

An End Child Poverty Update, 16th January 2017

JEUNESSE

Connect



Advocacy Towards Policy Change on Ending Gender Based Violence and Child Poverty

Gender-Based Violence is a global pandemic. The question we must ask ourselves, is not 'if' or even 'why', but rather, 'how' do we best work collectively, young and older persons in Africa and across the world, to end this vice. This is the challenge we carry with us as we 'attack' GBV, as a driver of child poverty and its effects on children and youth.

As Arigatou International, we have learnt that by engaging youth and children as co-partners in our work — that is by working, not only for, but with young members of our communities — we are strategically positioning ourselves to achieve social, political and economic transformation; faster, more effectively and with resounding effectiveness and lasting impact.

Rev. Fred Nyabera, Director,
End Child Poverty

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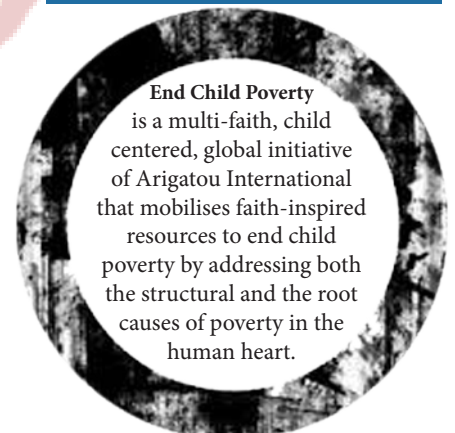
-  GBV Orientation Workshop
-  The Day of the African Child
-  The Network and Youth Advocacy Training
-  Youth Network Activities
-  16 Days of Activism Against GBV

REDUCING GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

In the past decades, several African countries, including Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Somalia, Mali and South Sudan, have experienced extensive periods of conflict and extreme violence. These conflicts have involved massive human rights violations and horrendous atrocities. These have included high levels of violence, looting and killings of civilians. The wide spread use of sexual violence and torture as a near risk free and effective intimidation and control tool has also become well known.

Driving the violence epidemic of Gender Based Violence (GBV) against women and men are a number of factors. Underlying factors are traditional and deeply-held beliefs and value systems in regards to the devaluation of women and girls leading to highly unequal gender. In addition are factors such as a culture of impunity, the nature of the conflict itself with an extremely difficult geographical and logistical context.

This has prevented the respective governments, international and national actors from providing security and protection for civilians, particularly for the thousands upon thousands of women and girls who have been raped and have experienced other forms of sexual torture throughout war. Some reports have estimated that almost 50% of GBV survivors in the DRC are girls under the age of 18. Although women represent the overwhelming number of affected by GBV, men and boys are also deeply affected.



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Arigatou International has partnered with Norwegian Church Aid as a key Faith Based Organisation to implement the Regional Advocacy Strategy which brings other Faith actors such as Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa (FECCLAHA), African Council of Religious Leaders (ACRL) and All African Conference of Churches ACRL (AACC) brings Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) and partners together to advocate on the United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR). It covers the period 2015 – 2017 focusing on DRC, Mali, South Sudan and Somalia, and since April 2016 Burundi.



**GENDER
BASED
VIOLENCE &
CHILD POVERTY**

An analysis of the global persistence and escalation of Gender Based Violence against children and youth in all areas of life, including homes, communities, institutions, and armed conflicts, reveals that the vast majority of people damaged by the decisions made and the actions carried out by those in power (largely men) are children (and women). Most alarmingly, however, is that young people in conflict areas are more vulnerable.

GBV at the family level and violence against girls and boys within the society, is closely linked to child poverty. This violence perpetuates and exacerbates child poverty and factors which lead to child poverty, on one hand. On the other hand, there is a high prevalence of GBV and violence against boys and girls, in families affected by poverty and in low income communities.

Celebrating the Day of the African Child



On June 16th every year, governments, NGOs, International Organisations and other stakeholders gather to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing the full realization of the rights of children in Africa. This is in commemoration of the 1976 massacre of SOWETO children in the then apartheid South Africa. An analysis of the global persistence and even escalation of violence in all areas of life, including homes, communities, institutions, and armed conflicts, reveals that the vast majority of people damaged by the decisions made and the actions

carried out by those in power (largely men) are children (and women).

The day thus presented a unique opportunity for Arigatou international to amplify her advocacy role in reducing GBV and its negative impacts on children. The theme of the 2016 Day of the African Child was, “Conflict and Crisis in Africa: Protecting all Children’s Rights”. The African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child dedicated the commemoration of the Day of the African Child 2016, to the millions of Children affected by the conflicts and the crises in the continent and beyond.

