to put children's well-being at the heart of poverty eradication policies.

In commemorating IDEP, we organised our first **IDEP photography contest**, with the theme: *Defining a World Free of Child Poverty through Photography*. The contest ran for 1 month, from IDEP, 17th October 2017, to the Day of Prayer and Action for Children (DPAC), 20th November 2017.



20 photographs were shortlisted for the [final draw](#), representing contestants from Kenya, Ghana, India, Mexico and Lebanon, among other countries. A photographer from Mexico and Kenya emerged as the [winner and 1st Runner's Up](#) respectively. The contest aimed at increasing awareness on child poverty and highlighting positive contributions by community members, towards tackling child poverty. Further, the photographs curated formed part of Arigatou International's communication resources.

Apart from the photo contest, we mobilised grassroots action in more than 25 countries, in commemoration of IDEP 2017. A brief sample of these actions is summarised in the ensuing section.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: MOZAIK, a member of the GNRC Bosnia, organised a roundtable for religious leaders, teachers, parents and students, in Visoko. Resting on the IDEP theme, the roundtable promoted positive inclusivity in the community, towards alleviating child poverty. MOZAIK also organised an event in 6 primary schools, bringing together more than 100 children and youth, aged 12-15, to express themselves through art and photography.



Burundi: Youth from the REJADH network from Burundi held a series of intercultural children's events, including folk dances, to sensitise the community on children's rights and child protection. These events brought together parents and decision makers, urging them to apply policies suitable to meeting the needs of children.



Comoros: Conseil De La Paix (CAP), a member of the GNRC, celebrated IDEP by organising debates for school students to raise awareness about child poverty. Conseil De La Paix also organised an exhibition and sales of homemade products by women and youth, at Moroni Foyer Des Femmes. This was an initiative towards resource mobilisation for families living in poverty.

India: Together with 30 members of the GNRC India, Shanti Ashram organised various activities including a food-donation drive benefitting 150 families, holding interfaith prayers for children, teaching about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and participating in the End Child Poverty IDEP photo contest. These activities were coupled with a vibrant social media campaign, throughout the month of October.

Kenya: The Cry of A Young One (TCOAYO), a member of the GNRC Kenya organised a children's edutainment activity in Mathare,

an informal settlement in Nairobi. The event aimed to create a safe space for the 40 participating children. It diffused the tense pre and post-election environment that was marred by inter-ethnic conflicts and violence. They used this event to address conflict in tandem with child poverty.



Malaysia: I CAN Malaysia, a member of the GNRC conducted Art and Craft classes for children living as refugees in Kuala Lumpur, many of whom were from Rohingya families that had fled the conflict in Myanmar. The classes provided a safe space for interaction, reflection, skills development and boosting the self esteem of the children.

Moldova: The Association of Professional Women from Moldova (BPW – Moldova) organised a national drawing contest for 350 children between 7-16 years. Through this, children expressed the situation of poverty in the family and various communities across the country.

Nepal: The Shanti Sewa Ashram (Peace Service Center) organised an awareness event in Kathmandu, highlighting the need for upholding children's dignity and working in solidarity towards ending child poverty. Children were joined by other participants, in this event.

Romania: Between October and December 2017, Sol Mentis, a member of the GNRC Romania, organised an outreach program to build understanding and empower children, so that they can address child poverty. Through this program, over 800 children and youth donated foodstuff and clothing to benefit persons affected by poverty.

Rwanda: The Umbrella for the Vulnerable, a member of the GNRC, organised a children and youth educational event to teach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Students from various schools participated in this action, which focused on tackling Goal 1 on ending poverty.

Serbia: The Somborski Edukativni Centar/ Sombor Education Centre (SEC), a member of the GNRC, organised a workshop for young people, on the prevention of violence against children. The workshop aimed at raising awareness on the importance of activism for child protection. SEC further collected donations of school supplies to benefit children from vulnerable families.



Sri Lanka: The Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement (Sarvodaya) in collaboration with the End Child Poverty Knowledge Centre, organised a Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) awareness activity. The activity that took place at the Gouvravilla Sinhala

School in Colombo, urged children to view themselves as change agents and to build a positive future.

South Sudan: Hands of Grace, a Christian ministry in South Sudan that supports vulnerable children, celebrated IDEP by conducting an awareness activity for children and the youth. This included sensitising the young people on matters related to ending poverty, through storytelling, songs, drama and speeches from different stakeholders in the society.

