



GNRC ANNUAL REPORT
2016/2017

SECURING A BETTER FUTURE FOR CHILDREN



About Us

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. GNRC members come from all of the world's major religions and many other spiritual traditions.

Together, the GNRC is committed to creating a world where every girl and boy can grow up safe and sound—a world where every child has the chance to shine.

Our Mission

To mobilize the potential of all religions to become a positive transforming force for children and invite the solidarity of people from all walks of life, while seeking partnership with leaders, individuals, and communities, international, national and regional institutions, grassroots organizations, and people of good will everywhere.

Our Vision

A peaceful world where every human being takes full responsibility for children's dignity, safety, well-being and joy.

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GNRC Around The World



KEY ACRONYMS

AI	Arigatou International
ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
BRAVE	Building Resilience Against Violent Extremism
CAP	Conseil de la Paix
CASM	Social-Cultural Action Center of M’tsangani
CEPA	Centre for Poverty Analysis
CLAI	Consejo Latino Americano de Iglesias
COEPA	Comité Ecuménico de Panamá
CRAVE	Community Resilience Against Violent Extremism
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DPAC	Day of Prayer and Action for Children
EEC	Ethics Education for Children
END CHILD POVERTY	Interfaith Initiative to End Child Poverty
GNRC	Global Network of Religions for Children
HC	Hosting Committee
HH	His Holiness
ICQN	Inter-Country Quality Node
IDEP	International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IOC	International Organizing Committee
IRCPT	Inter-Religious Council for Peace-Tanzania
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LMP	Leadership Mentorship Program
LTLT	Learning to Live Together
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid
NIT	National Institute of Transportation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SG	Secretary General
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UTSS	Under The Same Sun
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
YUNA	Youth of United Nations

“One billion children around the world are still exposed to various forms of physical and sexual violence.”

Mr. Shozo Fujita

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL, ARIGATOU INTERNATIONAL

A CALL TO ACTION TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

Remarkable efforts were made by members of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) in 2016-2017. Their grassroots efforts, carried out in more than 43 countries around the world, were inspired by diverse faith practices and a strong belief that every child is priceless in dignity and deserves to grow up safe and sound. GNRC members tackle a variety of issues that cause suffering for children, including poverty, injustice and exploitation. All of these issues are directly or indirectly linked to violence against children.

One billion children around the world are still exposed to various forms of physical and sexual violence. In 2012 alone, close to 95,000 children between the ages of 15-19 suffered violent deaths.

It is time for the world to take a stand — to draw a line and say “no more” to this most pernicious of evils; the perpetration of violence against the most vulnerable among us, our children.

This is why the Fifth Global Forum of the GNRC, taking place in Panama City in May



2017, will focus on *Ending Violence Against Children: Faith Communities in Action*. In the spirit of “All for Children”, we hope to support the world’s people of faith as they take the initiative in finding new ways for diverse actors to work together to eliminate all forms of violence against children.

My prayer is that the GNRC 5th Forum will re-energize our collective efforts to realize the dream of a world of peace for children, and for all. I look forward to witnessing the achievements of GNRC members in the year to come.

Shozo Fujita

Mr. Shozo Fujita

Secretary General, Arigatou International

“Your efforts in keeping children safe in schools and communities, and promoting peace and non-violence are recognized.”

Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL, GLOBAL NETWORK OF RELIGIONS FOR CHILDREN



BUILDING A WORLD FREE OF VIOLENCE

I want to thank all of you—the GNRC members, religious leaders and faith communities—around the world for the tremendous efforts towards addressing all forms of violence against children in the year 2016-2017. In more than 43 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean and the Middle East, your contributions to making our world a better place for children are deeply appreciated.

You all are already contributing to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) especially SDG 16.2 focusing on ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms

of violence against and torture of children. Yet, the numbers are still way too high. Up to one billion children are still exposed to violence, out of which 95,000 are killed, 85 million are involved in hazardous work, 120 million subjected to sexual violence and many displaced every year.

Your contribution to the implementation of the SDGs to end violence against women and girls; ending economic exploitation of children; keeping children safe in schools and communities, and promoting peace and non-violence are recognized. We thank you for your valuable work.

At the GNRC 5th Forum in Panama, we will work together to strengthen each other, plan together and commit to work even harder to contribute to a world free of violence for our children.

Thank you.

Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali,

Secretary General, Global Network of Religions for Children
Director, Arigatou International – Nairobi

“The GNRC 5th Forum will contribute to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG16.2.”

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1.0 UPDATES FROM THE NETWORK

1.1 Africa

Kenya

Formalization of GNRC–Kenya:

On the 26th of September 2016, the Secretary General of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) and the Director, Arigatou International–Nairobi, Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali, presided over the official launch of GNRC–Kenya. Different organizations in Nairobi as well as individuals working for children’s welfare attended the meeting.



The Secretary General also introduced to the participants the GNRC 5th Forum scheduled to take place in Panama in May 2017, focusing on ending violence against children. The GNRC Network and Programs Coordinator, Dr. Dorcas Kiplagat also welcomed the members into the network and encouraged them to conceptualize new ideas that can steer the country towards attaining the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly those that relate to children’s issues.

The new GNRC Country Coordinator, Sh. Ramadhan Aula encouraged members to be vibrant and active at all times and to engage and network with one another for a common goal.





Enhancing Peace Ties: In an effort to enhance strong ties to promote a better world for children, the Director, End Child Poverty, Rev. Fred Nyabera, paid a courtesy call to the High Commissioner of Sri Lanka to the Republic of Kenya, Mr. Chulpathmendra Dahanayake on 26th January 2017. They discussed Arigatou International's four initiatives and partnership, in relation to children's welfare.

1.2 Asia

Sri Lanka

Together we can End Violence and Poverty Affecting Children! On 7th - 8th February 2017, GNRC in collaboration with End Child Poverty

held a regional meeting at Sarvodaya Suwasetha Sewa Society premises in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The meeting sought to explore ways to strengthen the Knowledge Centre and the GNRC network in the region.

