



Annual Report 2020

House of Mercy Children's Home Lagos, Nigeria (HOM)

NGO No CAC/IT/No 21690

Preamble

Since 2006, House of Mercy Children's Home, Lagos, Nigeria (HOM) has been striving to provide nutritional, educational, physical and mental health, residential and protection support to children who are marginalised, disadvantaged and excluded in society. Our services continue to grow to meet the increasing demand.

Our support for children takes place on all levels: promoting child protection, the traditional family structure and family preservation and reunification. We provide support for children deprived of parental care; promote an end to child poverty and child hunger; and advocate for children with disabilities, child migrants, displaced children and refugees.

We strive to focus the attention of government officials, policy-makers, decision-makers and community-based organisations on the health, welfare, protection and educational needs of children so they can enact appropriate legislation and ensure that it is effectively enforced.

Our offices are based in Lagos, Nigeria but we work on a wide variety of issues affecting children in several African countries in close cooperation with grassroots community groups and local organisations with whom we share our knowledge, expertise and experience.

Our website and many of our resources are available in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese to enable us communicate more effectively with English-speaking, French-speaking, Spanish-speaking and Portuguese-speaking Africans throughout Africa and in the Diaspora.

At HOM, we do not shy away from tackling the deep-rooted causes of the problems facing Nigerians and Africans as a whole. We also provide tangible solutions that address the root causes so that we can all

take action, at our own level.

Our Annual Report details the impact our work has had over the year 2020, outlining our achievements and celebrating our amazing Staff, Donors, Supporters and Friends, without whom these results could not have been achieved.

To gain further insight into our work, we invite you to visit our [website](#). A PDF version of our brochure titled [HOM in a Nutshell](#) featuring major highlights of our work from October 2006 to October 2020 is also available on our website.



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Our Year in Review

Child Feeding Programme

Since the launch of our Child Feeding Programme (Mobile Kitchen) designed to alleviate the suffering caused by hunger and malnutrition fourteen years ago, we have provided over 500,000 highly nutritious and life-saving meals to child beggars, street children, child scavengers and other needy and vulnerable children and distributed grocery items to over 7000 destitute families, people with disabilities and the elderly in Lagos, Oyo and Ogun States in Nigeria

In an attempt to provide assistance to children and families living in poverty and destitution, the elderly and disabled persons, we carried out several actions of solidarity throughout 2020.



On [World Food Day](#), October 16, 2020, a global day to increase awareness and action to alleviate hunger, we distributed food items to poor and vulnerable children and destitute families as well as residents of the Old People's Home.

A playlist of our [Food Distribution Activities](#) on World Food Day is available on our YouTube channel.

A playlist of our [Child Feeding Programme](#) is also available on our YouTube channel.

Children's Home



Rehabilitation of street children is possible, albeit challenging. Our work with street children has taught us that given the right opportunities and support such as help and guidance in transitioning from street life, assistance in re-connecting with educational opportunities and skill training and employment, street children have tremendous potential.

House of Mercy Children's Home, Lagos, Nigeria (HOM) champions every child's right to a safe, permanent and nurturing home. While some of the 77 children who have passed through our children's home since March 2011 have been reconciled with their families, those who have no home or parents to care for them; and those who cannot be safely reunited with their families remain in our care.

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Our residential programme provides a safe home and a stable family environment where children can learn, grow, and ultimately achieve their dreams and aspirations. We provide high-quality care for our children which includes healthy meals and snacks, comfortable sleeping quarters, clothing, books and educational materials, educational opportunities and recreational activities.

We continue to equip our staff to serve children who have been affected by complex, challenging issues and to ensure that our daily practice of child care is as healthy and effective as possible.

We are committed to protecting the children we work with and have put in place a range of policies and procedures to promote child protection across our services.

In 2020, we welcomed 8 children (3 girls and 5 boys) into our children’s home and 2 children were reunited with their families through our [Family Preservation and Reunification Programme](#).

A playlist of [School Holiday Events](#) featuring children in our children’s home can be viewed on our YouTube channel.

Playlists of our [Street Children Programme](#) and [Christmas Events for Children](#) including some of our actions of solidarity towards impoverished youth, widows and destitute families at Christmas are also available on our YouTube channel.

Child Education Programme



Our experience providing mother-tongue literacy programmes for unschooled child beggars, children from nomadic communities and other marginalised children shows that children learn best in their mother tongue and that literacy in a mother tongue lays the cognitive and linguistic foundation for learning new languages. Simply stated, education in the mother tongue is foundational to future learning and success.

