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- \*Benin: an organizational diagnosis to revitalize grassroots groups and AWCY
- \*Burkina Faso: General Assembly of Associations of Working Children and Youth
- \* Mali: Children and youth diagnose the situation of children's rights in the country
- \* Chad: national consultation workshop on respect for children's rights
- \* Zimbabwe: advocacy for a reduction in child labor

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## \*Benin: an organizational diagnosis to revitalize grassroots groups and AWCY

In order to relaunch its activities, revitalize and encourage the proper functioning of its grassroots groups, the National Coordination of Associations of Working Children and Youth of Benin held a virtual exchange meeting on 27 February, 2021 on the theme: "I swear to tell the whole truth about the functioning of my AWCY". This theme enabled each city to make a clear and in-depth diagnosis of its functioning, to highlight its strengths and weaknesses and the approaches to solutions to the problems posed or the difficulties encountered. This session produced a capacity building report for WCY that was accompanied by an action plan which will be implemented very soon.

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## \*Burkina Faso: General Assembly of Associations of Working Children and Youth

During the last General Assembly (GA) of the National Coordination of the Associations of Working Children and Youth of Burkina (CNAEJT / B) held from 9 to 12 February 2021, the participants spoke of the withdrawal of 8,543 boys and 6,201 girls aged between 10 and 17 years from the worst forms of work in quarries and artisanal gold mining sites. These boys and girls have been integrated into schools and/or placed in trade apprenticeships, in workshops and vocational training centers.

Furthermore, in collaboration with grassroots groups, the AWCY have set up 200 child-friendly spaces, 100 functional listening points in which they welcome, listen, refer and take care of children and youth in a situation of mobility as well as internally displaced children and those from host communities. Through the savings-credit strategy set up by the CNAEJT / B and its AWCY in their respective localities, 96 men and 492 women carry out profitable economic activities that enable them to educate, care for their children and participate in social events in their community. The CNAEJT/B was able to carry out its activities with the technical and financial support of its partners such as the Ministry of Women, National Solidarity, the Family and Humanitarian Action, UNICEF/Burkina, Save the Children, Italian Center for Children's Aid (CIAI), the Raoul Follereau Foundation, the NGO Little Hand and the KIBARE Association and the support of its Godmother, Doctor Marie Berthe OUEDRAOGO.

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## \* Mali: Children and youth diagnose the situation of children's rights in the country

Under the coordination of the Associations of Working Children and Youth of Mali, consultations were held with groups and organizations of children and youth on the

implementation of the articles of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) and other instruments ratified by the Malian state in favor of children. These consultations enabled children and youth to comprehensively analyze the current situation of children in Mali, to assess the level of application of the signed conventions relating to children (CRC and ACRWC), to capitalize on the achievements and shortcomings on issues related to childhood development.

Previously, the children and youth conducted studies in 8 regions of the country (Kayes, Koulikoro, Ségou, Sikasso, Mopti, Gao, Tombouctou, Kidal and Bamako) by meeting with authorities of communities in different localities. In doing so, they investigated the realities of the children's rights situation in the country. For example, in Kayes, the children did some consultations and organized focus groups that reached 54 families, 225 parents including 120 women and 105 men in the community. In the regions of Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal, the children and youth observed that the insecurity of the territory means that children's rights are violated, while children's education is completely degraded. In a bid to improve the situation of children in the country, the children recommend, among other things: to consistently remain informed about the realities, the ACRWC and about the laws ratified by Mali, to multiply the synergy of actions between OCY (Organizations of Children and Youth), to create more infrastructures, and to equip training centers, etc. Note that the participants in this workshop come from: OJADE, AWCY, CCNEJ, APJEC, AMECBA.

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#### \* **Chad: national consultation workshop on respect for children's rights**

With the help of national consultations, the National Coordination of the Associations of Working Children and Youth (CNAEJT) in Chad has taken stock of the respect for children's rights in Chad. These consultations allowed the children to express themselves on the issues that concern them in order to arrive at better orientations in the fight for the respect of rights. On this occasion, the children of 11 localities (Abéché, Ndjamena, Guelendeng, Kélo, Bongor, Bénoye, Béré, Koumra, Bébédjia, Moundou and Koundoul) took stock of the situation of respect for children's rights and identified the major problems related to non-respect of rights. As a result, five major recurring problems in the experiences of children in Chad were revealed, namely: *exploitation and child labor, - excision and early marriage, registration of children at birth, - the education of children and that of girls in particular, - the rural exodus of young people*. Civil society organizations were represented by the head of the Association pour la Promotion des Libertés Fondamentales au Tchad (APLFT). Proposals for accompanying measures have been made to the Government and to Civil Society Organizations to provide solutions to these problems.

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#### \* **Zimbabwe: advocacy for a reduction in child labor**

In Raffingora, 50 WCY including 17 boys and 33 girls took part in an awareness raising campaign with 5 commercial farmers at the beginning of this year. The objective of the workshop was to advocate for the reduction of working hours for children and youth. After an exchange, the owners of the farms agree to provide minimum work as well as working hours adapted to the age of the children. During the meeting, it was also discovered that 80% of the WCY who took part in the workshop do not have proper identification documents such as a birth certificate or a national identity card.

However, without identity documents, access to banks, mobile money services and loans is difficult. Farm bosses therefore send the remuneration of the WCY either to the bank accounts of relatives or friends who in turn use the salaries of the WCY working on the farms. Thus, the WCY were concerned about the need for them to have national documents in order to be

recognized. This will have made it possible to limit their exploitation by family members or older peers. This discussion drew the attention of 24 traditional leaders who gathered to discuss the way forward so that each WCY can access their right to nationality. Thus, it was noted that the Traditional Chiefs will take the initiative to contact the General Office so that the WCY of Raffingora can have access to identification documents. This would allow them to easily withdraw their salaries from their own accounts without asking to use other people's bank accounts.

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**Coming up soon: Calao Express No. 204**