Dr. Dorcas Kiplagat stated that the upcoming GNRC 5th Forum will contribute to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG16.2 focusing on ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children. End Child Poverty Director, Rev. Fred Nyabera, expounded on ways of strengthening the Knowledge Centre and better means of ending violence against children. The meeting officially ended with a field visit to the Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA) and Meethotamulla Slum where Sarvodaya has a project on poverty eradication.



“Every Act of Kindness is an Act of Peace. And Every Act of Peace is what we should live by.”

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2.0 INTERNATIONAL CELEBRATIONS

2.1 Good Deeds Day

Philippines: Over 1.7 million people from fifty countries celebrated Good Deeds Day on 10th April, 2016. GNRC–Philippines through Teach Peace Build Peace Movement (TPBPM) joined in commemorating this day by demonstrating simple acts of kindness towards people and the environment. Under the slogan, ‘One Good Deed at a Time’, community members were sensitized on the importance of peace, tolerance and caring for one another. Peace notes reading, ***‘Every Act of Kindness is an Act of Peace. And Every Act of Peace is what we should live by’*** were shared with participants.



Comoros supported the activity. In attendance were over fifty (50) children from seven schools, teachers, parents, government representatives, members of diplomatic missions, civil society representatives, human rights organizations and representatives from security agencies.

2.2 International Day of the African Child

Comoros: The International Day of the African Child was celebrated in Comoros on 19th June 2016 at the Social-Cultural Action Center of M'tsangani (CASM). The South African Embassy, Conseil de la Paix (CAP), CASM and the Ministry of Justice-



The celebration was an opportunity for all stakeholders to learn about child rights, and their roles in protecting children from abuse and neglect. Some of the key activities of the day included the distribution of brochures of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and citation of its articles. Caps, t-shirts and birth certificates were issued to children from less privileged backgrounds—an activity sponsored by CARITAS since 2015. Several media houses aired the event including: the National Radio and TV, Ngazidja Radio and TV, Haiba Radio and CASM Radio in addition to the social media.

Tanzania: GNRC–Tanzania partnered with Kinondoni Municipal Council (KMC) to commemorate the International Day of the African Child on 16th June 2016 at Mwalimu Nyerere Primary School grounds. The event brought together fifty (50) students from 7 schools in Kinondoni District who engaged in songs, dances, poems and plays to acknowledge and celebrate the African Child.

The guest of honor, Mr. Ally S. Hapi (Kinondoni District Commissioner), pointed that children should be nurtured in safe environments and

their rights protected in order for them to grow up into responsible future leaders.

2.3 International Day of Peace

Bosnia and Herzegovina: On 21st September 2016, GNRC–Bosnia and Herzegovina celebrated the International Day of Peace by organizing a roundtable meeting with religious leaders, youth and children from different faiths. The goal of the meeting was to demonstrate to participants that different faith communities can coexist and work together for peace and development.



Twenty five (25) youth and children were reached through the roundtable meeting. Participants were educated on the importance of embracing the values of peace and tolerance. The talks were supported with a video clip 'The Imam and the Pastor,' which elaborates how the lives of two religious leaders changed after they made peace with each other.





Burundi: In celebrating the International Day of Peace, GNRC–Burundi and the Youth Network of Faith organized a visit to a children’s home in Kajaga, Bujumbura (Missionnaires de la Charité, Maison de la Paix) on Saturday 24th September 2016. GNRC–Burundi representatives used the occasion to talk about GNRC’s work and her commitment to children. Most of the children in the orphanage were either abandoned, orphaned or were victims of domestic violence.

Cuba: GNRC–Cuba held discussions on 17th September 2016 in Manzas to celebrate the International Day of Peace. Topics such as the importance of peace and how to instill good morals in children and youth were discussed. A total of fifty one (51) participants were reached.

India: On 21st September 2016, Shanti Ashram celebrated the International Day of Peace, guided by the UN theme, ‘The Sustainable



Development Goals: Building Blocks for Peace,’ at Kongunadu Arts and Science College. Two hundred and forty four (244) students and 11 members from Shanti Ashram participated in the program.

Guided by the theme ‘Violence, Stigma and Discrimination Faced by People Living with HIV/AIDS’, Shanti Ashram sought to encourage positive coexistence between people living with HIV/AIDS and other members of the community.

Kenya: Commemorating the International Day of Peace on 21st September 2016, GNRC–Kenya and Ruth Matete Music Academy visited



the Good Samaritan Children’s Home and rehabilitation Center in Mathare slums, which is currently a home to three hundred and six (306) children. The aim of the visit was to build the children’s self-esteem through peace talks and entertainment.

The orphanage receives children all year-round, registering close to 5,000 children over the past 15 years. Mama Mercy Thuo, the Manager and Mother of the Good Samaritan Children’s home revealed that most of the children were victims of domestic violence, abandonment, rape, forced early marriages, physical violence, and drug abuse, with others having been orphaned. Her concern for the sanctity of life inspired her



work, retorting, “Even the most vulnerable and weak in the society can be mentored to excellence, as every child deserves the right to shine in life.”

Tanzania: Nine hundred (900) participants converged at the Mipango University in Dodoma on 21st September 2016 to celebrate the International Day of Peace. Several organizations including Youth of United



Nations (YUNA), Inter-Religious Council for Peace-Tanzania (IRCPT), Alpha and Omega Reconciliation and Peace Building and Tanzania Bora Initiative partnered with GNRC–Tanzania to make the event a success. Radicalization leading to violent extremism, corruption, unemployment, attack on albinos and conflict between farmers and herders were cited as the major factors slowing down development in the country.