Tanzania: The GNRC Tanzania conducted focused group discussions with children, teachers, religious leaders and education officers in Mwanza and Dodoma regions. The goal was to raise awareness about IDEP and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The activity brought together 112

people including children and teachers from 7 schools within the region. Children were empowered to speak about different challenges affecting their welfare as a result of child poverty.

Uganda: Youth Leaders for Restoration and Development (YOLRED) celebrated IDEP by organising debate, poem and drama sessions, for students from several secondary and primary schools. The aim of the action was to emphasise the urgent need to eradicate child poverty. More than 100, including 94 children and representatives from faith communities, participated.

Collectively, these actions around the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (IDEP) give a powerful forward push, in advocacy towards ending child poverty.



3. FLAGSHIP AND GRASSROOTS INITIATIVES

“The shortest path to eradicating poverty in the long term is by starting with today’s children — building structures and empowering families to ensure that they escape the vicious cycle of intergenerational poverty.”

—Rev. Keishi Miyamoto

Arigatou International — End Child Poverty initiates and supports flagship and grassroots projects that promote sustainable peace, children’s right to education and empowering care-givers of children affected by poverty. Through these initiatives, we aim to provide practical solutions to the drivers of child poverty.

In particular, we have put in place, the **Right to Education** and the **Right to Peace** programmes, as well as established the **Empowering Women and Youth** programme. We also support **special high-impact projects** by accompanying members of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) and other grassroots partners.



3.1 RIGHT TO EDUCATION

Education is a powerful tool to catapult children out of poverty and improve their well-being. Indeed, quality education has been cited as **Goal 4** of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We believe that universal access to quality education is a basic right that should be made available to all children. We also believe that all children should be able to carry out their studies and complete basic primary and secondary education, coupled up with the opportunity to pursue tertiary education. For these reasons, Arigatou International — End Child Poverty established the **End Child Poverty Right to Education Programme**, which provides scholarships to children affected by poverty, among other interventions.

The End Child Poverty Right to Education Programme At A Glance

- Nearly **150 students** received scholarships under this programme in 2017.
- The programme has been implemented in **6 countries**, including **Kenya, Lebanon, Malaysia, Pakistan, South Africa** and South **Sudan**.
- We have provided scholarships for **5 consecutive years**, since 2013.
- **Goal 4** of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aims to ensure quality education and lifelong learning for all.

The scholarships provide payment of tuition or school fees, in addition, to purchasing school uniform, books, stationery and school supplies, according to the student's needs. The children and youth benefitting from the scholarship program are affected by poverty and other compound vulnerabilities such as conflict, violence, forced displacement and the loss of their parents' or caregivers' income.



It is our approach to support a student throughout her or his duration of study, and as such, many of the students receiving scholarships (in Kenya and South Sudan in particular) have been part of the process for several years. We believe that this sustained long-term support will create an environment conducive for growth and success. The good news is that several of the students participating in this programme have gone ahead to successfully complete their primary school and their secondary school studies.

In 2017, nearly 150 students benefited from these scholarships, through partnerships with organisations in **Kenya, South Sudan, Lebanon and Malaysia.**

Supporting the **GNRC Kenya**, we provided 4 students with scholarships to learn in various secondary schools in the Rift Valley and Northern Kenya regions. Similarly, we collaborated with the **Amani Village of Hope**

(AVH), based in Western Kenya, to offer primary and secondary school scholarships to 33 orphaned and vulnerable children. Also in Western Kenya, we supported the **Ebusiratsi Special School**, which serves students with Autism spectrum disorder and other cognitive challenges, to upgrade their sanitation facilities and make these more accessible.

In Juba, South Sudan, we provided scholarships to 21 students through the **Hands of Grace**. Similarly in Lebanon, we partnered with **Annas Linnas** to provide learning materials and other donations to nearly 30 Syrian children living as refugees. In Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, we collaborated with **ICAN Malaysia** to offer educational classes to over 90 children living as refugees from Myanmar, Yemen and Syria.

As part of our efforts to grow the Right to Education programme, we also carried out **solidarity visits** with the ICAN Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 15th – 17th November 2017. We organised a similar visit with the Amani Village of Hope (AVH) in Siaya, Kenya, on 14th – 15th December 2017. These visits strengthened the partnership bonds and gave us ample opportunity to listen to children, receiving their perceptions regarding the importance of education and the impact of our scholarships.



Furthermore, through the Right to Education programme, we have formed **partnerships** with organisations such as The Family Bank Foundation and the Meriada Book Club, both in Kenya. These organisations came alongside Arigatou International — End Child Poverty to pool resources that would form part of the scholarship fund. As such, we were able to sponsor more students to complete their primary and secondary school education.

