

Success Story: Tanzania 2011

Growing a national movement to address violence against children



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Introduction

The World Day of Prayer and Action for Children (DPAC), celebrated annually on 20 November, is an opportunity for all sectors of society - governments, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and religious communities - to work together to end violence against children. World Day events take many forms, including mobilization and media campaigns, workshops, religious services and vigils, and common action to protect children from violence.

DPAC was launched in 2008 at the Third Forum of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) in Hiroshima. The initiative unites secular and religious organizations and harnesses their collective power in support of children. In 2011, more than 200,000 people in 72 countries participated in the World Day of Prayer and Action for Children. This Success Stories series tells the inspiring stories of 2011 and 2012 DPAC actions in selected countries and provides resources and recommendations for organizing similar actions. This story highlights actions in Tanzania, a country where the GNRC has been active for more than a decade.

Recent national attention to violence against children made November 2011 an opportune time for the World Day to address the issue. In August of 2011, the government of the United Republic of Tanzania released a pioneering national study on violence against children in Tanzania, with support from UNICEF and others. The release of the study initiated a multi-sectoral movement to stop violence against children.

With the support of all sectors, including local government, mass media, faith-based organizations and civil society, there is a very real possibility that Tanzania will successfully address sexual, physical and emotional violence against its children.

– Dorothy Rozga, UNICEF Representative, Tanzania

Source: http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/tanzania_59495.html

For more information about the National Study on Violence against Children:

- Access [National Study on Violence against Children in Tanzania](#).
- Access the [story about the launch of the study](#) on the UNICEF website.

The 2011 World Day actions in Tanzania showcase a wealth of approaches to sensitizing a nation about the issue of violence against children. DPAC was used to consolidate existing efforts to address violence against children and garner support among diverse constituencies. The series of World Day actions included: forums for children; a workshop for journalists, religious leaders, community representatives, and children; a text messaging campaign; and the creation and performance of songs, dances and dramas about stopping violence against children. Actions culminated on 20 November 2011 in a large-scale celebration with more than 2000 participants.

Ensuring children's voices are heard

Children are at the heart of the World Day and this was reflected in the three forums for children, which the GNRC organized in three districts of Dar es Salaam during the week before November 20th. The children who participated in the forums were selected through GNRC Tanzania's network of Peace Clubs. Participants between the ages of 11 and 15 years were designated representatives to the forums by their clubs. (See the box that follows for more information about the Peace Clubs initiative.)

Engaging children and youth through Peace Clubs

A hallmark of GNRC work in Tanzania has been its groundbreaking Peace Clubs for young people. Created as a response to rising intolerance in the nation and region, the Peace Clubs bring together children and youth of different faith and cultural backgrounds to facilitate mutual understanding and build a culture of peace in Tanzania. Peace Clubs are youth-led with the support of an adult sponsor. To date, young people have established 118 clubs around the country. In each Peace Club, between 30-40 young people work with Peace Club leaders to design and carry out activities which include: ethics education, music and arts projects, weekly forums, discussions between clubs, and celebrations of relevant international days.

Adapted from: <http://www.youth.gnrc.net/en/youthgroups/africa/tanzania.html>

The forums were led by a facilitator from the Department of Prevention of Violence against Children of the Tanzanian Police Force. Each of the forums followed the same 3-hour program which included: an introduction to the topic of violence, an overview of violence against children in Tanzania, an examination of the role of various actors in addressing violence against children, and an examination of the way forward. At the conclusion of each forum, participants committed to bringing forward the lessons learned and continuing the discussions from the forums within their own Peace Clubs.

Religious leaders should educate the community on stopping violence against children.

- The Statement of Children for DPAC 2011, Tanzania



Child representative Ahmed Sudi delivers the Child Statement

A statement from the children who participated in the forums brought their voices into the large celebration on 20 November. The statement was prepared by a group of forum participants who were designated by their peers. When drafting the statement, they drew upon the teachings and discussions from the forums. The group designated a child representative to present the statement during the celebration. GNRC staff worked with the young representative to help him prepare for his role in the celebration.

Resources for organizing actions with children and youth

- Access the DPAC [Strategy on Child and Youth Participation](#).
- Access child-friendly resources on the issue of violence against children in the [children's corner](#) of the website of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Violence against Children.
- [Access the November 2011 Statement of Children on Violence against Children](#).

Working with the media to address violence against children

Strategic involvement of the media is a key aspect of broad mobilization for social transformation. On 18 November, a Media Seminar brought together religious leaders, community leaders, journalists, and young people, to examine violence against children in Tanzania. During the first segment of the seminar, a UNICEF facilitator elaborated the thematic context with a comprehensive review of the findings of the National Study on Violence against Children. The second part of the program, facilitated by a representative of the Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation, covered the Tanzanian Guidelines for Ethical Reporting on Children and included the presentation of a documentary case study to illustrate the importance of sensitivity in media coverage involving children.