2.4 The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (IDEP)

Bosnia and Herzegovina: On the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (IDEP), GNRC–Bosnia and Herzegovina organized a roundtable meeting for faith leaders, art exhibitors, parents, teachers, youth and children to discuss ways in which they can end poverty in the country and protect children

from violence. A total of eighty (80) participants attended the event. Fr. Josip Ikić, Prof. Midhat Čakalović and GNRC Coordinator in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ms. Ismeta Begic gave inspirational talks.



Comoros: On the 16th of October 2016, GNRC–Comoros celebrated IDEP at Sadani Oichili, Ngazidja Island – Union of Comoros. Hosted by CAP (Conseil de la Paix) and Municipality of Oichili Yadjou City Council, the activity saw the participation of more than one hundred (100) people including parents, teachers, local government, youth and children.

An agricultural project focusing on reducing poverty and unemployment in Oichili Yadjou received financial support during the forum. The IDEP event in Comoros was featured in National Radio and TV (ORTC) and Al-watwan National newspaper.

Croatia: Celebrating IDEP, GNRC–Croatia visited the students of Fran

Galović Primary School in Zagreb City and sensitized them on preventing and ending poverty in their country. During the current year, the school opened its doors to hundreds of migrant children, and GNRC–Croatia used the opportunity to welcome them. Four workshops targeting six hundred and ninety (690) pupils were conducted at the primary school and a peace club comprising of twenty five (25) children was started at the end of the event.

Rwanda: Led by GNRC–Rwanda, approximately 700 participants celebrated IDEP on 17th October 2016 in Southern Province, Rwanda. Participants shared their experiential stories on the effects of poverty, had interfaith talks on poverty and a cultural event to boost peace in the community.



South Sudan: GNRC through Hands of Grace celebrated IDEP in October 2016. 350 children, 50 parents and 20 invited guests from the government and NGOs attended the event, including Rev. Fred Nyabera, Director, End Child Poverty. Various speakers gave speeches on the importance of preventing poverty. The Director, Hands of Grace, Bishop Martin Mogga stated

that empowering children from poor backgrounds was one way of ending child poverty.

Tanzania: GNRC–Tanzania organized a student-led event at the Oysterbay Primary School on 16th and 17th October 2016, to commemorate IDEP. Activities such as debates, sports for peace and awareness on

poverty were conducted. The debate themed, *‘Moving from Humiliation and Exclusion to Participation: End Poverty in All its Forms’*, had students from Oysterbay Primary School explore strategies to eradicate poverty and promote peace in the community. Other child rights issues were discussed, and the event concluded with a football match dubbed, *‘Kick-out Poverty’*.



“Another remarkable achievement in 2016 was the production of three versions of the LTLT Manual in Kiswahili language.”

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3.0 ETHICS EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN

3.1 Africa

Tanzania: GNRC–Tanzania and the Ethics Education for Children (EEC), Geneva organized a training workshop based on the principles and methodology of the LTLT the *Learning to Live Together* (LTLT) Manual. The workshop was held on 16th - 19th June 2016 at the Radio Maria premises in Mikocheni, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, as part of GNRC–Tanzania’s contribution to mentor children and youth. Over forty (40) participants between 18 - 28 years including peace club members, peace ambassadors and teachers benefited from the training. Mr. Suchith Abeyewickreme an international LTLT Trainer, Ms. Pauline Mandisa and Mr. Charles Mwaniki from Nairobi, facilitated the workshop.



The participants are expected to facilitate sessions in their various capacities within their communities and places of work.

Translation of Manuals: Another remarkable achievement in 2016 was the production of three versions of the LTLT Manual in Kiswahili language: The Peace Club Guide, The Learning to Live Together Manual and The Countering Violent Extremism Manual. The guidebooks are to be used to enrich peace trainings and efforts to prevent and build resilience against violent extremism and other forms of violence.

GNRC–Tanzania has already started using the manuals to train youth and children in the country. Twenty seven (27) Youth Peace



Ambassadors from Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam were trained in June 2016. The 27 ambassadors also volunteered to train 150 students in 5 schools in Dar es Salaam.

South Africa: The Interfaith Council on Ethics Education for Children held a three-day meeting in Cape Town, South Africa from 12th - 14th August 2016. A panel discussion was also organized by representatives from the Western Cape Education Department and the Equal Education and Children’s movement to discuss Xenophobia and Education in South Africa.



Comoros

Right to Education and Protection of Children:

On the 24th of September 2016, GNRC–Comoros participated in a civil societies’ workshop aimed at seeking solutions to protecting children’s rights, particularly education and safety. Thirty five (35) associations from the Comoros civil society were invited to the workshop. The workshop focused on the validation of the supplementary report to the initial report by the Union of Comoros for the implementation of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children.

3.2 Asia

India: Stakeholders with strong passion for children’s welfare including policy-makers, experts, youth advocates, members of inter-governmental organizations and civil society from almost seventy (70) different countries had the opportunity to learn about the LTLT Manual, during the International Conference on Prevention of Violent Extremism through Education, held in New Delhi, India on 19th - 20th September 2016.



The conference sought to raise awareness on the importance of education in Prevention of Violent Extremism (PVE) as well as identify actions for the effective implementation of PVE activities. The event was co-organized by UNESCO and GNRC with the support of the *Organization Internationale de la Francophonie* and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

3.3 Europe

Montenegro: GNRC–Montenegro conducted an LTLT workshop aimed at fighting prejudices for thirty (30) elementary and secondary school teachers and students for a period of one and a half months between May and June 2016. Ms. Tamara Milić, advisor for Inclusive Education in the Ministry of Education, Ms. Anita Marić, Bureau for Education and Ms. Vanja Rakočević, pedagogue and coordinator for volunteers club, facilitated the workshops which benefited twenty (20) youths.

3.4 Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)

Colombia: On 27th September 2016, GNRC–Colombia conducted an Ethics Education

forum in Bogota on the *Learning to Live Together* (LTLT) Manual. A total of two hundred (200) participants including: students from grades 9-11, facilitators and religious leaders attended the workshop. Participants were later put in groups where they practically demonstrated the skills acquired from LTLT training.