In 2018, we shall continue to provide these scholarships and mentorship to the recipient students. We will also explore ways to increase the Right to Education scholarship fund and strengthen the programme's sustainability.

3.2 RIGHT TO PEACE

Arigatou International — End Child Poverty recognises that, when there is peace, we are able to accelerate efforts to end child poverty and violence against children. Conversely, violence and conflict are deterrents to attaining a world free of child poverty, and indeed, act as structural drivers of child poverty. We believe that all children have a right to peace and a life free of poverty, as expressed in **Goal 16** of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our GNRC 5th Forum Commitments further call us to protect children from violent extremism,

Our Right to Peace Programme At a Glance



An estimated **1,293** people, including youth and children, participated in our 2017 peace activities.



350 respondents in Kenya, contributed to our Regional Peace Programme (RPP) research study on understanding youth and violent extremism.



We partnered with **30 organisations** to implement our peace activities in 2017.



2 Regional Peace Programme (RPP) forums have been organised, in 2016 and 2017, bringing youth leaders from **Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania and Uganda**.



Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aims to advance peace, justice and sustainable institutions.



The **GNRC 5th Forum** emphasised "Protecting Children from Violent Extremism, Gang Violence and Organised Crime," as one of its core sub-themes.



Nearly **56,509** people were reached with peace messaging through our targeted online social media campaign.

gang violence and organised crime, focusing specifically on the role of faith communities in addressing these challenges.

In light of this, we endeavour to establish and expand initiatives that promote peace building, conflict transformation and addressing the root causes of poverty, such as corruption, poor governance and violence. We boost this work at grassroots, national and regional levels. Our primary tool has been fostering interfaith dialogue, interfaith cooperation and facilitating peace education. We also enhance the leadership capacity of faith actors – primarily youth – through training and mentorship. Likewise we have used research to gather and generate information useful to advancing sustainable peace. All these comprise our **Right to Peace Programme**, which currently holds the **Great Lakes, East and Horn of Africa Regional Peace Programme (RPP)** as well as other processes.



For the year in reporting, we continued to implement projects under the **Regional Peace Programme (RPP)**. Since 2016, we have been part of a nested partnership bringing together **6 organisations** to implement a 5-year Regional Peace Programme (RPP) in the **Great Lakes, East and Horn of Africa region**. This nested partnership includes the



All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), African Council of Religious Leaders (ACRL), Fellowship of Christian Churches and Councils in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa (FECCLAHA), the Hekima Institute of Peace Studies and International Relations (HIPSIR), and the Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) – which is the convener of the partnership. The RPP covers **12 countries** being Burundi, Djibouti, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. Through the RPP, we are working to prevent, counter and transform violent extremism and its impacts on young people. As a result, we formed a community of peace practitioners comprising of young leaders from Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda and Tanzania.

In 2017, under the Regional Peace Programme (RPP), we held the **2nd Regional Youth Leaders Forum on Peacebuilding**, together with the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC), the Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) and the Africa Centre for Transformative and Inclusive Leadership (ACTIL). Coupled with training on Transformative Leadership, this forum succeeded in promoting interfaith dialogue and skills training on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/C/VE). Arigatou International's **Community Resilience Against Violence Extremism (CRAVE)** manual,

developed by the GNRC, was also piloted during the forum. The forum took place from 14th – 24th November 2017, in Sagana, Kenya. It brought together 65 people, including 41 youth leaders and influencers from Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda and Tanzania. The regional youth leader's forum is an important step in cementing collaboration among the network, enhancing their capacity



to lead peace initiatives and also grow the GNRC. The coming year will offer us an opportunity to organise and host the 3rd RPP forum, with the theme, “Youth In Action: Media and Preventing Violent Extremism”.

Arising from the youth leaders forum, we were able to support follow-up **youth-led peace actions** across various communities in Kampala, **Uganda**; Mombasa and Nairobi counties in **Kenya**; Dar es Salaam, **Tanzania**; and Addis Ababa, **Ethiopia**. Youth organised various outreach, advocacy and awareness events including, university student's forums, inter-faith visits to various places of worship, inter-cultural sports tournaments and youth entrepreneurship awards. An estimated 878 youth, children, faith leaders, government officials and other members of the community

participated in these actions. The youth-led actions ensured that the young leaders imparted their knowledge and made a positive impact in their community. We are working towards empowering the youth leaders to learn, lead and live the change that will produce lasting peace in the region.