On [International Mother Language Day](#), February 21, 2020, we published a video advocating for the right of all African children (out-of-school children, children from nomadic communities, children from linguistic, ethnic, or cultural minorities, refugees and displaced children, former child soldiers and other marginalised children particularly in the rural areas) who have been excluded from educational opportunities, to education in their mother tongue.

Education in the mother tongue and the preparation of curricula adapted to multilingual contexts and relevant to the needs of the learners should be undertaken if we want out-of-school children to reintegrate into national education systems and gain the skills they need to lead productive lives and positively contribute to society.

These children are part of our hope and our future as a people.

The [Mother Tongue Education](#) video features a collection of books by African academics and experts advocating and presenting guidelines for the use of African languages for the education of Africans and it is available on our YouTube channel.

Playlists of our [Child Education Programme](#) and our [Child Beggar Programme](#) are also available on our YouTube channel.

The video of our [Children's Library](#) which was launched on International Literacy Day, September 8, 2016, to promote and improve literacy skills of children and young adults is available on our YouTube channel.

“Our experience providing mother-tongue literacy programmes shows that children learn best in their mother tongue.”

Children with Disabilities



Children with disabilities belong to one of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups of and they are frequently discriminated against, stigmatised, and excluded from wider society – even by their own families.

Only a small percentage of children with disabilities go to school. Those with learning, speech, physical, cognitive, sensory disabilities or emotional difficulties who are fortunate to be enrolled in school are more likely to drop out. Many children with disabilities who remain in school are excluded from learning because the curriculum has not been adapted to their needs or teachers do not have the capacity or time to make the necessary adaptations, and/or they do not have access to the assistive devices necessary for their learning needs.

Many of the children with disabilities who are not enrolled in school could participate well if schools had the capacity in terms of knowledge, skills and equipment/facilities to respond to their specific needs, such as special education services for children with behavioural challenges, learning difficulties and autism, accessible buildings for children with physical disabilities and specialised support for children with severe disabilities.

At HOM, we believe that children with disabilities are entitled to the same nurturance, care, protection, nutrition and encouragement as other children. That is why we constantly strive to bring the issues of children with disabilities to the forefront.

Our video on Disability Awareness features some of our actions of solidarity with children with disabilities and is available on our [Video Gallery](#) and on our [YouTube channel](#). We also have an article entitled [Children with Disabilities: An Invisible Group in Need of Attention](#) available in English, French and Spanish on our website.

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Child Mental Health



Family secrecy in connection with child sexual abuse, including incest, is a key challenge for child protection work. The concealment of mental illnesses such as depression, severe mood swings, self-harming behaviour and suicide attempts are devastating for the patient.

At House of Mercy Children’s Home, Lagos, Nigeria (HOM), we firmly believe that by raising awareness around the many facets of mental health, we can help remove the shrouds of shame, stigma, secrecy and denial associated with mental health issues and help children and adolescents develop their self-esteem, strengthen their coping mechanisms and provide them with the skills to face and overcome emotional trauma.

Mental health conditions among children and young people, particularly those in vulnerable communities are rapidly becoming more pervasive and more urgent. Unfortunately, most people do not have access to the resources they need when they need help. In 2020, we attempted to address these challenges by compiling a comprehensive list of resources that can help gain a better understanding of Mental Health and Wellness.

Our list spans 134 resources in English, French and Portuguese. These resources have been developed by African, African-American, Afro-Brazilian, Guyanese, Martiniquan psychiatrists, psychotherapists, psychologists, doctors, researchers and writers. These professionals are devoted to addressing issues ranging from general mental illnesses and disorders such as ADHD, anxiety, depression, suicide and substance abuse to psychosocial issues such as domestic violence, child abuse and Black-on-Black violence. Some of the resources also provide context and shed light on the effects of historical trauma and oppression such as slavery, conquest, genocide, colonialism and racism to the specific mental health needs of children, youth, women, and families.

We encourage you to take a look at these resources and share with those who need them.

The [Mental Health and Wellness Resources](#) video is available on our YouTube channel.

A playlist of our [Child Health Programme](#) is available on our YouTube channel.

Child Protection



When people prey on the weak in our society and take advantage of those who are unable to protect their own interests, whether they be children who have been abandoned, abused, or neglected by their parents, youth in the juvenile justice system, the disabled, the mentally challenged or the elderly, it is essential that we address these issues head-on.