Nicaragua: Using the *Learning to Live Together Manual*, GNRC–Nicaragua conducted two workshops on “Education for Peace” during the reporting period. The first workshop involved twenty (20) young people while the second involved twenty (29) youth. Both workshops took place in Managua.



“Violence against children has become endemic. Today, one billion children around the world are subjected to different forms of physical and sexual violence.”

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4.0 PRAYER AND ACTION FOR CHILDREN

Through Prayer and Action, a lot of work on child rights was done by GNRC members, including child health and promotion of education as provided for under SDG 3 and 4 respectively. Actions to promote positive parenting and birth registration were implemented in support of SDG targets that aim to protect children such as 16.9 which clearly expresses the need for legal identity for all. All GNRC members worked to create a conducive environment for child growth and development.

4.1 Africa

Kenya

Reports and statistics indicate that children as young as two years old have experienced some form of violence in their lifetime. It is in regards to this that GNRC in Mombasa, Kenya organized a campaign dubbed ‘End Child Violence’ to sensitize the community on the problem. The event, which took place on 26th November 2016 was part of celebrations to mark the World Day of Prayer and Action



for Children (DPAC). A total of seventy (70) participants attended the event.

South Africa

On the 19th of November 2016, GNRC–South Africa in partnership with Mavela Ikhaya Project, Religions for Peace and Kwa Zulu Natal (KZN) Inter Religious Council, held an interfaith event to commemorate the DPAC in Ndwedwe, South Africa. Forty one (41) participants were reached during the event.



Tanzania

GNRC–Tanzania commemorated DPAC at the SOS Children’s Village aimed at ending violence against children. One hundred and twenty five (125) participants including parents, teachers, religious leaders and children attended the event. GNRC staff and volunteers also presented various activities from the LTLT Manual.



4.2 Asia

India

“Every Child a Story Teller” is a unique event launched by Shanti Ashram, which invites children between 9 - 15 years to use the creative mediums of story-telling to reflect on their community. During DPAC, the children used creative ways such as drawing and painting to promote the theme, **“A violence-free childhood, every child’s wish”**.

Indonesia

To celebrate DPAC, GNRC–Indonesia organized a one-day event for children to discuss on a future, free from Poverty in Poso, Indonesia. The religious leaders shared with children, scriptures relevant to poverty and the event concluded with plans of action against poverty from the children.

Nepal

GNRC–Nepal led by Dr. Chintamani Yogi celebrated DPAC between 20th and 22nd November 2016. An Interreligious dialogue was conducted on the first day followed by an Interreligious Dialogue seminar for professionals on the second day. The event attracted one hundred (100) participants from the region. The senior vice chairperson of Senior Citizen Federation, Mrs. Ambika, advised faith-based organizations at all levels to work together to end violence against children. She emphasized the promotion of child rights through the education system to prevent violence against children particularly in rural areas.



4.3 Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)

Argentina

Children, parents, teachers, Government officials and the elderly came out in large numbers to commemorate DPAC at Manzone, Pilar, Buenos Aires, Argentina on the



19th of November 2016. The event was hosted by GNRC–Argentina who took the opportunity to inform participants about the upcoming GNRC 5th Forum in Panama. Participants made drawings/paintings on public/community spaces with messages and symbols of peace and love. What caught the eyes of the participants was how a tank used during the war was refurbished and converted into a mobile library as a demonstration of how good things can come out of bad situations.

Cuba

GNRC–Cuba in partnership with the Quaker Friends Church marked DPAC in Matanzas, by visiting the Holguin Oncology Hospital to console the sick. Children at the hospital were taught the importance of praying when they are sick. Discussions on body hygiene and education were also conducted during the visit.



4.4 Middle East

Lebanon

GNRC–Lebanon led by Annas Linnas Association held a conference at the Public Technical School of Shhim to address Violence Against Children on the 19th of November 2016. The organization partnered with the Union of the Municipalities of Iklim Al Kharroub, Himaya Association, and INTERSOS Association – Lebanon. One Hundred and five (105) participants attended the function. Fr. Abdo Raad was the main organizer assisted by Mr. Hassan Fawaz. Key personalities present included Mr. Ziyad Hajjar, the Head of the Union of Municipalities of Iklim Al Kharroub (North), Ms. Rajaa Kenaan, Mr. Mario Lotfi and Major Rabieh Al Ghossaini, representing the General Director of the Internal Security Forces among others.

“Estimates by the United Nations in 2016 indicate that more than 700 million people live in extreme poverty, majority in Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.”

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5.0 INTERFAITH INITIATIVE TO END CHILD POVERTY (END CHILD POVERTY)

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 calls for an end to poverty in all its manifestations by 2030. Estimates by the United Nations in 2016 indicate that more than 700 million people still live in extreme poverty, majority of whom live in Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, accounting for about 70% of the global total of extremely poor people. The world's richest countries are not spared either in that right now there are 30 million children growing up poor in those countries.

Through End Child Poverty, GNRC members put a lot of effort to contribute to SDG 1 by working for and with children to end extreme poverty as highlighted in this report.

5.1 Africa

Kenya: The church has become a major player in contributing to the achievement of the SDGs particularly SDG 1, 3 and 4 on eradication of poverty, quality healthcare and education respectively.



At a Dinner held on 4th November 2016, Arigatou International staff in Kenya joined the “Friends of Lodwar”, a group of Christians committed to supporting the people of Turkana County and other well-wishers to raise funds to support poverty eradication initiatives of the Catholic Diocese of Lodwar. The function was led by Bishop Dominic Kimengich of Lodwar. More than three hundred (300) people attended the function which realized more than \$8,000.

Rwanda: GNRC–Rwanda led by Umbrella for The Vulnerable Organization conducted a campaign on 8th October 2016 to raise awareness on hygiene and nutrition among children in the



community. The campaign dubbed, 'The Fight Against Malnutrition,' reached over one hundred (100) orphans and vulnerable children in Rwamagana District. Children in the area suffer from preventable diseases that have caused deaths sometimes.