Further to our actions to empower the youth, we also conducted **Research** on the topic, “*Understanding Youth and Violent Extremism in the Horn of Africa: The Role of Faith Communities.*” The research survey took place in the Kenyan counties of Mombasa, Nairobi and Garissa, involving a total of 350 participants from 15th September to 31st October 2017. The research sought to provide in-situ (context-specific) knowledge in order to enhance understanding of faith community resourcefulness and response to combating violent extremism, with a particular emphasis on the youth response. A validation of the research results was conducted through a workshop organised on 20th March 2018, Nairobi, Kenya. 21 practitioners and experts in the field, including faith actors participated in the validation. The results of the study will be launched in 2018, with the aim to provide relevant and timely knowledge to peace practitioners, policy makers and academicians.

Also under our Right to Peace programme, we facilitated a **Peace and Conflict Analysis** on the political and governance in Kenya, resulting in the production of the report, “An Agenda for Peace in Kenya: Reclaiming the Narrative in 2017.” The study re-examined the impact of the 2017 politics, the tumultuous elections and the implications to the future of the country. It further analysed the dominant narratives, factoring in the role of faith leaders, and generated scenarios and recommendations

for actions at all levels of society. Through this process, we aimed to serve as a peace resource to faith leaders in the country.

Collectively, these initiatives under our Right to Peace Programme help us to address violent conflicts and violent extremism, as societal root causes of violence against children and child poverty.

3.3 EMPOWERING WOMEN AND YOUTH THROUGH SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

Through the Empowering Women and Empowering Youth programmes, Arigatou International — End Child Poverty aims to foster sustainable livelihoods for women caregivers (of children) and youth affected by poverty. Participants benefiting from this programme receive and contribute to various services including, entrepreneurial and employability training, provision of small-scale business capital, voluntary savings and loans schemes, mentorship and facilitating the formation of networking groups. The women and youth partnering in these programmes are often the head of low-income households, and they face multiple socio-economic barriers such as lack of education, gender-based violence, crime, internal displacement and forced migration.



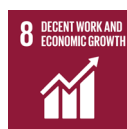
Empowering Women and Youth Programmes At A Glance



Sustainable Livelihoods initiatives have been implemented in **9 countries** including **Argentina, Colombia, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Kenya, Malaysia, Tanzania and Uganda.**



Over **400 youth** and **20 women** have benefitted from this initiative in 2017.



Goal 8 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aims to promote economic growth and decent work for all.



Goal 10 of the SDGs aims to ensure that inequalities are reduced, by promoting socio-economic inclusion, among other targets.

In 2017, we began the process of initiating the Women Caregivers Empowerment Programme in Kuala Lumpur, **Malaysia**, together with ICAN Malaysia, a member of the GNRC. Consequently, Arigatou International — End Child Poverty, in collaboration with ICAN Malaysia, organised a 3-day scoping visit from 15th to 17th November 2017. It consisted of strategic planning and review sessions, and field visits to the International Islamic University in Malaysia and ICAN Malaysia's children's education project. As a result, we commenced the development of a 5-year action plan that proposed several interventions including, round table meetings on ending child poverty, collaboration with the University for community-based research and empowerment of women care givers through the WORTH model. The WORTH

model promotes women's self-led financial literacy, voluntary savings and lending, positive parenting and micro-enterprise activities. The first WORTH training is planned to take place in April 2018, contextualised to meet the needs of Rohingya women (particularly mothers) living as refugees in Malaysia.



Through our Youth Empowerment Programme, we partnered with the Fellowship of Christina Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa (FECCLAHA), to support the sustainable livelihood activities of several Youth Peace Clubs in Nairobi, Kenya, as well as North Kivu Province, in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. These Youth Peace Clubs encourage entrepreneurship and peace education in the informal settlements where the youth live. Over 300 youth from Bukavu and Goma (North Kivu Province), in addition to nearly 100 youth from Nairobi, were trained on peace building, conflict prevention and advocacy, within the year. A number of these youth have proceeded to set up small-scale businesses in their neighbourhoods, providing supplemental income and building their sense of socio-economic independence.

In Uganda, we partnered with the Action for Fundamental Change and Development (AFFCAD), a youth-led organisation in Kampala, to provide entrepreneurship awards and small-scale business grants to 15 young

women living in poverty. These youth come from Bwaise slum (in the capital Kampala), and are champions of change and fighting poverty in their neighbourhood.

