

The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty - 2019
Statement by the Director, Arigatou International - End Child Poverty

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“Together we can end child poverty worldwide”
This phrase carries weight more than just the words. Children suffer the largest burden of poverty ; that is in plain numbers, of the 1.3 billion people who are poor, 663 million are children and 428 million of them are under the age of 10. Despite this, at Arigatou International, we are always convicted that indeed, if we come together, we can eliminate child poverty.

As we join the world today in commemorating this year’s International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (IDEP), we find it fitting to affirm this conviction. IDEP for us is not only a moment for

advocacy, reflection and action against poverty but also a moment to make the voices and concerns of those living in poverty heard and recognized, while ensuring that the poor, especially children are put in the forefront in the fight against poverty.

This year’s IDEP comes at a time when we are also commemorating the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). In honor of this, we have a collective responsibility to come together; recognize and promote the fact that children have a right to active, free and meaningful participation in efforts to secure their own wellbeing. To this end, article 12 of the CRC supports this assertion where it guarantees children space to freely express themselves and form their views on matters affecting them. While guaranteeing children this space, we also have a duty to listen to their views and opinions and take action for their wellbeing.

The CRC further recognizes the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child’s physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development. Based on this, we can therefore infer that poverty is denial of a child’s rights since it hurts their development and in turn leads to lower income and health in adulthood.

Achieving wellbeing for children also requires taking into consideration their families and the community. Family and community provide the primary set of institutions and site for the nurturing of children. They are the base and children are like the branches. We must therefore not only care for the children but also for the parents, so that their base is solid; hence our support for the IDEP theme: *Acting together to empower children, their families and communities to end poverty*

In all, as a Faith Inspired Organization, we at Arigatou International, believe that all children have rights and dignity, that must be upheld, protected and promoted. Childhood adversity, especially violence against children and child poverty imposes unbearable costs on the lives of children. We believe that recognizing and enabling the individual and collective voice of children is essential to helping us feel and share in this pain and thus prompt us to action.

Fred Nyabera,
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