The adventures of Kokotako and Assibavi

ARE THERE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MIGRANTS CHILDREN AND YOUTH?

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West Africa remains a historical zone of migration and mixture of population. This migration is gaining momentum in the Abidjan-Lagos corridor, an area characterised by a significant migratory movements of children under 18 years.

The report of the baseline study on the situation of children affected by mobility in the Gulf of Guinea which was published in January 2018 as part of the implementation of CORAL project, indicates that 75% of migrants from West and Central Africa move within sub-saharan Africa.

Child mobility refers to the movement of a child or a group of children from one locality to another within or outside their country in search of a better life. Mobility takes into account the changes that the child undergoes along his/her journey to his/her destination as well as his/her experiences during his trip.

Among the reasons for the movement of these children and young people, many of them are linked to the search for employment opportunities, education, training and income generating activities (IGAs) to build their future.

Unfortunately, often time due to lack of preparation, most children involved in mobility face risks of various kinds.

Recognising the fact that migration does not only come with risks or vulnerabilities but also with opportunities and personal development, CORAL project seeks to support migrant children throughout their migratory journey (in places of origin, transit, and destination) thereby respecting their best interests.

To this end, a special attention is given to the development of various awareness and communication tools in the implementation of this project in order to induce lasting behavioural changes among concerned actors, particularly children and young migrants.

It is in this context that Working Children and Youths Workers (WCYs) from Ghana, Togo and Benin Republic were brought together in Lomé from 20 to 22 September 2018 to develop a script on the opportunities in child and youth migration; this scrip will be used to produce a comic strip.

This volume 2 of the comic book complements the first one which laid more emphasis on the risks associated with early and dangerous migration as well as on the conditions for safe and secure migration.

This masterpiece is the result of the work of children and youths who are committed to educating their peers.

I invite you, dear children, youths, and dear adults working with children and youth movements to draw from the lessons herein after reading this communication and awareness tool.

CORAL Project Regional Coordinator
Alfred SANTOS
Kokotako

Assibavi
We are in the beautiful village of Agbetiko

Here is kokotako, a boy from the village.

These are kokotako's parents.

Kokotako come here!

My son, you will not go to school anymore, you will learn a trade.

I agree, because there is no more money.

Never!!! I will continue school.

The child leaves the village for the city.
Kokotako on his way to the city.

BOM!  Ouch!  I hope I won’t fall!

On getting to the bus station Kokotako alights.

Kokotako in difficult situations. He...

...carrying bags of cement...

...doing all sort of jobs.

Finally, Kokotako was found by a social worker.
KOUNYOWOU, the neighbouring village to AGBETIKO where Assibavi is.

Assibavi has lost her parents and has no one to support her.

She is suffering a lot.

I can't take it any longer!

Assibavi leaves the village and arrives the city.

I do not know where to go!!!

Suddenly, Assibavi is held by a hand.

She was sexually abused.

Oh!!! Help!!!!!!
Assibavi finally found a woman she works for in the market.

Assibavi, come and join AWCY*
I like it, yes I accept.

This is Assibavi, the lady I told you about.

Welcome Assibavi, we will help.

Assibavi benefits from AWCY literacy classes.

Assibavi attends management and accounting training.

Assibavi, it was hard for you, but you came out as the best.

Thanks!

* Association of Working Children and Youth
Assibavi here is some money to start your business.

Thank you, I promise to do my best.

Thank God, I am selling my own goods now.

4 years later, she owns a food stuff shop.

Here is your balance madam, thank you for coming.

Assibavi meets a "Nana Benz" who wants to help her in her business.

Assibavi you will gain more by going to Dubai.

Thank you madam.

Everything works for Assibavi and her business is doing well.

Assibavi now owns a car.

Assibavi I am happy for you because you have evolved well.

Thank you my friend, all thanks to you.

Nana Benz: A rich lady who sells loincloth
Follow me!
Why? I do not know you.

The little Kokotako runs away.
What does he want from me that one?

I want to help him. Why is he running away?
Trust me, I really want to help you.

I'm listening to you, sir.
It is the social service. We can help you go to school if you don't mind.

Do you really want to help me go to school?
Yes!!!
Thank you! Thank you sir!
Kokotako seeing his dream coming to pass.

During break time.

I sir!

Give me back my pen!

I was just playing with you, don’t be angry.

Kokotako moved on in his studies and had his senior secondary certificate.

Thank you uncle for helping me achieve my dream.

Congratulations you were brilliant.
After his school, Kokotako was recruited as a teacher and a few years later, he became the headmaster of a primary school in the village of AGBETIKO.

These students are not working hard!

Sir, my parents are preventing my sister from going to school.

Why?

My parents do not have money to send me to school and they want to marry me off to an old man.

Give you out in marriage!!! at your age, never!!! we will find a solution to this.

At last the girl is now going to school.

Congratulations my daughter, you are working hard!

Kokotako has created an NGO to sensitize parents and help children in difficulty in the village.

I will do everything necessary for all children to go to school.
We return to Assibavi who, not only has succeeded in her business but, has also decided to impact her environment.

To achieve this, Assibavi returns to her village.

Assibavi is warmly welcomed by the children.

Assibavi in discussion with the chief.

"I want to build a center to help all those children I saw earlier."

"The centre is well built. Through this, Assibavi has succeeded in helping girls in her neighborhood from all forms of violence."

"Thank you my daughter for this initiative."
Assibavi! Tell me what are the rights not enjoyed by the children in mobility?

