

# CALAO EXPRESS 196 (July 2020)

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(AMWCY)

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Write to us via : [maejt94@gmail.com](mailto:maejt94@gmail.com) ou à [capexcom@endatiersmonde.org](mailto:capexcom@endatiersmonde.org) and visit  
our website at :

<http://www.maejt.org> and on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/maejt.francais>

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- \* *Publication: Newly published*

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## Special: COVID-19 and the Day of the African child celebration

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### Introduction:

June 16, Day of the African Child was celebrated this year differently by the WCY. Like other organizations, WCY celebrated the Day in their different countries. However, to respect the individual and collective measures against Covid-19, the key word was to celebrate the Day differently in few numbers or through discussions via social networks on the challenges facing children, especially those in difficulty with the law. Below are some of the activities undertaken in some countries to celebrate the Day:

### \*Benin: reflection day on the alternatives, making and distribution of mufflers

The WCY of Benin devoted the day of June 16 to reflect on as many alternative suggestions as possible to protect the children and youth who work in the marketplaces, motor parking stations and learning centers. Beyond this day, discussions will continue on various fora such as on WhatsApp and Yahoo Messenger as well as in the AWCY grassroots groups to collect alternative proposals that will better support children and youth during the ongoing COVID – 19 pandemic and enable them to deal with it safely. In addition, through the apprentices of the training center called “Victims in Actors” located in Dodji Bata in the commune of Ze, the NCAWCY/Benin made more than 1000 mufflers which it distributed to vulnerable working children and youth from towns and villages in each department of Benin. This muffler distribution campaign lasted throughout June under the supervision of the national coordination of the AWCY in Benin.

[iresounnouho@gmail.com](mailto:iresounnouho@gmail.com), [aejtaguegue@gmail.com](mailto:aejtaguegue@gmail.com)

### \*Ghana: COVID-19 : migration and safety

In the fight against the pandemic, awareness and information on risks has become more important to ensure that people follow safety precautions and know what to do if they fall ill. With the government's restrictive measures to slow down the pandemic, the International Organization for Migration (IOM - Ghana) is using all available means to reach the general public. To do this, IOM Ghana has partnered with AWCY Ghana called Welfare of Children and Youth Association (WCYA) to raise awareness in three regions: Volta, Greater Accra and the North. The WCYA through its members, engaged communities on how to undertake safe migration and prevent COVID-19. It distributed posters and postcards made by IOM in bus stations and other areas where significant movements were taking place such as in Sarpeiman, Ashaiman and its surroundings in the Greater Accra region, as well as in the municipalities of Ho and Hohoe and the district of Afadjato in the Volta region. Similar activities were organized in the northern region of Ghana.

The key message was that we are all in the same boat, calling for tolerance and solidarity in an effort to counter stigma against children and youth migrants. They urged community members to adhere to the safety protocols in order to contain the spread of the virus. Martin, the national WCYA coordinator of Ghana expressed satisfaction over the support that the WCYA has received from the IOM, saying: “The posters and postcards developed by the IOM are child-friendly and contain important messages on how to protect yourself from COVID-19, regular hand

washing, tolerance and solidarity, how to seek medical assistance in the event of symptoms, social distancing protocols, among others. These messages are appropriate and truly crucial in communicating messages to youth and, more importantly to be able to explain the risks to children so as to ensure that no one is left behind. "

[tornyesinu1984@yahoo.com](mailto:tornyesinu1984@yahoo.com), [isaackotey21.ik@gmail.com](mailto:isaackotey21.ik@gmail.com)

#### **\*Mauritania: WCY celebrate the Day of the African Child in Covid-19 mode**

The National Coordination of the AWCY of Mauritania celebrated June 16, the Day of the African Child in Covid-19 mode. It is in this context that social networks have been used as a tool to get the message out. In fact, the WCY organized a debate related to the theme: "Access to justice adapted to children in Africa" in the WhatsApp group of WCY in Mauritania. To magnify the day, the WCY chose one of the first animators of the AWCY of Nouakchott as guest. He became a social worker in an NGO called Fouda Noura, and works directly with people in conflict with the law and particularly children. The debate sparked a lot of exchanges and sharing while the discussions focused on the following points: definition of the terminology of juvenile justice in Mauritania, its causes and consequences, the question of reintegration of children in trouble with the law in their family and within the community, and the role of WCY on the issue of "children in trouble with the law".