Tips:

- Disseminate information about DPAC to the full media spectrum including print, television, radio and internet media outlets.
- Make an effort to approach media personal responsible for covering children's issues, as they will likely be more responsive.
- Get to know media personnel who are responsible for deciding which stories are aired.
- Urge television and radio personnel to air your stories during peak news hours.

Resource:

Access the Tanzanian [Guidelines for Ethical Reporting on Children](#).

At the conclusion of the seminar, participants developed three summary recommendations: additional seminars on the Code of Ethics should be organized; a media network on violence against children should be formed; and media guidelines for ethical reporting on cases of violence against children should be developed. Following the workshop, during a press conference with print and

television media outlets, GNRC-Africa and UNICEF shared the aims of the workshop with a broader audience and publicized the theme for the World Day of Prayer and Action for Children and the November 20th celebration.

Leveraging technology to mobilize leaders in prayer

In order to further extend the scope of the 2011 actions, the GNRC employed an innovative approach to outreach. They contracted with a mobile phone service provider to disseminate text messages to government, faith community, educational and Peace Club leaders around the country. The messages encouraged recipients to participate remotely in a silent prayer that took place at noon on November 20th during the large celebration. More than 2,700 messages were sent. The messaging proved to be an effective method for engaging a broad group; recipients reported that they received the messages and participated in the prayer.

Touching hearts through artistic expression

In organizing the 2011 DPAC activities, GNRC drew upon its extensive experience using creative outlets such as music and the arts to transcend cultural barriers. Through the use of music dance and poetry, powerful messages about stopping violence against children reached members of diverse communities and young people were meaningfully involved in spreading the word.

The arts used are entertaining yet sending a clear message that knows no barriers. In this way everyone despite their cultural or religious background was able to appreciate, be engaged, and agree that we need to stop violence against children.

– Elizabeth Mwase, Program Manager, GNRC-Africa



Children sing during the celebration on November 20th.

GNRC Peace Club members make up the Music Conscious Band, which creates musical compositions on the priority issues of the GNRC-Africa. In preparation for the 2011 DPAC actions, they wrote five songs about ending violence against children, performing two of them during the November 20th celebration. Songs included *Let's Stop Violence against children Everywhere*, *Child abuse is not right*, and *Let Us Protect Children*. The band also recorded the five songs in order to share the message more widely.



The Music Conscious Band performs a song about ending violence against children.

In addition to musical performances, the large celebration included other forms of creative expression. A Zanzibar Peace Club member recited a poem about putting an end to violence against children. Acrobatic and dance performances entertained participants while echoing the theme of stopping violence.

*Let us stop violence against children everywhere
On the street stop it
In schools stop it
In homes stop it
If we are serious this will end
If we are serious this will end
- Chorus of Let's Stop Violence against Children Everywhere
(Tukomeshe unyanyasaji kwa watoto popote)*

Examples of poems and songs about ending violence against children:

- Tanzania Day of Prayer poems by Peace Club members from Zanzibar are available online. Access them [here](#).
- [Access the lyrics for Tukomeshe unyanyasaji \(Let us stop violence against children\).](#)

Joining forces for a lively celebration

The momentum that built through the rich array of preparatory actions contributed to a vibrant celebration on 20 November 2011 in Dar es Salaam. In addition to the more than 2,000 children who participated, religious leaders, community leaders, educators, government representatives and

representatives of civil society and international organizations joined in the festivities. The celebration was organized by: GNRC, UNICEF, the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children, the Inter-Religious Council of Peace Tanzania, and the Tanzanian Broadcasting Corporation.

The occasion provided a platform for religious leaders from different faiths to affirm their commitment to addressing violence against children before a vast audience of those directly impacted by the issue– the children themselves. The celebration also included the presentation of the children’s statement and inspirational words from GNRC, UNICEF, and government representatives, punctuated by engaging artistic performances.

The power of faith both anchored the event and extended its reach. The festivities concluded at noon when a Christian representative and a Muslim representative led the crowd in prayers about ending violence against children. Recipients of the text messages around the country joined them in prayer.

For additional information:

- Access the [Commitment from Religious Leaders on Preventing Violence against Children in Tanzania](#).
- Access the [video and story](#) about the celebration on UNICEF’s website.

Lessons Learned:

- All actors can contribute in some way to efforts to stop violence against children.
- Successful planning begins early on and involves different stakeholders from the outset.
- The arts can be a powerful tool for bridging cultural divides.
- Using technology such as text messaging and working closely with the media are two important strategies for increasing public awareness about priority issues and campaigns.