Child safety and well-being is a shared community responsibility and we all have to constantly be vigilant and aware that children may experience violence, abuse or neglect when their families are struggling with chronic challenges such as mental health issues, harmful dependencies such as alcoholism, drugs and smoking, domestic violence or extreme financial stress.

Addiction to the internet and pornography has also fostered unthinkable cases of violence and sexual abuse. It is important to keep this in mind because without creating solutions to tackle both the root causes and the consequences of child abuse and violence, the issue will continue to manifest itself.

We have published a number of articles in recent years to raise public awareness and highlight steps to take to protect the weakest and the most powerless among us:

- [Child Abuse is Everyone's Problem](#),
- [The Little Match Girl](#) and
- [There is a Mouse Trap in the House](#).

These articles are also available in French and Spanish on our [Blogger](#) page.

Simplified versions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history, are available on our website in [English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#) to facilitate an awareness of the CRC.

The [Events](#) page of our website also includes a list of dates for raising awareness and understanding of the key issues facing children.

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In 2018, we published a video entitled [Stop Child Abuse](#) in English and French aimed at protecting children from childhood sexual abuse including incest, physical abuse and neglect; combating the various forms of injustice, violence and deprivation inflicted upon so many children in different settings (home, school, community, religious institutions, humanitarian crises etc.); and changing mindsets and social norms that tolerate violence against children. The video is available on our [video gallery](#) and on our [YouTube channel](#).

We encourage others to join us in influencing mindsets, attitudes and behaviours by sharing the [Stop Child Abuse](#) video with their families, friends and colleagues. By raising awareness, we can help stop child abuse and neglect before they start.

Other actions that can be taken to prevent and stop all acts of violence and abuse perpetrated against children include the use of behaviour change communication and awareness raising materials/initiatives such as stickers, billboards, leaflets, radio shows and road shows.

Toll Free Rescue Lines for child abuse and domestic violence reporting and information on how to report suspected child abuse and neglect to the relevant authorities are available on our [website](#).

House of Mercy Children's Home, Lagos, Nigeria (HOM) is a member of the Child Protection Network, Alimosho Local Government, Lagos State Chapter. We will continue to work closely with government agencies, community organisations, groups and individuals and actively take part in the collective efforts to ensure that policies and solutions being adopted and developed are aimed at addressing the protection needs of children so that they can have a childhood free of violence.

"Toll Free Rescue Lines for child abuse and domestic violence reporting and information on how to report suspected child abuse and neglect to the relevant authorities are available on our [website](#)."

Ogun State Outreach

We continued to expand into more locations in 2020 to provide support to vulnerable children, the elderly, disabled persons and families living on the margins of society.

We carried out outreach activities in Ogun State, a distance of about 197km from Lagos State where HOM is located and distributed baby care items, food items, toiletries, hygiene kits and ankara fabrics to vulnerable children, destitute families, the elderly and disabled persons.

The video of our [Ogun State Outreach](#) is available on our YouTube Channel.



Humanitarian Assistance: IDPs in Northeast Nigeria



For the seventh consecutive year, we continued to step up our efforts to provide much needed assistance to children and families in crisis and communities experiencing severe trauma in the Northeast region of Nigeria.

In 2020, we published a [video](#) highlighting some of our most recent activities in support of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) on our YouTube Channel.

A comprehensive view of the activities carried out in support of IDPs in the Northeast region of Nigeria is available on our [Video Gallery](#) and also on our [YouTube channel](#).

The video aims to raise awareness about the plight, courage and resilience of IDPs in Northeast Nigeria.

Humanitarian Assistance: Bukavu, Democratic Republic of Congo

Resource-rich lands are coveted by former colonial invaders, armed actors, and multinational companies and resource wars have caused the deaths and disablement of millions of innocent civilians, forced millions from their homes, increased the gap between the rich and the poor, and contributed to massive environmental destruction in African nations over the past six decades.

After more than three decades of internal armed conflict during which the Congolese have been thrust into a maelstrom of war, hatred and destruction that has devastated infrastructure, ruined the economy and brought about massive suffering and population displacement, the crisis continues to have a huge impact on children inside Democratic Republic of Congo, across the region and beyond.

In 2020, in cooperation with local communities in Bukavu, we continued to provide humanitarian aid to conflict-affected populations and children to help them cope with the impact of conflict and enable them to resume their childhoods.