The WCY found the discussions and the contents of the exchanges very interesting. Debates will continue through mini-panels on issues related to the protection of children.

[cnaejtmauritanie@gmail.com](mailto:cnaejtmauritanie@gmail.com), [amadoumauritanie@gmail.com](mailto:amadoumauritanie@gmail.com), [ajejtmauritanie@gmail.com](mailto:ajejtmauritanie@gmail.com),

#### **\*RDC: sensitization and distribution of mufflers in the children's department in prison**

With the easing of containment measures, the CNAWCY/ DRC commemorated the Day of the African child at the children's department in the central prison of Bukavu. The goal was to show these children that COVID-19 is a reality, since some of them are unaware of its extent. The WCY did not only proceed with the distribution of mufflers and hydro-alcoholic gel but also with the sensitization of the children on the respect of the barrier gestures. All this was done in a friendly atmosphere alongside with the judicial authorities of the central prison of Bukavu. The fund used to finance this activity comes from the rabbit breeding project that the CNAWCY is undertaking. To amplify the impact of these initiatives, future programs have been drawn up in collaboration with stakeholders.

[cnaejtrdcongo@gmail.com](mailto:cnaejtrdcongo@gmail.com), [lucien.lulema@gmail.com](mailto:lucien.lulema@gmail.com), [kavunjangabolucien@gmail.com](mailto:kavunjangabolucien@gmail.com)

#### **\*Uganda: Central and Southern Africa share experiences on access to child-friendly justice systems**

AWCY / Uganda known as WCYMU, organized a regional meeting to mark the Day of the African Child and share experiences on access to child-friendly systems in East, Central and Southern Africa. Among the countries that participated in this regional meeting were Uganda, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and DR Congo. Discussions focused on defining child-friendly justice systems, national as well as international commitments. One of the main results of the meeting was that, while most national laws recognized the rights of the child and that laws exist, the real situation on the ground remained different. It has been observed that the perpetrators of these crimes against children continue to escape prosecution and punishment, that investigations, prosecutions and judgments are slow due to ineffective methods of treatment, among others. Efforts have included the use of child-friendly courts, the use of child protection committees, children's ongoing awareness of the justice system, creating synergies with responsible bodies such as the police to ensure that offenders are prosecuted, among other measures.

[aj45jose@yahoo.com](mailto:aj45jose@yahoo.com), [wcyuganda@yahoo.com](mailto:wcyuganda@yahoo.com)

#### ***Newly published:***

The French and English versions of "WCY face the Challenge" n° 20, annual bulletin of the AMWCY have just been published. The bulletin highlights the regional activities of the AMWCY and those carried out by national coordination and WCYAs in the member countries of the Movement. You can read it by clicking on the links below:

**English version:** <https://www.maejt.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/D%C3%A9fi-des-EJT-n%C2%B020-English-Version-22-06-2020.pdf>

**French version:** <https://www.maejt.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/D%C3%A9fi-des-EJT-n%C2%B0-20-Fran%C3%A7ais-Version.pdf>

**COVID-19: Voices of Working children and youth:** This flyer is the synthesis of the WCYs' points of view on the impacts of COVID -19 on the populations and especially children as well as the recommendations they made. It is in two versions (French and English). You can read it by clicking on the links below:

**French version:** [https://www.maejt.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Covid-19\\_Voix-des-Enfants-et-Jeunes-Travailleurs\\_-1.pdf](https://www.maejt.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Covid-19_Voix-des-Enfants-et-Jeunes-Travailleurs_-1.pdf)

**English version:** [https://www.maejt.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Covid-19\\_-Voice-of-Working-Children-and-Youth-1.pdf](https://www.maejt.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Covid-19_-Voice-of-Working-Children-and-Youth-1.pdf)

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