Nigeria

The conflict in Northern part of Nigeria by militant groups such as the Boko Haram has resulted in a huge influx of Internally Displaced Persons



(IDPs) in major towns. Durumi Area 1 Camp in Abuja, hosts 2,740 people with 850 being women. Majority of the IDPs especially women and girls lack a decent livelihood leading to rampant cases of sexual abuse. As a result, a third of the girls' in the camp between 14 - 18 years are currently pregnant with their first or second child. These young mothers cannot fend for themselves let alone their children.

GNRC-Nigeria in partnership with the COFP Foundation, trained eighty (80) women and girls from the camp on vocational skills over a two weeks period. The trainees graduated with certificates and skills in bakery and production of industrial products like disinfectants, body creams, liquid soap and air fresheners. Each of them was further issued with a start-up kit.

5.2 Asia

Malaysia: "I Can Malaysia", a member of the GNRC-Malaysia, organized an Educational trip to the National Planetarium for twenty seven (27) Rohingya Refugee Children aged 7-13 years on 7th May, 2016. The Rohingya children in Malaysia are deprived of education and the trip helped to lift their spirits and expand their knowledge through fun-filled entertainment and interaction with a new environment and



new people. The children were so excited and happy, this being their first visit to the Planetarium.

India: The Children-led '*Reversing Child Poverty*' initiative has been running since 2013 and has impacted many children in different parts of India since then. It has reached 31 institutions-31,200 children and youth from 5 different faith traditions in Coimbatore. The total savings by the children during the period was Rs. 1.64 lakhs, of which the children contributed Rs. 1.57 lakhs to the practical projects implemented through the Poverty Solutions project. The 2016 Action Plan was launched successfully at Shanti Ashram on 30th June 2016. Two hundred and fifteen (215) participants from 41 institutions participated in the launch.

Pakistan: GNRC Youth–Pakistan came up with the slogan '*Small Effort, Big Dream, Good Dream: Together We Can End Child Poverty Worldwide*', to guide their activities in 2016. On 27th May, they organized a fund raising to help less privileged children to acquire stationery for homework during their summer vacation. This event took place at the St. Mary's Public School, Wah Cantt grounds. There were one hundred and twenty five (125) people in attendance.

5.3 Europe

Croatia: As a follow up action on this year's IDEP, children from Frana Galovića Primary School donated food and household items to the Beli Manastir Association. The organization works to restore peace and dignity through upholding human rights and prevention of poverty. The children were also sensitized on the importance of ending poverty, ending child violence, human rights, peace and coexistence.

Serbia: End Child Poverty initiative and the GNRC in collaboration with the Somborski Edukativni Center (SEC) co-hosted a Round Table meeting at the Sombor Municipal Hall, Serbia on 28th July 2016. The event entitled '*Faith Communities Partnering towards Ending Child Poverty and Violence Against Children*', focused on the link between the two and the role of faith communities and children in aligning ending child poverty actions to the SDGs in the Balkans. The meeting additionally sought to provide new sustainable pathways to ending child poverty and violence against children.





United Kingdom: On the 16th and 17th November 2016, the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty held its third face-to-face meeting at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) – University of Sussex, Brighton, UK. Over fifteen (15) participants representing different organizations that are members of the coalition including: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Save the Children, Arigatou International–End Child Poverty, Euro Child, World Vision, Young Lives and IDS, attended the meeting. Participants shared their organizational child poverty work, and End Child Poverty used the opportunity to publicize her Interfaith Guide being developed.

5.4 Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)

Colombia:

Extreme Poverty Eradication: Supported by 'Growing Together Corporation', GNRC–Colombia conducted several workshops from 1st April to 30th October 2016, in Barrio Rincon del Lago, Soacha, aimed at overcoming child poverty. The corporation has been working towards eradicating poverty in Soacha by implementing sustainable projects that allow people to maintain a solid economy. Beneficiaries of the projects include people affected by the Colombia violence. The total number of participants reached during the event was eighty five (85).

“Protection of children is explicitly stated under SDG target 16.2, end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children.”

GNRC 5th Forum Concept Note

6.0 PEACE BUILDING

Protection of children is explicitly stated under SDG target 16.2, ‘end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children’. Targets 8.7, 5.3 and 5.2 also support child protection. UNICEF (2015) observes that although countries have made progress towards reducing child and infant mortality and addressing nutrition and increasing access to quality education, these same countries still struggle to protect children from violence, exploitation and abuse. It is the conviction that we can end violence against children that many GNRC members in different parts of the world implemented various activities geared towards ending violence against children.

(ADEA), Federal Government of Ethiopia, Ministry of Education—Ethiopia, Inter Country Quality Node (ICQN) on Peace Education and the ‘Learning for Peace’ Institute, organized a symposium that sought to assess how inclusive, equitable and innovative education policy and programmes can contribute to sustainable peace and development across the continent. The high-level symposium, attended by Ministers of Education from 16 African countries and other education stakeholders took place between 1st and 3rd June 2016, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

6.1 Africa

Ethiopia:

In the wake of the global challenge posed by the spread of violent extremist ideologies, UNICEF in collaboration with a number of partners namely: Association for the Development of Education in Africa



The symposium had three main thematic areas: 1) The role of education in strengthening social cohesion and resilience; 2) Combating Violence

through quality education; and 3) schools for learning and for practising peace.

Dr. Dorcas Kiplagat presented on “Building Community Resilience to Prevent Violent Extremism”. The presentation focused on GNRC’s two programmes: Community Resilience Against Violent Extremism (CRAVE) and Building Resilience Against Violent Extremism (BRAVE) and how their implementation strategies can be utilized to impact learning and prevent violent extremism.