Kokotako, their rights are:
- Right to play,
- Right to health,
- Right to life,
- Right to food and water,
- Right to fair justice,
- Right to education / Training,
- Right to participation,
- Right to rest,
- Right to non-discrimination,
- Right to protection,
- Right to freedom of expression,
- Right to shelter,
- Right to light work,
- Right to access basic social services, in his/her transit or destination point,
- Right to a name and an identity,
- Right to security.
THIS COMIC STRIP WAS PUT TOGETHER 
BY THE FOLLOWING CHILDREN AND YOUTH OF AMWCY:

Franck AMELIKE, 15 years old, Ghana
Emmanuel HOUNDEGANME, 17 years old, Togo
Véronique BYLL-CATARIA, 16 years old, Bénin
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If I leave my village where
I don't go to school
I work too much
I am beaten
How do I protect myself?

If the people I meet on my way...
PRESENTATION OF TERRE DES HOMMES

Founded in 1960 in Lausanne by Edmond Kaiser to help children victims of Algerian war, the Terre des hommes Foundation is currently the largest Swiss Child Aid Organisation. The Foundation is committed to sustainably improving the conditions of life and development of the most vulnerable children and defends their rights as defined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). In humanitarian crises, this commitment is joined with the duty of saving lives, reducing the suffering of children and preserving their right to live and their dignity.

The values of Terre des hommes (Tdh) - courage, ambition, respect and commitment - are brought to everyday life by all those involved in carrying out the organisation’s mission and projects.

Tdh is building a better future for poor children and their communities through innovative approaches, concrete and sustainable solutions. Active in more than 30 countries, Terre des hommes develops and implements projects and field programs that improve the daily lives of more than 2.2 million children and their families, particularly in the areas of health and protection. This commitment is funded by individual and institutional support, 85% of which is allocated directly to the Terre des hommes programmes.

Tdh aims to be an ambassador for children’s rights, in Switzerland and around the world, by carrying out campaigns to promote the fundamental rights of children or to denounce violations of these rights, notably as set out in the Convention of the Rights of the Child adopted by the UN in 1989.

With its vision of impact by 2030, Terre des hommes is committed to promoting and achieving significant and lasting changes in the situation of children, especially the most vulnerable, to improve their well-being and exercise of their rights as defined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

To make a difference in the protection of the child, Terre des hommes has chosen to focus its ambition on three priority areas targeting present and future vulnerabilities of children at the global level:

- Children affected by migration, globally in major migratory flows, places of origin, transit and destination.
- Child victims of exploitation through work,
- Children in conflict with the law.

PRESENTATION OF ENDA THIRD WORLD

Enda TW founded in 1972, is an international NGO present in several southern countries of Africa, Latin America and Asia. It is made up of autonomous entities, Enda acts in several areas related to environment and development. Its main line of action is the fight against poverty.

ENDA Youth Action is one of the entities that make up ENDA TW. Founded in 1985 and based in Dakar, ENDA Youth Action (EYA) has as main objective the accompaniment and support for children and young people in Africa. At the organisational level, the Youth Action entity operates through two structures, one international and the other national. The interventions of the international structure commonly known as the «International Programme» focus on supporting the African Movement of Working Children and Youth (AMWCY) in twenty-seven African countries.
As for the national «National Programme» structure, its interventions are mainly carried out in several cities in Senegal where programmes and projects focusing not only on children and young workers but also on other social groups are being implemented. Children in difficult situations (talibé children, children broken homes, out-of-school children, idle working-class children in neighborhoods, children on the move, etc.). Since its creation, EYA has been supporting children and young people in many fields. This support is based on specific missions, namely:

- Improve the quality of life of children in difficult situations, who are the majority of the population, their working and learning conditions, including education and recreation.
- Support children and young workers in their fight against abuse, early exodus, and abuse.
- Support the collaboration of children’s organisations with authorities, and partners, in promoting their rights and dignity and taking them into account in public policies.
- Promote self-promotion and child participation, by supporting community dynamics to better deal with children’s issues

PRESENTATION OF AMWCY

The African Movement of Working Children and Youth (AMWCY) was founded in 1994 in Bouaké (Ivory Coast) by children and young workers from 4 West African countries namely Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Senegal, Mali.

There is a large movement made up of Children, girls and boys, who have not had the opportunity to go to school or dropped out too early for a variety of reasons. These children and young people were forced to choose to work so as to flourish socially, help their families, and unburden them of the weight of their care.

They contribute to the development of their country. The Movement is present today in 27 African countries. As at the end of 2015, it has 975 054 members and supporters including 308,072 active members, grouped into 4,331 grassroots groups, 380 associations. The majority (73%) of its members are children under 18 with 58% girls. Its founding members have identified twelve (12) priority rights areas to fight against their bad working conditions, to ensure their protection. Thus, they formulated a programme of promotion of these rights, «by highlighting them».

Objectives of AWCY:

- to promote and strengthen the realisation of the 12 rights and the improvement of the living and working conditions of WCYs (Working Children and Youth);
- strengthen the communication skills of members and associations;
- strengthen the capacity of members to implement profitable Income Generating Activities (IGAs);
- build their capacity by training members of associations and facilitators;
- develop collaboration between AWCY, local authorities, international institutions, NGOs and others movements;
- organise AWCYs at the national level, with a view to carry out local and national programmes;
- participate in debates and lobby on behalf of villagers at the United Nations.
NOTA
1- Let us join our efforts together to protect migrant children in our communities by working together to provide them with development opportunities.

2- Institutional and community actors must collaborate to ensure a protective environment for children affected by mobility.

3- All children, including migrant have the same rights. So let us respect their rights and take care of them in all neutrality.

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