In addition to serving the immediate requirements of conflict-affected populations for safety and security, we also ensured that their long-term needs for food, shelter, water, sanitation, education, mental health and psychosocial support and income generation activities were met.

The video of our humanitarian assistance work in Bukavu, Democratic Republic of Congo is available on our [Video Gallery](#) and also on our [YouTube channel](#).



Humanitarian Assistance Programme - Africa

Our humanitarian assistance programme strives to stand up for the oppressed and downtrodden, especially for those whose rights have been crushed; those whose very existence is threatened and those who are stalked by genocide.

The geographical reach of our [humanitarian assistance work](#) covers the following regions:

- [Northeast region of Nigeria](#)
- [Democratic Republic of Congo](#)
- [Central African Republic](#)
- [Ebola affected nations](#) (Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea)
- [The Sahel](#)
- [Horn of Africa](#)

We work closely with local partners to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to vulnerable populations in need through shelter, nutrition, health-care, sanitation, education and empowerment initiatives.

By working with local grassroots organisations who understand the mother tongue languages of the affected populations, we are able to leverage existing assets to more adequately assist vulnerable populations in a cost-efficient manner. These local partners are familiar with the cultural and political setting and also have a proven record of addressing the needs of their communities. With this symbiotic collaboration, we are able to cater for basic needs such as shelter, food, potable water, sanitation, education, health care and income generating activities.

A playlist of our [Humanitarian Assistance Programme](#) is available on our YouTube channel.

Africans United for Peace Campaign



Mercenaries have been used extensively in Africa since the 1950s to:

- prevent African nations from regaining their independence,
- destabilise newly independent States or legitimate governments whose political views have not suited former colonial invaders and the international community of foreign nations,
- carry out kidnappings and terrorist activities,
- stir up religious, ethnic and xenophobic tensions and
- create chaos, civil unrest, armed violence, civil wars and secessionist wars.

In 2019, in an attempt to address this situation and highlight the extent of the crisis facing [Refugees and IDPs](#) and [Child Migrants](#) in Africa, we launched a campaign for the restoration of peace titled '[Africans United for Peace](#)'.

To those people who use criminal conduct and violent acts to gain political ends, we say in no uncertain terms that we stand united for peace, justice, sovereignty and the full development of the people of Africa without foreign states and rulers dividing and exploiting us.

As such, it is imperative that we all act unanimously and use community engagement activities and the media - TV, radio, internet, newspapers or other outlets to:

- detect and prevent conflicts at their very roots,
- steadfastly denounce 'false flag wars' and
- promote reconciliation, peace-building and reconstruction.

Another extremely worrying issue similar to that of mercenary activities in Africa is that of police brutality. Police brutality and systematic torture have become the norm in many African nations resulting from lack of accountability and deliberate policies.

It is indeed tragic that almost five decades later, we are still dealing with the same issue raised in the hit song titled 'Zombie' by Fela Anikulapo Kuti and Africa 70.

We strongly denounce and condemn police brutality in all its forms and manifestations, deplore the mindless violence and loss of lives and express deep sympathy with and support for those who have fallen victim to police brutality and systematic torture in Nigeria and in other nations across Africa.

"Another extremely worrying issue similar to that of mercenary activities in Africa is that of police brutality. Police brutality and systematic torture have become the norm in many African nations resulting from lack of accountability and deliberate policies."

Africa Wake Up Campaign

In 2020 we intensified our [Africa Wake Up](#) campaign against poverty and injustice.

Ever since African nations regained their independence, survival has been a daily struggle for all but the privileged few in many African nations with governments seeing themselves as replacements for colonialists and treating their own people in the same way as the invading European nations had evidently done before, and, it is hard to see a way out of this dilemma.

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, a distinguished Kenyan writer, academic and political activist in his book 'Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature' stated:

Prescription of the correct cure is dependent on a rigorous analysis of the reality. The present predicaments of Africa are often not a matter of personal choice: they arise from a historical situation. Their solutions are not so much a matter of personal decision as that of a fundamental social transformation of the structures of our societies starting with a real break with imperialism and its internal ruling allies. Imperialism and its comprador alliances in Africa can never develop the continent.

Simply put, former colonial invaders use various pretexts to intervene in and destroy African countries and set up puppet regimes that have no empathy or sympathy for their own people.