Kenya:

CRAVE Program: Arigatou International–GNRC conducted an outdoor peace activity for youth at Tononoka Social Hall in Mombasa, Kenya on the 23rd of April 2016. GNRC hosted the activity under its program, Community Resilience Against Violent Extremism (CRAVE). More than one hundred (100) youth drawn from Mombasa County attended the workshop. Local elders, persons

with disability, women and youth leaders as well as the local Government officials were present. The aim of the event was to create awareness and empower the youth for peace, social coexistence and to campaign against exploitation.

BRAVE Program:

Kisumu County: GNRC members in Kenya held a youth engagement forum under the ‘Building Resilience Against Violent Extremism (BRAVE) program on 20th June 2016 in Kisumu County. The function dubbed ‘BRAVE Messengers’ Conference aimed at educating the youth against radicalization and violent extremism. The forum was attended by four hundred (400) youth from various schools and the community and religious leaders from the county; Hon. Farida Salim, BRAVE’s Coordinator in Kisumu presided over the function. The leaders reported the disappearances of boys and girls, alleged to have joined ISIS in Syria or al Shabab in Somalia.



Kilifi County: GNRC Members in Kenya, through the Building Resilience Against Violent Extremism (BRAVE) initiative, held BRAVE Messengers retreat guided by the theme



'Together we Can Find Peace'. One hundred and seventy five (175) in-school youth took part in the three-day retreat at Town Secondary School, Malindi, in the on-going efforts to engage young adults to address radicalization and violent extremism in Kenya. The retreat focused on strengthening the youth's value system, and the topics covered, included principles of peace building, prevention of radicalization into violent extremism, early warning and the role of the youth in countering violent extremism.

Regional Youth Forum: The GNRC and End Child Poverty in collaboration with ICCO Cooperation and Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) hosted a three-day (29th - 31st August

2016) regional youth forum in Nairobi to build resilience of youth leaders, youth workers and youth influencers against violent extremism. More than forty five (45) participants from Eastern Africa, specifically: Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya took part in the peace-building program. The Director, End Child Poverty, Rev. Fred Nyabera urged participants to promote forgiveness arguing that the cycle of violence can fully be broken when the society learns to repay vengeance with good.

Understanding Youth and Violent Extremism in the Horn of Africa:

The Role of Faith Communities:

A recent study by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) and Finn Church Aid shows that 40% of all recruits into al Shabab terror group were children and youth between the ages of 15 - 19 years. The findings compelled Arigatou International-Nairobi and her partners to conduct a Desk Analysis, "Understanding Youth and Violent Extremism in the Horn of Africa: The Role of Faith Communities", to



map out existing faith inspired-youth focused approaches and research on countering violent extremism within the Horn of Africa region. The Desk Analysis report was validated in a meeting attended by: Government officials, Non-Governmental Organizations and Faith-Based Organizations dealing with or interested in Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) at Gracia Gardens, Nairobi, Kenya on 31st January 2017. A total of twenty (20) participants attended the meeting.

Important recommendations such as the need to partner with the government in Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) and the need to empower and include faith leaders and women in PVE were proposed. Ways to reduce hard power of security forces/government, were also explored.

Tanzania:

Leadership Mentoring Program

(LMP): In 2016, the LMP attracted youth between 18 – 35 years from across the country. Thorough selection of participants for the program was done to identify the best candidates



for the training. Trainings such as leadership and personal development, entrepreneurial mindset, behavior change and fundraising methods were carried out. So far, seventy five (75) youth have been trained and are now committed to six months peer mentorship.

Education for Peace (Peace Clubs):

Through peace clubs, GNRC–Tanzania mentored 120 students and 50 teachers from 24 schools. The *Building Bridges of Trust* and the *Reconciliation Walk* for instance, helped Muslim and Christian participants appreciate the similarities between them, in addition to lessons on virtues of dialogue, respect, trust and unity. The GNRC established peace clubs in five more regions and was planning to create the National Peace Clubs Network to benefit more students across the country.

Civic Education and Youth Awareness Forum on Countering Violent Extremism:

GNRC–Tanzania together with Zanzibar Fighting Against Youth Challenges Organization (ZAFAYCO) conducted a youth forum on Countering Violent Extremism on 24th December 2016 at the State University of Zanzibar (SUZA), Beit El Raas Campus. More than one hundred





and fifty (150) youths from Zanzibar University (ZU), State University of Zanzibar (SUZA) and different youth organizations attended the event. The forum was inspired by the Regional Youth Forum on Countering Violent Extremism, which took place in Nairobi, Kenya in August 2016.

Unemployment and injustice were cited as some of the push factors of radicalization and violent extremism. Education and promotion of creativity were proposed as solutions to the problems. “Creating awareness and interfaith dialogue is the only way to prevent radicalization into violent extremism... Let us unite and fight

violent extremism before it becomes a menace in Zanzibar,” one GNRC peace ambassador said. Youth were also urged not to fall victim of political and religious extremism.

6.2 Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)

Colombia

GNRC–Colombia conducted three workshops themed, ‘Poany Paz’, whose objective was to raise awareness among youth and adults on the importance of ending armed conflict and to make them aware of the peace talks between the Colombian Government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). Some of the key discussions in the workshops included ways of compensating victims and how Colombia can achieve an equitable, just and peaceful society. Fifty four (54) participants were reached through the awareness program.



“The junior art competition sought to bring out children’s understanding and interpretation of violence against children across the world and the role of faith communities in curbing it.”

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7.0 OTHER ACTIVITIES

7.1 GNRC 5th Forum

Fifth Forum Planning meetings

Two major committees were set up to plan for the GNRC 5th Forum; the International Organizing Committee (IOC) chaired by Mons. Sidney Fones and the Hosting Committee (HC) chaired by Rt. Rev. Julio E. Murray. The IOC and HC held several planning meetings at different times during the reporting period, to ensure that the Forum achieves its intended objectives and outcomes. The Forum will bring together about four hundred (400) participants, including children from around the world.