These on-going processes add to similar work that we have supported in Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Kenya and Tanzania, in collaboration with our Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) members and other partners in their respective local communities. Going forward, we seek to expand the reach of these empowerment programmes and also aim to generate deeper impact for evidence-based advocacy.

3.4 SPECIAL HIGH-IMPACT INITIATIVES

Arigatou International — End Child Poverty supports special high-impact initiatives that broadly address the root causes and drivers of child poverty. These interventions have the potential to be successfully modelled, widely replicated, and scaled-up across various contexts. They also represent low-cost investments in comparison to their resultant high-value outcomes.

In 2017, we accompanied and supported such actions by Global Network of Religions for



Children (GNRC) members and grassroots partners from **over 20 countries**. This included partners in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burundi, Croatia, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Lebanon, Pakistan, Mali, Malaysia, Macedonia, Moldova, Nepal, Philippines, Rwanda, Serbia, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. Some of these notable high-impact initiatives have been highlighted in the following section.

3.4.1 International Practicum on Innovative Solutions for Child Poverty, Coimbatore, India

Shanti Ashram, supported by Arigatou International — End Child Poverty, organised and hosted the **International Practicum on Innovative Solutions for Child Poverty** from 1st – 6th November 2017, in Coimbatore, India. **13 participants** representing **10 institutions** from **5 countries** – India, Kenya, Malaysia, Nepal and Sri Lanka – participated in this learning opportunity. The training provided hands-on experience for modelling and replicating country-specific initiatives, based on the innovative **India Poverty Solutions** Programme. Participants also gained a heightened awareness of the multi-dimensional impact of poverty in children's lives. India Poverty Solutions is an innovative children and youth led initiative of Shanti Ashram, which addresses child poverty using local resources to provide food, education, health, development and community participation. We partner with Shanti Ashram to establish and grow this initiative, together with the GNRC. As a result of the international practicum, the GNRC members will be encouraged and supported to establish similar initiatives in their home countries.



3.4.2 Mobilising Faith Communities to End Child Poverty and Violence Against Children, Skopje, Macedonia

In collaboration with the **First Children's Embassy in the World - MEGJASHI (FCEWM)**, Arigatou International — End Child Poverty and the GNRC organised the 3rd Balkans Regional meeting. This meeting was held in Skopje, **Macedonia**, from 26th February 2018 to 1st March 2018, bringing together 51 members of the GNRC and partners from **9 countries**: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Germany, Romania, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro and Serbia. Convened under the theme: **"Mobilising Faith Communities to End Child Poverty and Violence against Children,"** the regional meeting produced rich discussions, with the expectation of developing a community mobilisation and advocacy strategy. In addition, this discussion gained noticeable media coverage in Skopje, together with the engagement of decision makers and duty bearers from various spheres. This meeting is part of a continuous regional process of advocacy, capacity building and strengthening the GNRC members in the region, to work on ending child poverty and violence against children.

3.4.3 Families Benefit from Medical Insurance Scheme and Livelihoods Project, Rwanda

The Umbrella for the Vulnerable Project, through our support and that of the GNRC, implemented 'The Goats Project' in Rwamagana and Rubavu districts in Rwanda. 25 most vulnerable families were identified and each was given 2 goats for subsistence farming, aimed at enhancing the standard of living for the low-income families in these



remote rural areas. The Umbrella for the Vulnerable also implemented the "Medical Insurance Scheme" project commonly known as "*Mutuelle de santé*." As a result, 500 most vulnerable people in Rubavu district were identified and provided with a one-year (2017-2018) basic medical cover scheme. The project aimed at improving healthcare for persons affected by poverty, and their children. Additionally, the Umbrella for the Vulnerable organised a fruit-tree planting activity in 50 households in Rwamagana district. The tree-planting exercise brought together 100 children, plus nutritionists, community leaders and government officials, to address nutrition in light of ending child poverty. Together, these activities all form a social safety net for families and their children in these communities.

3.4.4 Building Interfaith Cooperation through an Interfaith Study Tour, Oman and Tanzania

The Director, Arigatou International — End Child Poverty, was part of the delegation that took part in a study tour in Muscat, Oman and Zanzibar, Tanzania between 11th and 17th March 2018. Through the study tour, the delegation aimed to deepen their understanding on issues of religious tolerance, peaceful coexistence and development of Islamic Institutions in the two regions (Oman and Zanzibar). The study tour sought to facilitate open dialogue on applying the experiences of Christian-Muslim relations in Oman and Zanzibar, into areas of conflict between Christians and Muslims in other places in Africa and the Middle East. The study also sought to provide relevant and accurate information on the culture, laws, and attitudes towards the practice of Islam with regard to peaceful social coexistence in Oman and Zanzibar. As a result of this process, we have the opportunity to explore collaboration with Al Amana (Oman) and ZANZIC (Zanzibar), including joint outreach to Yemeni refugees in the Middle East and end child poverty projects in Zanzibar.