“Our real problem in Africa is one of bad leadership at all levels. And this lack of demonstrable and genuine leadership from past and current African governments has caused serious harm to the economies of African nations and the lives of all Africans.”

Choose your leaders with wisdom and forethought.
To be led by a coward is to be controlled by all that the coward fears.
To be led by a fool is to be led by the opportunists who control the fool.
To be led by a thief is to offer up your most precious treasures to be stolen.
To be led by a liar is to ask to be told lies.
To be led by a tyrant is to sell yourself and those you love into slavery.

These words of Octavia E. Butler (1947–2006), a celebrated African-American science fiction writer often referred to as the "Grand Dame of science fiction", have perhaps never been as apposite as they are today.

Our real problem in Africa is one of bad leadership at all levels. And this lack of demonstrable and genuine leadership from past and current African governments has caused serious harm to the economies of African nations and the lives of all Africans.

If we really want to stem the tide of bad leadership in Africa, we need to support good leaders and good governments and offer no support to bad leadership, dictators or tyrants. When we stop supporting oppressive patterns, we make it difficult for the destructive forces undermining progress in Africa to succeed.

Thousands and thousands of [brave men and women](#) fought so that future generations, like ours, could enjoy freedom. However, as hard won as that freedom was, that fight is not yet over.

The fight for true freedom is a fight that our generation has to win for our own sakes and for the sake of our children and our children's children.

We stand at a most critical juncture in our history and all of us - parents, child caregivers, educators, activists, community leaders, NGO leaders, farmers, food scientists, academics, legal professionals, practitioners, medical researchers, hydrologists, environmentalists, decision-makers, policy-makers, business leaders and concerned citizens alike - have a responsibility to hand over to future generations a better continent than the one bequeathed to us.

Let us hope that future generations will say that we rose to the challenge that faced our generation, that we were not found wanting and that we played our part and did our best to put evil back in its place.

Our Africa Wake Up Campaign is available in English, French and Portuguese at the following addresses: <http://africa-wake-up.blogspot.fr>, <http://afrique-reveille-toi.blogspot.fr> and <https://africa-acorda.blogspot.com>

A playlist of our [Africa Wake Up](#) Campaign is available on our YouTube channel.

Our article [Africa: from Neo-Colonialism to True Independence](#) is also available on the Africanews website.

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Sacred Cows

This section of the report addresses sacred cows like the Arab-Led Slavery of Africans, Religion and the 50th Anniversary of the Biafran War in an effort to foster dialogue, reflection and action.

Commemorative Events

International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition: August 23

The Arab-Led Slavery of Africans predates the Atlantic Slave Trade of the West by about a millennium. Although it covered a more extensive geographic area, very little is said or known about it and its effects on the social fabric and history of Africa is generally underestimated.

In his book titled 'My Life in Search of Africa' Dr. John Henrik Clarke (1915-1998) an African-American historian, professor, and a pioneer in Pan-African and African studies who fought to legitimise African history for more than 60 years asserts:

It is important to recall that the Arab slave trade drained Africa of much energy and much organization. It came a thousand years before the European slave trade, and Africans did not have the energy or the organization to stop the European slave trade. Besides, Africans did not suspect that the Arab stranger and the European stranger were conquerors and slave traders. Africans are hospitable to strangers and still will invite strangers to dinner, even now. The written accounts of the early Arab slave trade in Africa should be read because it is a very misunderstood, under-discussed, but major period in African history. The outcomes of this period are still visible today. Yet many people are either unaware and/or unwilling to touch this aspect of African history. The Arab slave trade in Africa drained the Africans of the organization and strength it needed to successfully fight off European invaders and slave traders. These Arab invaders managed to secure control of much of northern Africa, and maintain control of this region today. And we still practice their religion and worship their conception of God.

While much has been documented about the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, very little attention has been paid to the Muslim slave raids into Africa and the Arab-Muslim slave trade which began in the early seventh century and continued in one form or another until the 1960s and even till today.

- The deportation of Africans to the lands of Islam was structured around two main roads: the maritime traffic between the coast of East Africa and those of the Middle East on the one hand, and the trans-Saharan caravan traffic on the other.
- In the eastern part of Africa, Arab raids affected an area comprising the Horn of Africa, East Africa, and the Great Lakes region. Slaves captured during bloody expeditions were then transported by sea from enclaves situated on the eastern coast of the continent, between present-day Somalia and Mozambique, to the shores of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. Zanzibar would serve for centuries as a hub for this traffic.
- In West Africa, the Arab-Muslim slave trade encompassed a vast region from the Niger Valley to the Gulf of Guinea. This traffic followed the trans-Saharan roads. The crossing could last up to three months with a high mortality rate due to the dire conditions of the trip.

