Day of the African Child
Online Event Report
2020 #SikuYaMtoto
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Background

Each year, on 16th June key child rights organisations and the media join hands to commemorate the Day of the African Child in Tanzania. This year C-Sema together with our partners worked jointly to commemorate this event. The event took place online to ensure everyone’s safety because COVID-19.

In 1991 the African Union and its Member States created this day "The Day of the African Child (DAC)" to remember the 1976 student uprising in Soweto, South Africa, where students who marched in protest against apartheid were brutally murdered. We therefore, use this day to celebrate the children of Africa and call for serious introspection and commitment towards addressing the numerous challenges they face.
HAKI ZA WATOTO:
Una wajibu wa kuzilinda,
kuziheshimu na kuzitekeleza
The event

Four sessions were organised as explained hereunder.

A dialogue for children about their rights and protection as well as the role they play in protecting themselves and others; and the role, others play in protecting them from abuse. The dialogue was meant to be a learning experience but fun as well so there will be some light casual questions about their experiences about being children in Africa.

A panel of 15 children from different social and economic background in Tanzania specifically, 5 children from a rural district, Mbozi; 5 from Pemba representing Zanzibar; and from Tanzania’s largest city, Dar es salaam were picked to lead this discussion while a number of other children participated online, as audience. What's more astounding is that the app (the online platform) used to facilitate this discussion was created by our very own young Tanzanian girls from Dar es salaam based digital technology organisation, Apps&Girls.

The online event was so full of energy from children panelists who were well articulate on issues they want redress. They shared stories about family decisions taken for and on their behalf without being consulted. These decisions range from colour of cloth, meal choices, school selection, to forced marriage, FGM, etc.

The event was a stuck reminder to both government and CSOs to be mindful of children participation in project design, planning and implementation to guarantee their voice and maximum impact on their lives.
The second session was art. Children were hosted by a young brilliant upcoming artist who held an arts and craft class where children from all over Tanzania were happy to join and learn about drawing, painting and all things arts.

Parenting session was third. A conversation between parents (of children between 0-8 years of age) about their parenting journeys. Oftentimes parents get so caught up in striving to impart on their children the values that were given to them by their own parents and guardians that they forget to pause and reflect on all the new lessons that our children and the journey, that is parenting is giving them. They spend time teaching manners, hardwork and teaching children how to protect themselves from things like violence & abuse. “Mwanangu Amenifundisha…” asked participating parents to pause in their journey. It was a great conversation about parenting, parents shared the things they have learnt and re-learnt and about their perception on how safe our children are in today’s world.

The fourth and last event was Innovation in Information and Communication Technology (ICT). There were presentations from three young ladies who have innovated solutions using ICT - the first one was Doreen Michael who is currently working on an integrated school management system to help schools manage data, etc. Then, Grace Joachim whose team is currently working on a startup called WakusomaDrive which works like Uber for students. Parents can book a school bus for their children and they can also track them the whole time, when they are picked at the meet/pickup-point, dropped at school, and dropped back at the original meet/drop-off point.

The last presentation was from Balbina Gullam who talked about Huduma Smart, she trains domestic workers and provides a job market for them via a tailored website. In all presentations, people were able to ask questions and engage with the girls who were presenting. We received feedback that it was FUN and informative!
Media coverage

Media coverage on this event was aawesome! Both main stream media and social media partners covered the events on their respective channels. Just to mention a select few media houses and media programmes we were on, starting with Clouds FM’s Power Breakfast on 16th and 17th June, TBC FM’s Kumepambazuka / Pambazuko on 16th June, Channel Ten’s Baragumu, Times FM, ZBC, TV E, E FM, EATV, Mlimani TV, Mlimani Radio and Azam TV.

Our social media conversations with hashtag #SikuYaMtoto were led by Elimika Wikiendi and Jamii Forums across all social media channels, i.e. on Jamii Forums, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. Social media impressions and reach figures to be added....
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Dorothy Ernest, Programs Manager at CDF, explaining the challenges children are facing during COVID-19 pandemic during Day of African Child commemoration.

Ipyana Andrew, Digital Skill and Security Manager at JamiiForums, providing an insight on children’s safety while using the Internet.

Euphomia Edward, Programs Officer at CDF, explaining the child friendly justice system in Tanzania during an interview with EATV.

Beatrice Kessy, Helpline Team Leader at C Sema, explaining about the rights and welfare of a Tanzanian-African child. (https://youtu.be/CLN6df0J7bE)
The organising team from all participating organisations would like to send heartfelt gratitude to Carolyne Ekyarisiima - Founder & CEO - Apps and Girls for supporting the event with platform where these online conversations took place.

We would also like to recognize thank our moderators Nancy Sumari (parenting) and Barbra Mtemvu (children) from JengaHub, Christian Bwaya who joined the parenting session as parenting expert and Emanuel Mtawa (Leon’s Art Club).

We send our gratitude to Jesca Ndana and Haika Harrison Save the Children International Dar es Salaam, Dickson Megera Save the Children International Zanzibar office and Hidaya Haonga Save the Children Mbozi District office for coordinating children participation from their respective locations.

Lastly, we would like to thank our event’s overall coordinators Celina Baragwiha from Children’s Dignity Forum, Modesta Joseph Msabila from Apps&Girls, Jane Haule and Itanisa Mbise from C-Sema for their tireless efforts that saw this event a success.
Final note

We use this day ‘The day of the African Child’ to remind leaders, citizens and media sources of the type of development this country and nation needs in protecting children's rights, especially that the less fortunate, should have a portion of the national budget allocated for them.

We should know that the price of not doing anything is bigger than that of taking effective action. Investing in this important cause ensures a better life for all Tanzania children.