4. ADVANCING KNOWLEDGE TO END CHILD POVERTY

“Knowledge is Power.”

–Francis Bacon

4.1 END CHILD POVERTY KNOWLEDGE CENTRE

The End Child Poverty Knowledge Centre is a global faith-inspired hub for research, resource gathering, networking, experience sharing and knowledge dissemination towards ending child poverty. The Knowledge Centre also serves to build the capacities of individuals and organisations working to reduce child poverty. It draws upon indigenous and progressive tools of development, as well as faith-inspired resources and infrastructure. Arigatou International together with the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement, launched the End Child Poverty Knowledge Centre during the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, 17th October 2014. The Physical Hub of the Knowledge Centre is based in Colombo, Sri Lanka at the Sarvodaya Headquarters. The Online Hub of the Knowledge Centre is mounted on the End Child Poverty [website](#) and Arigatou International’s Online Community.

The Knowledge Centre began the process of developing “An Interfaith Guide for Child Well-being in Sri Lanka,” which looks at holistic child well-being, including overcoming poverty and violence against children. Several preparatory consultations were held in 2017, including a roundtable on “Mindfulness

as a Preventative tool for Violence against Children.” The roundtable brought together representatives from local and international Non-Governmental Organisations, civil society and faith leaders, in Colombo, in October 2017. This preparation helped to build a better understanding of how faith-based, community oriented, approaches can be implemented and developed to ensure the safety and well-being of children. Development of this guide will continue in 2018.

Also in the year, the Knowledge Centre conducted an online safety awareness programme for children (15-18 years), in several schools across Colombo. This programme enabled us to better understand the knowledge gaps, so as to further develop and conduct relevant online safety education programmes for children. We also taught the children the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in relation to addressing child poverty.

4.2 PUBLICATIONS ADDRESSING CHILD POVERTY

We produced noteworthy publications in the year, in addition to our online communication through the End Child Poverty website and social media platforms. These served a 3 fold purpose: To account for our work by sharing the progress and impact made; secondly, to continue building awareness on the pressing challenge of child poverty; and, to showcase the work of faith-inspired communities towards ending child poverty.

More than that, the Knowledge Centre section on our website continued to serve as a repository for relevant resources including reports, briefing papers, newsletters, toolkits and manuals. These are curated from organisations such as the Global Coalition

to End Child Poverty, United Nations, World Health Organisation, UNICEF, African Union, Center for Women’s Global Leadership and ECPAT. These resources are freely available tools for use by practitioners, researchers and policy makers.

Child Poverty Publications



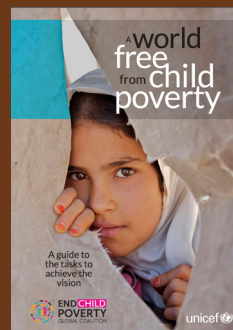
Making Waves: This impact report of End Child Poverty’s work since its inception to 2017 was produced disseminated in the course of the year.



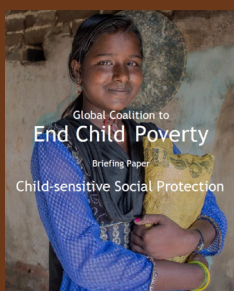
Interfaith Resource Guide to End Child Poverty: Inspire. Act. Change. This Guide promotes faith-inspired resources to reduce poverty at grassroots and global level.



Jeunesse Connect Issue 2 (Youth Connect Issue 2), the ACTION! Seminar newsletter on advocacy against Gender Based Violence (GBV)



A World Free From Child Poverty: A Guide to the Tasks to Achieve the Vision (publication by UNICEF and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty)



Global Coalition to End Child Poverty briefing paper on: Child-sensitive Social Protection



Global Coalition to End Child Poverty briefing paper on: Child Poverty and Adolescent Transitions

ARIGATOU INTERNATIONAL: BUILDING A BETTER WORLD FOR ALL CHILDREN

“All for Children.”

—Arigatou International

Arigatou International is a non-profit organisation that brings together people from all walks of life to **build a better world for children.**

Arigatou International is “All for Children” and draws on universal principles of common good to offer compelling new ways for people of diverse religious and cultural backgrounds to come together to address children’s issues.