“In an effort to honour the memory of the victims, the resisters and the survivors of one of Africa's least talked about and purposefully unknown and untold secrets spanning 14 Centuries of Slavery and involving over 17 million Victims, we published a video titled ‘Arab-Led Slavery of Africans’.”

- When they arrived at destinations, the captives were sold in the slave markets of Cairo, Baghdad, Istanbul, Mecca and other centres.
- The Arab-Muslim slave trade was characterized by appalling violence, castration, and rape. The men were systematically castrated to prevent them from reproducing and becoming a stock. This inhumane practice resulted in a high death rate: six out of 10 African men who were mutilated died from their wounds in castration centres. The Arab slave trade also targeted African women and girls, who were captured and deported for use as sex slaves.
- African people have always defied subjugation and during the Arab-Muslim slave trade, enslaved Africans asserted their essential human dignity and stood up and demanded their inalienable human rights. The Revolt of the Zanj or the Revolt of the Blacks which occurred near the city of Basra in Iraq in 869 A.D. was one of the great rebellions of world history and the first major uprising in the history of the African Diaspora. Under the command of Ali Ibn Muhammad, enslaved Africans from East Africa and the Great Lakes region rose up, took control of many cities, and founded an embryonic state. The revolt lasted 15 years.
- The Arab-Muslim slave trade affected more than 17 million people. In the Saharan region alone, more than nine million African captives were deported and two million died on the roads.
- The Arab-Muslim slave trade had a tragic impact on the evolution of African societies leaving some areas completely devastated and depopulated.
- The Arab-Muslim slave trade also promoted the development of racist and essentialist theories that view Black people as inferior by nature. In many Arab countries this racism and enslavement of Africans still exist today.

In an effort to honour the memory of the victims, the resisters and the survivors of one of Africa's least talked about and purposefully unknown and untold secrets spanning 14 Centuries of Slavery and involving over 17 million Victims, we published a video titled ‘[Arab-Led Slavery of Africans](#)’ on August 23, 2020, the International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition.

The video was also produced with the aim of sounding a warning against modern-day forms of slavery of Black Africans by Arabs and the mistreatment of Black African children, women and men in Arab countries and in North African-Arab occupied countries.

The video is available in English, French and Portuguese on our [YouTube channel](#).

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World Religion Day: January 19

Religion is a sensitive topic for many Africans and on-going geopolitical events in Africa further amplify emotional responses to religious issues. Yet, any innovative society should be willing and able to discuss and examine openly all issues, even controversial matters and sacred cows.

Dr. John Henrik Clarke in his book 'My Life in Search of Africa' also stated:

Religions are used by conquerors to impose their view of the world on you and to get you to become their prisoners psychologically and spiritually. With respect to Christianity, the Europeans took African folklore and incorporated it into a European cultural framework. The same thing was done to bring African people into the Arab practice of Islam. Both Europeans and Arabs attempted the gradual but steady destruction of African culture and African spiritual expression, thereby enslaving African people to Christianity and Islam. Arabs are responsible for institutionalizing slavery in Africa while Europeans are responsible for internationalizing it. It was the Trans-Atlantic slave trade that created the foundation for Western capitalism. This slave trade was justified and rationalized by the Catholic church with the authorization of the Pope, who saw no apparent contradiction between slavery and Christianity. This spiritual devastation of this slavery experience took away the fundamental and essential sense of human-beingness of African people.

On the question of religion, there has been a considerable amount of deception and misinformation. As the adage goes, lie and something of the truth will always remain. Even though all attempts were made to keep the truth under wraps, every day more pieces of the puzzle are falling into place.

First and foremost, DNA evidence, archaeological proof and historical records show that the Biblical Hebrews-Israelites, the true and blood line descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are Black-skinned people with Negroid features and coily or kinky hair.