Among the achievements realized so far include the formulation of the forum theme, **“Ending Violence Against Children: Faith Communities in Action”**, and the three sub-themes namely: **“Protecting Children from Violent Extremism, Gang Violence and Organized Crime: The Role of Faith Communities”**; **“Nurturing Spirituality and Ending Violence in Child Upbringing: The Role of Faith Communities”** and **“Ending Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of Children: The Role of Faith Communities”**.

Other achievements include the preparation of the Programs and Sub-Programs, and the Concept Notes in different languages, identification of child and adult participants,





speakers, session chairs, moderators and panelists; identification of meeting venues and other logistical preparations.

Rev. Keishi Miyamoto asked the committee to focus on the challenges especially on violence that children face every day.

GNRC 5th Forum Junior Art Competition

In preparation for the Fifth Forum, the HC hosted a Junior Art Competition in Panama City in October 2016 to design the logo for the Forum. The contestants were children aged between 14 and 17 years from schools that are members of GNRC–Panama.

The junior art competition sought to bring out children's understanding and interpretation of violence against children across the world and the role of faith communities in curbing it. A total of 18 artworks were presented, from which top three were selected for use as GNRC 5th Forum symbols.

7.2 Secretary General's Advocacy Round Up

Global Partnership to Ending Violence Against Children

On July 12, 2016, the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon presided over the official launch of the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children and its associated Fund. During the meeting, Rev. Keishi Miyamoto, President, Arigatou International and Convenor GNRC was announced as one of the Advisory Board Members of the partnership.

The Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children and its associated fund were created to help accelerate action and strengthen collaboration between countries to tackle the violence that children face every day, as part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Prior to the launch, Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali participated in the meeting of the Interim Advisory Board in New York on 18th and 19th April 2016. The composition of the new Board, the roadmap to its launch and the Solutions Summit slated for 2017 were among the issues discussed at the New York meeting. Other discussions revolved around the mission, vision and objectives of the partnership, as well as the guiding principles.



The meeting was co-chaired by UNICEF and World Health Organization (WHO). The Governments of Sweden, United Kingdom, Mexico and others also participated in the partnership meeting.

Interfaith Council on Ethics Education for Children

In August 2016, Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali, attended the Interfaith Council on Ethics Education for Children Meeting in Cape Town, South Africa. Amongst the issues broadly discussed were strengthening the Family Systems Initiative, the Global Citizenship Education and how to address Violent Extremism. A separate meeting of the AI Directors was held after the Council meeting.

Consultation Meeting

Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali, participated in a Consultation meeting on 'Mapping Faith, Peace and Development' held at the Georgetown University, in Washington DC on 2nd to 4th

October 2016. Country-level work carried out in Bangladesh, Senegal, Kenya and Guatemala was discussed. An engagement session was held involving a group of invited practitioners and scholars who discussed gaps in knowledge and growing areas of interest.

Symposium on Healing and Reconciling Wounded Memories: Key Elements in Achieving Holistic Peace

"Violence against children has become endemic. Today, one billion children around the world are subjected to different forms of physical and sexual violence. In 2012 alone, 95,000 children and adolescents under the age of 20 died as a result of violence. This has to be ended", was the message from the GNRC Secretary General, Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali, when he spoke during a symposium held between 6th - 8th December 2016, in Nairobi, Kenya dubbed 'Healing and Reconciling Wounded Memories: Key Elements in Achieving Holistic Peace'. The three-day event, which sought to deepen understanding and seek solutions to achieving reconciliation, conflict resolution and achieving holistic peace in the greater Horn of Africa was sponsored by the Norwegian Church Aid (NCA). About 20 participants, comprising



religious leaders, professionals, women, community leaders and government officials attended the meeting.

During the symposium, Dr. Ali had an opportunity to give presentations on the following topics: - *Reflection on Peace and Reconciliation: An Islamic Perspective, Effects of Conflicts on Children's Minds*; *Somalia: Empowering Formerly Radicalized Somali Youth for a Better Future*; and *Rwanda: Empowering the Youth for an Abundant life and Empowering Former Child Soldiers (FCS)*.

Zero Hunger: The GNRC Secretary General, Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali participated in the Inter-Religious Engagement for Zero Hunger on 13th June 2016, at the World Food Programme (WFP) headquarters, in Rome, Italy. The aim of the forum was to mobilize faith communities and organizations to help in the eradication of hunger and poverty across the world. Led by H.H. Pope Francis I, representatives from

a range of faith-inspired NGOs and faith communities attended the WFP Forum.

In his remarks, H.H. Pope Francis I decried the excessive consumption of resources that has led to wastage of food in the world. His Holiness emphasized that it is by helping the hungry and thirsty that we can achieve humanity, faith and development. Observing that the world actually produces more food than it needs, Dr. Ali called for a strategy that focuses on reducing food wastage and sharing surplus production to reduce hunger. He asked faith communities, and all religious people to never allow anyone to go hungry, especially children.

At the core of WFP's work is a drive to achieve the goal of Zero Hunger, one of the SDG goals by the year 2030.



“It is high time the world stood together and demanded an end to violence inflicted on children.”

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8.0 FEATURE

8.1 Did I make a mistake to be born a Girl?

I recall it being a peaceful Thursday evening in the slums of Kibera, Nairobi in 2012. As the first-born daughter in a family of five, I had a dream of becoming successful and help my mother, a single parent and siblings from this impoverishing life. Encouraged by the wish of my late father to acquire education no matter what, I knew I was destined for greatness.

At about 8:00 pm, just as mama was putting food on the table, her 'kaduda' rung. The call was a notification of the demise of her sister who had been suffering from cancer. In shock, Mama asked Uncle Ben to come over and stay with us as she went to her late sister's home in Kawangware, about an hour's drive. Uncle Ben was still a young bachelor as he called himself.

Uncle Ben was always good with children; telling them stories, singing



to them and even giving treats like sweets or toys. I think that is why mama liked Uncle Ben because he adored his brother's children.