Arigatou International develops and sustains unique **multi-stakeholder initiatives** designed to ensure that all children are treated with dignity, all children’s rights are respected, and all children have the opportunity to freely pursue their full human potential. Involving diverse partners, these initiatives emphasise both grassroots action and international advocacy.

Our initiatives are the [Global Network of Religions for Children \(GNRC\)](#), [Ethics Education](#), [Prayer and Action](#) and [End Child Poverty](#). We have headquarters in Tokyo, Japan, and offices in Geneva, New York and Nairobi that support our global initiatives.

We have great faith in children, who actively help shape our work. Young people are deeply respected, active partners in every Arigatou International initiative. We also believe that all people share in a universal calling to care for children, so all of the tools

and approaches we offer are designed to bring people together — in all their wondrous diversity — to build a better world for children. If we care for children today, they will change the world tomorrow.

The Arigatou International At A Glance

Arigatou International has **4 initiatives**. Find us online: arigatouinternational.org

The **Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC)** is a global-scale interfaith network of organizations and individuals specifically dedicated to securing the rights and well-being of children everywhere. Find us online: gnrc.net

Ethics Education for Children promotes values and ethics for children and young people within the framework of the child’s right to education as stated in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Find us online: ethicseducationforchildren.org

Prayer and Action for Children is a movement connecting people of religion and goodwill who are committed to work together toward a world fit for children where all children are free from violence. Find us online: prayerandactionforchildren.org

End Child Poverty is a multi-faith, child centered, global initiative that mobilizes faith-inspired resources to eradicate poverty affecting children. Find us online: endingchildpoverty.org

THE 5TH FORUM: ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN – FAITH COMMUNITIES IN ACTION



“We commit to listen to children with empathy and respect, welcome their wisdom and gifts, and continue to work side-by-side to address violence against them.”

–The GNRC 5th Forum Panama Declaration on Ending Violence Against Children

Arigatou International launched the Interfaith Initiative to End Child Poverty (End Child Poverty) during its Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) 4th Forum, held on 16th – 18th June 2012, in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. End Child Poverty was launched in fulfilment of our commitment to address poverty that affects children, made by the President of Arigatou International, the late Rev. Takeyasu

Miyamoto, during the 2002 United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Special Session on Children.

Under the GNRC 4th Forum theme, “Ending Poverty, Enriching Children: Inspire. Act. Change,” participants addressed the three most distressing challenges that have become major causes of poverty — corruption and poor governance; war and violence; and unequal distribution of resources. The resultant GNRC 4th Forum commitments and recommendations thereafter formed the foundation of the Arigatou International — End Child Poverty strategy, approach, programmes and project activities, to date.

The GNRC 5th Forum, held on 9th – 11th May 2017, in Panama City, Panama, gave opportunity to address violence against children, under the theme, “Ending Violence Against Children: Faith Communities in

Action.” The arising shared commitments made by participants in the GNRC 5th Forum **Panama Declaration**⁴ provided a prism through which End Child Poverty could address violence against children and the nexus between child poverty and this global epidemic.

As a result, we will aim to mobilise faith communities towards theological reflection, advocacy and leading high-impact grassroots and flagship initiatives, so as to address violence against children – a key driver of child poverty. Most importantly, we shall seek to create and expand opportunities for children and youth to contribute towards ending child poverty and addressing violence towards children. We will also continue to mobilise action by faith communities towards realising the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, particularly **Goal 1**, “End poverty in all its forms everywhere” and **Goal 16**, “Promote peaceful, just and inclusive societies.”

Together with members of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) and her sister initiatives; Ethics Education for Children and Prayer and Action for Children; End Child Poverty took part in organising the successful GNRC 5th Forum, as well as the **Children’s Pre-Meeting**, 6th– 8th May, in the same city. During the GNRC 5th Forum, we launched of the “Interfaith Resource Guide to End Child Poverty: Inspire. Act. Change,” on 10th May 2017. Arigatou International — End Child Poverty also organised and conducted the GNRC 5th Forum **Thematic Special Session**, “The Nexus between Child Poverty and Violence against Children,” for nearly 80

participants, on 11th May 2017. The session provided space for dialogue and reflection related to addressing child poverty and violence against children.

Going forward, we will support members of the GNRC and partners, as well as collaborate with the initiatives of Arigatou International, towards ending child poverty and violence against children.