The day created an opportunity for Arigatou International, End Child Poverty to discuss the impact and confluence between conflict, GBV and child poverty and how it can be addressed and to highlight the role of religious communities.



Word from the GBV Desk



Welcome to our first external edition of Jeunesse Connect, a quarterly newsletter where we will share on Arigatou International's – End Child Poverty Gender Based Violence program. This issue mainly features the activities of the African Youth and Children Network for Human Rights (YCNR) (Réseau des Enfants et Jeunes Africains pour les Droits Humains (REJADH), a Young people's network that Arigatou International has brought together with the help of Norwegian Church Aid to address issues of Gender Based Violence in Conflict and Post conflict countries and how they negatively impact on Children (Countries of focus - Burundi, Mali, Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia and South Sudan).

The program strives to increase the participation of Children in Policy and social change as well as to increase the collaboration of faith actors towards ending violence against children in the target countries.

The network has undertaken various activities and marked important days as is highlighted in the publication and will be undertaking their chosen campaign- "The Myth of Maputo". Enjoy your reading!

Catherine Wangui Njuguna,
Consultant on Gender Based Violence,
Arigatou International- End Child Poverty



The Launch of The Network and Youth Advocacy Training



A youth advocacy training was held in Addis Ababa from 3rd to 7th October, 2016. The training gathered fifty-three youths from Burundi, DRC, Ethiopia, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan. The Objectives of the training were to; Equip participants to advocate for their rights and the rights of African youth in general, Develop a regional advocacy campaign, adapted to each specific context and Establish a youth advocacy network. As a result of the training youth participating from the different countries formed a network by the name REJADH/YCNR.

This is a regional network of Children and youth above the age of 15 years and coming from Mali, Somalia, DRC, Burundi and South Sudan. The network was created after the Addis Ababa Youth Advocacy Training in October 2016. It is the network that will develop and implement a campaign "The Myth of Maputo" as part of the Regional Advocacy Strategy supported by Arigatou International, in partnership with the Norwegian Church Aid. Arigatou International aims to end GBV and its negative impacts on young people and children in conflict and post conflict countries.

Food for Thought

Which values can you draw from your faith tradition to prevent gender-based violence in your community?





Solène Brabant,
Regional GBV Advocacy Officer,
Norwegian Church Aid

GBV remains a major issue all around the world exacerbated in conflict and post-conflict settings where sexual violence is used as a war weapon and where banalised violence encourages the perpetration of GBV within all components of the society, including homes, schools, workplace, etc.

The Regional Advocacy Strategy (RAS) aims at bringing faith-based actors and other secular actors together to join efforts in advocating towards the implementation of UNSCR 1325. However, rather than addressing UNSCR 1325 directly, the RAS adopts a contextual and innovative approach. The strategy identifies African systems, institutions and policies related to UNSCR 1325 principles and addresses them to create an African solution to prevent and protect children and youth from sexual violence and GBV and to guarantee effective women's and girl's participation.

It is of utmost importance to bring faith-based actors with positive voices together to advocate specifically for the agenda of Women, Peace and Security and in general for the achievement of women's rights in order to counterweight an important international faith-based lobby slowing down any progress on women's rights. Faith-based actors are essential stakeholders to overcome GBV because of their strategic position in societies so their capacities need to be built to speak out and ask for sustainable change in societal, economic and political systems.

The Myth of Maputo

What is the Maputo Protocol?

The Maputo Protocol was originally adopted by the "Assembly of the African Union" in Maputo, Mozambique on July 11, 2003. The official document is titled "Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa." The Maputo Protocol is a treaty instrument that is binding on all countries that ratify it. It went into effect in November 2005, after the minimum 15 of the 53 African Union member countries ratified it. The Protocol covers a broad range of women's rights, including the elimination of discrimination against women, the right to dignity, the right to life, the integrity and security of the person, the protection of women in armed conflicts, the right to education and training, economic and social welfare rights and health and reproductive rights.



Did you know?

In countries where armed conflict is rife, there have been reports of rape being used as a 'tool of war'.

REJADH and Maputo Protocol

Despite its progressive nature towards the realization of women rights in Conflict and Post conflict situations, in the continent more the Maputo Protocol remains a myth, it is not well known. Many countries have not ratified and for those that have, there is little accountability and implementation. The Social and Political will is lacking.

It is for this reason that when the African Youth and Children Network for Human Rights (YCNR) /REJADH chose "RAPE IS NOT A WEAPON" as a theme and the Maputo protocol was the instrument that would guide all the elements of their campaign.