We went to bed. Shortly after, I felt something heavy that made it hard for me to breath. It was a bad dream, I said to myself. I woke up only to find my uncle covering my mouth and nose tightly. He was pointing a knife at me. What followed was excruciating pain as he forced himself into me. I do not know what time he left the room because I passed out. The call to prayer at 4:30 am coming from the nearby mosque is what woke me up. Blood was all over my legs. I was devastated!

The pain was too much but I had to wake up, to cover my shame. I slowly cleaned up the mess, took a shower and then I went back to sit on the bed thinking of the ordeal. In came his smiley head peeping on the side of the curtain. "Dorothy wake up for school, and wake your brother up," he said. Mama returned home, gave us our lunch money, prayed with us then kissed our foreheads as a goodbye gesture.

I was worried of discharging more blood and dirtying my white 'P.E' clothes, so I chose not to go to school, instead hide somewhere. In the evening at about 5:00 pm, I met my sisters at the usual point and we walked home together.

As we approached the house, we heard different loud voices coming from inside. "Your son is a liar! He was either dreaming or seeing his own things!" The voice was familiar; it was my uncle's. My mother saw me, she came and firmly held me. Seated was a Children's Officer and two police officers who stood next to my uncle. When I was assured of my safety, I narrated to

the authorities the entire story. My uncle was brought to justice and I went through several counseling sessions. I thank my brother for being the bold one. Were it not for him I would still be in emotional torture.

Five years later, I still bear the scars physically, mentally and emotionally. I now try to help those children who hide such experiences due to fear. We all need that one person to lift us up. It is high time the world stood together and demanded an end to violence inflicted on children. Children have a right to live and explore their potential to the fullest. Rape should be addressed with the seriousness it deserves!

#EndChildViolence

Sincerely,

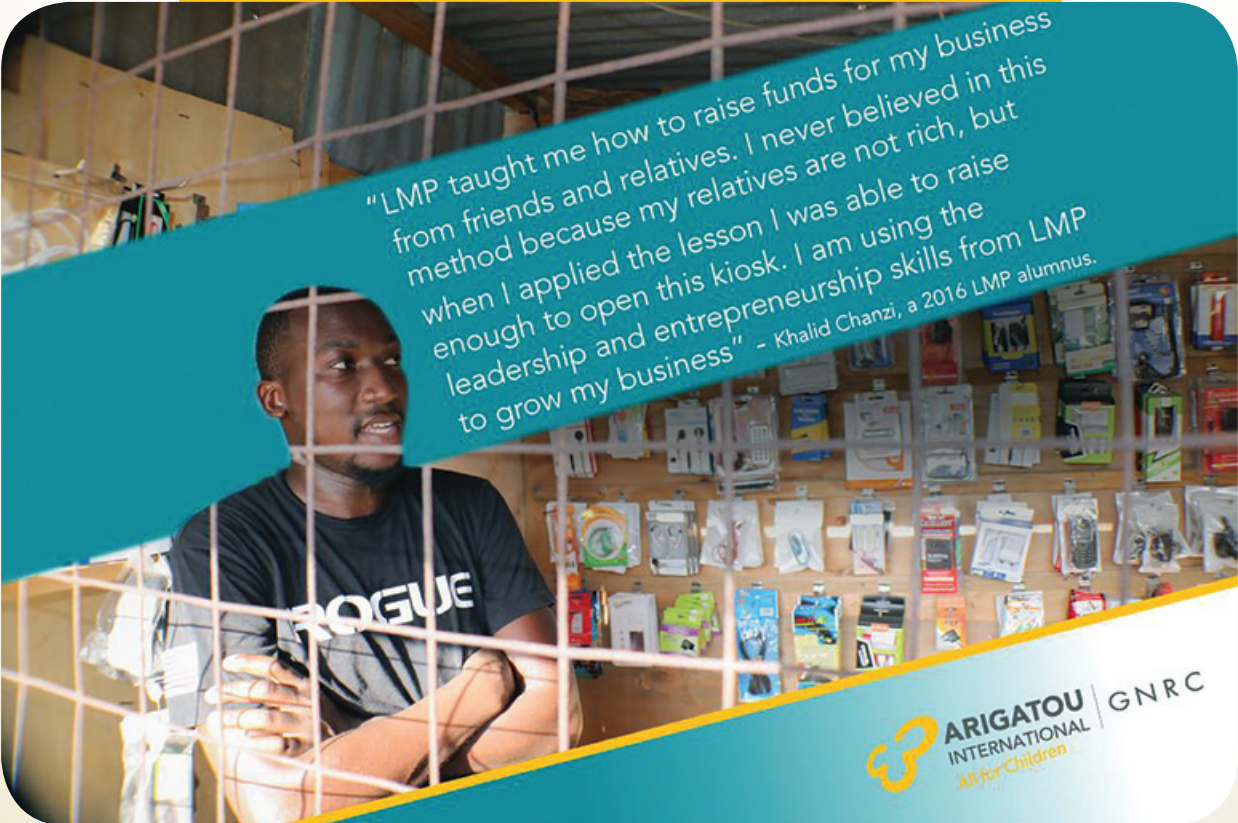
Diary of a Grieving Child.

"Violence against children can have devastating long-term impacts on their wellbeing and future world view."

Rev. Keishi Miyamoto
President, Arigatou International




Success Stories



"LMP taught me how to raise funds for my business from friends and relatives. I never believed in this method because my relatives are not rich, but when I applied the lesson I was able to raise enough to open this kiosk. I am using the leadership and entrepreneurship skills from LMP to grow my business" - Khalid Chanzi, a 2016 LMP alumnus.


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"Through GNRC's Support in South Africa, Mavela Children are getting quality education and good health care."

Ms. Saydoon Nisa Sayed – GNRC Member, South Africa

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"Dialogues, arts & sports for peace have molded our children to appreciate other faith communities."

Ms. Ismeta Begić – GNRC Coordinator, Bosnia & Herzegovina

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