4 The Panama Declaration on Ending Violence against Children: <https://gnrc.net/en/knowledge-center/documents/document/1173-gnrc-fifth-forum>



THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) AND ENDING CHILD POVERTY

“End poverty in all its forms, everywhere.”

–Goal 1

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a shared blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, prosperity, peace and justice.⁵ These 17 SDGs are part of The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, (shortened as ‘Agenda 2030’), which is a broad plan of action for all people, the planet and shared prosperity, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015.

The SDGs give us – governments, faith communities, businesses, schools, civil society and all citizenry – a way to work together towards building a better future for all. Goal 1 of the SDGs particularly calls us to **end poverty** in all its forms, including eradicating extreme poverty and halving the proportion of children living in poverty, in all nations. Arigatou International embraces the SDGs as a mechanism to address child poverty and violence against children. In this regard, we will work towards increasing awareness about the SDGs and generating greater social and political will for their attainment.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



⁵ The Sustainable Development Goals: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals>

LOOKING AHEAD: BUILDING MOMENTUM TO END CHILD POVERTY AGAINST CHILDREN

“If we empower children today, they will change the world tomorrow. In fact, they already are.”

–Arigatou International

In the year to come, we shall seek to create and expand opportunities for children and youth to contribute towards ending child poverty and addressing violence against children – a key driver of child poverty.

Arigatou International — End Child Poverty also prioritises working closely with all initiatives of Arigatou International, in order to fulfil the 10 commitments made during the GNRC 5th Forum, in [The Panama Declaration on Ending Violence against Children](#).

We will continue to mobilise action by faith communities towards realising the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); particularly Goal 1: “End poverty in all its forms everywhere” and Goal 16, “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies.” This will be through supporting the relevant GNRC and other partners’ initiatives, including the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty, the Moral Imperative and the African Interfaith Initiative on the Post 2015 Development Agenda.

Our community mobilisation and advocacy campaign, ‘Together We Can End Child Poverty Worldwide,’ will take place, leading up to the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (IDEP, 17th October 2018). The

campaign will broadly cover the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); ending violence against children; and highlighting the plight of Children-at-risk and Children-in-Crisis due to conflict, violence, hunger and poverty. This IDEP campaign shall encompass targeted online communication, the 2nd End Child Poverty IDEP Photography Contest, as well as grassroots actions by the GNRC members and partners.

The Interfaith Resource Guide to End Child Poverty and the Knowledge Centre will be useful in our 2018 campaign and actions. We further aim to grow the online platform of the Knowledge Centre and make resource contributions towards the physical hub.

Our partnership with grassroots organisations, faith leaders and within regional and global platforms, will also be strengthened. This will be through regular dissemination and exchange of ideas and information, participation in key meetings, joint planning and common project implementation, where feasible.

We are enthusiastic that these steps will, in due time, move us closer towards attaining a world free of child poverty.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“In our work, all that we do, we do for the benefit of children.”

—*Arigatou International*

We would like to thank all our partners, including the members of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) and faith communities all across the globe, for making this work possible. We welcome and cultivate partnerships, for we know that we cannot do this alone. We invite every person, community and organisation to take action. Without you, the burden would indeed be heavy to carry.

We also thank our sister initiatives — the GNRC, Prayer and Action for Children, and Ethics Education for Children — and the entire Arigatou International family for their relentless support in achieving positive results and progress.

Most of all, we thank every child for whom this work is purposed. Our promise to you is that we shall keep serving, in the spirit of attaining a world free of child poverty and a better world for all children.

Together We Can End Child Poverty Worldwide!





ARIGATOU | End
INTERNATIONAL | Child Poverty
All for Children





FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT US

End Child Poverty

Arigatou International — Nairobi

P.O.Box 43546 – 00100 Nairobi, Kenya

Tel: +254 20 257 39020/1

Mobile: + 254 733 945 971/ 705 320 970

🌐 endingchildpoverty.org

✉ endchildpoverty@arigatouinternational.org

f End Child Poverty

🐦 @IIECP

📷 EndChildPoverty_Arigatou

“Together We Can End Child Poverty Worldwide”

—End Child Poverty

End Child Poverty

Arigatou International — Nairobi

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Contact Us

End Child Poverty — Arigatou International
Crawford Business Park, State House Road, Nairobi

P.O. Box 43546 – 00100 Nairobi, Kenya

Tel: +254 20 2573920/1 | +254 705 320 970 | +254 733 945 971

 endingchildpoverty.org  endchildpoverty@arigatouinternational.org

 End Child Poverty  @IIECP  EndChildPoverty_Arigatou