Trainings, Mentorship and Youth Network Activities

Reflections and Action!



Ms. Nyambura Gichuki,
Programs Officer, End Child Poverty

“I have seen, first-hand, the problems that GBV has brought upon children in my community. Children live in constant fear, their education is disrupted, they become withdrawn and unhappy, and sometimes they even become violent towards others as well. This type of life, in a manner of speaking, is a terrible form of child poverty. And we must not let it continue.

I’ve also learnt that GBV is not a ‘woman’s problem’ or a ‘family issue’. No! GBV is a problem that affects all in the society and therefore each one of us has a responsibility to ensure that we stop it. I have learnt that young people have creative ideas and the positive will to do something about it; to prevent and stop GBV. Young people have incredible influence to make positive change happen.

That’s why it’s so important for us, as Arigatou International—End Child Poverty and our partnering communities, to invest in building the knowledge and confidence and leadership capacity of young people. So that young people can be part of the positive change to end GBV.”

“GBV must be fought from all possible fronts, as it is not only a physical torture to young girls, but also a distraction on their path to academic success and productive adulthood.”

- Dr. Kiplagat,
Network and Programs Coordinator,
GNRC



Two key meetings took place in Bujumbura, the senior religious leaders meeting where there was a good representation of female religious leaders and the male religious leaders. The leaders were drawn from key faith institutions with the main intention of orienting them on the upcoming Children and Youth Advocacy Network in Burundi and also seeking their support.



The nucleus of Mali met the former Prime Minister, Excellency Moussa Mara to present the project and seek advice on how the team can reach a greater audience.



The REJADH youth from Somalia are training young people on advocacy and human rights in a bid to expand the network.



26 young leaders drawn from different faiths and mainly comprised of youth from the rural area and GBV survivors from Goma and Bukavu were mobilised to attend a meeting with a goal of sensitizing young people on GBV and its effects on young persons, and to create awareness on their role in policy change as one key aspect of ending GBV in Conflict and Post Conflict countries.

VOICES FROM THE YOUTH



On the Youth Day celebration by the South Sudan Network, Youth and children were facilitated to conduct their own activities, through provision of funding and technical.

“Since I became a member of the network, I have noticed the importance of working in synergy for this cause. I am heartened at how boys and girls alike are fully engaged on the fight against GBV. Basing our advocacy on an international protocol will provide almost everything upstream and this is an asset to our success.”

“I am encouraged by the fact that children and youth are now advocating for their rights. I am inspired to fully engage in the fight against GBV with the ultimate goal of completely eliminating all forms of GBV.”

“Being able to work with other nationalities within the network is an asset for me as I believe that children and young people are able to fight against gender-based violence and plead for their rights.”

16 Days of Activism against GBV



On 25th November every year; The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women to 10 December, Human Rights Day, the world marks the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence Campaign. This is usually a time to galvanize action to end violence against women and girls around the world. The international campaign originated from the first Women's Global Leadership Institute coordinated by the Centre for Women's Global Leadership in 1991.



This year 2016 marks the 25th year of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence Campaign, initiated in 1991.



Burundi

A meeting with a senior adviser official of the presidency in charge of social issues as decision maker and a campaign on Maputo Protocol with Representatives of civil society organizations working in the field of human rights and advocacy.

DRC: Goma

A workshop in a rural area of Goma city with local leaders and religious leaders educating young women and men to talk about GBV and Maputo Protocol, a meeting with the president of the youth provincial council who is the leader of all the youth in North Kivu province and the intermediary between youth and Authorities, a meeting with 100 students in the main university in North Kivu (ULPGL) to present the network and talk about the Maputo protocol and how students can get involved and a meeting with REJADH Bukavu to share a note on the network.

DRC: South Kivu-Bukavu

A conference on GBV 2- cultural event with local leaders, parents and youth and copies of Maputo protocol were distributed.

Mali

A meeting with the National Youth Council of Mali, a meeting and experience sharing with the director of children parliament, a conference on the Maputo protocol with representatives from youth organisation and a meeting with local and religious leaders together with parents and children.

South Sudan

A meeting with commissioner of peace reconciliation commission of South Sudan, a visit to an orphanage Center in Juba, a workshop on GBV, a meeting with Bishop Enok (South Sudan Council of Churches and key leader in the Church).

Somalia

Training young people on advocacy and human rights, recruiting more young people to the network, a Boys and Girls summit in Mogadishu, a meeting with senior government officials and ministers, Celebrated the International Human Rights Day.

Myths Surrounding GBV!

Myth: Governments are powerless to stop these kinds of things from happening.

Truth: Governments have the power to help END GBV.

Myth: Men have no role in ending violence against women.

Truth: Men have a role in ending GBV.

Myth: Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) only happens to women against their will.

Truth: Some women take part in FGM voluntarily.

Myth: that child marriage is a thing of the past

Truth: Child marriage continues to take place up-to-date.

One on One with Thea Crawford Svensen,



"The work that has happened since October 2016 has truly been so encouraging to follow! We still have a lot of work to do, but I truly believe that change can happen, and that we together can make the world a better place, one small step at the time!"

Your take on a good campaign?

A good campaign is one that makes people curious. If you can spark people's interest and engage them in the topic, it is easier to make them agree with you. The key in all campaigns, though, is to have solid knowledge about the topic. It is also important that the same campaign can be communicated at many different levels: both directed at the public and politicians, young people and old people. Personally, I often favour campaigns that have an element of humour, while it at the same time manages to communicate the seriousness of the issue at hand.

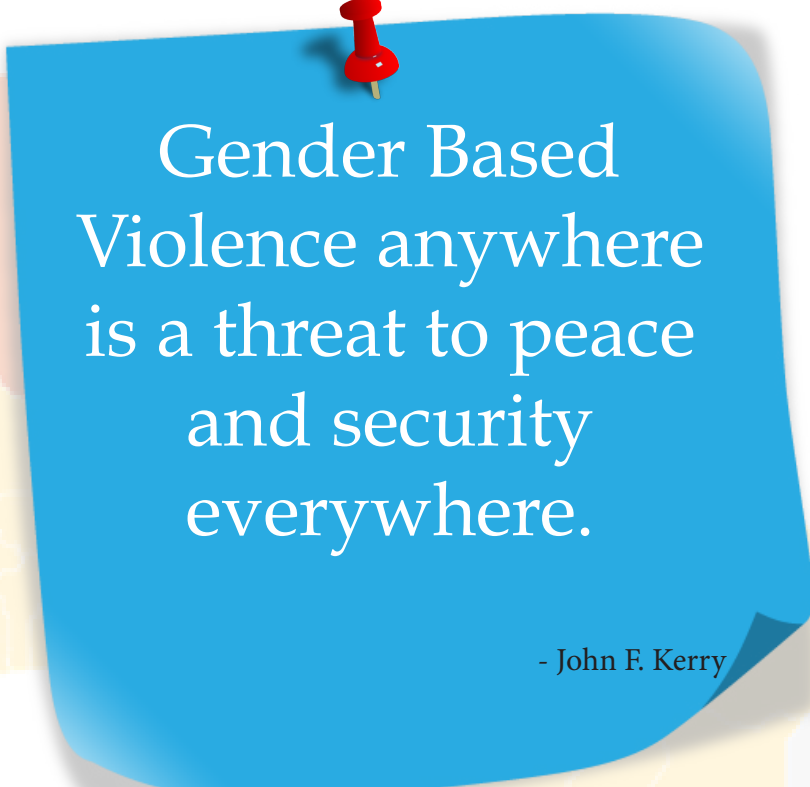
The role of youth campaigning in advocacy?

Youth campaigning is a really important part of advocacy for so many reasons. Firstly, as young people we have a different view of the world. Some 'would' or some 'may' say we are naïve, as many youths truly believe in changes in their societies, but it is really more naïve to believe things will always stay status quo. Secondly, youth campaigning is just a part of youth advocacy: it spreads the message and creates a sense of community, but young people also have the rights and means to have a voice towards their decision makers. I think positive campaigning is one way to create relations with politicians and other decision makers, and allows young people to be an important voice in their societies.



CALENDER UPCOMING EVENTS

- Advocacy Country Trainings with NCA, Arigatou International, Changemaker (DRC, Burundi, Somali, South Sudan).
- Myth of Maputo Campaign at Country level.
- Participation of REJADH in Change makers Summer Camps.
- Advocacy
 - International Women's Day – 8th March
 - GNRC 5th Forum, 9th -11th May 2017
 - Day of the African Child - 16th June
 - International Youth Day- 12th August
 - International Peace Day – 21st September
 - Day of Prayer and Action for Children – 20th Nov.
 - 16 Days of Activism - Nov. 25th - Dec. 10th
 - Monitoring and Evaluation Training



Gender Based
Violence anywhere
is a threat to peace
and security
everywhere.

- John F. Kerry



“In our child-centered work and service we seek to integrate positive religious values; we promote faith-inspired initiatives; and we cooperate with like-minded organizations to work together for a world free of child poverty.”

- End Child Poverty

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Special Thanks To:



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