- Historical accounts tell us that Hebrews-Israelites settled in Western Africa during the height of the Songhai, Mali, Ghana and Kanem Bornu Empires. When the Empires fell, many of the Hebrew tribes established settlements among the African tribes throughout Central and West Africa.
- Around 66 A.D. during the final destruction of Jerusalem and the siege by the Romans, it is estimated that over a million Hebrews-Israelites fled Roman persecution and starvation in Northeast Africa and migrated and settled in Negroland, the region known today as sub-Saharan Africa, while those that were captured by the Roman soldiers were sold as slaves throughout the Mediterranean world.
- What we refer to today as the Middle East was more accurately referred to as Northeast Africa before the building of the Suez Canal. It was named the Middle East by Europeans in the 1800s in order to avoid associating Biblical areas with Africa and Arabia. Europeans also dug the Suez Canal to physically separate Israel from Egypt.
- As soon as the Hebrews-Israelites began to settle in the various regions along the West and East coast of Africa, the [Arab slave trade](#) commenced, and the Hebrews-Israelites were led as captives to the lands of Islam where they were sold in the slave markets of Cairo, Baghdad, Istanbul, Mecca and other centres. The Muslim slave raids into Africa spanned 14 centuries involving over 17 million victims. In the Saharan region alone, more than nine million captives were deported and two million died on the roads. The Muslims later notified the Portuguese about the "People of the book" - a title conferred on the Hebrew-Israelites from West and East Africa by the Muslims. The Muslims also referred to Western Sudan or West Africa as "Yahoodie" which means "The Tribes of Israel".

“On the question of religion, there has been a considerable amount of deception and misinformation. As the adage goes, lie and something of the truth will always remain. Even though all attempts were made to keep the truth under wraps, every day more pieces of the puzzle are falling into place.”

- The papal bull issued on 18 June, 1452 by Pope Nicholas V granting the kings of Portugal and Spain full and free permission to invade, search out, capture and subjugate so-called Negroes wherever they may be, as well as their kingdoms, duchies, counties, principalities, and other property and ‘reduce their persons into perpetual slavery’ triggered the Portuguese slave trade from West Africa and eventually facilitated the Transatlantic Slave Trade. This decree was taken at the time – and still is today – as a fulsome endorsement of the enslavement of Black people, the Scramble for Africa and the brutal colonisation of Africa and subjugation of Black Africans through genocide, pillage and terror by the European invaders and all their successors.
- About 1600 years after settling in Negroland, millions of Hebrews-Israelites were captured, chained and shackled as human cargo to Europe, the Caribbean islands, South and Central America as well as to what became the United States during the [Transatlantic Slave Trade](#) initiated by the Portuguese.
- It is estimated that one-fourth or more of the approximately 12.5 million Hebrew-Israelites captured from Africa between 1525 and 1875 were children.
- During the Transatlantic slave trade, it was a known fact that the people on the West Coast of Africa were Hebrews-Israelites.
- 1747 Portuguese, English, French and German maps show the Kingdom of Juda (also known by the various names of Ouidah, Whidah, Fida, Hueda, Whydah, Wida) located in the West Coast of Africa. A 1766 Spanish map also has Negroland marked as populated by Hebrews-Israelites.
- By 1771, the Kingdom of Judah had been erased from the maps and replaced with the colonial name of slave coast.
- According to the Transatlantic Slave Trade database and the slave ships manifests, the original names of the Hebrews-Israelites or so-called Negroes who were captured as slaves from Africa were Hebrew names before the European enslavers changed their names. Not only were Hebrews-Israelites enslaved and their history erased but their very identity was also taken from them, and others, many of whom were responsible for the slave trade, are claiming to be them.
- Hebrews-Israelites, the blood line descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob can still be found in many parts of Africa and on all continents and islands today.

“The papal bull issued by Pope Nicholas V in 1452 was taken at the time – and still is today – as a fulsome endorsement of the enslavement of Black people, the Scramble for Africa and the brutal colonisation of Africa and subjugation of Black Africans by the European invaders and all their successors.”

“In the same manner that the Caucasians falsified the history of Black-skinned Africans and white-washed all of history, they also created a false image of a “god” who looked liked them, whitewashed Bible characters and repackaged Christianity as a tool of oppression designed to assert white supremacy, slavery, conquest, genocide and colonialism.”

Secondly, Christianity was practised on the continent of Africa particularly in Ethiopia, long before European invasion through wars of conquest, genocide, colonialism and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, as evidenced by the Coptic Churches of Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt.

- Ethiopia has practised Christianity for over 1600 years and Ethiopia is the only African nation that successfully defeated the invading European nations and was not colonised.
- Also significant is the fact that the ancient Ethiopian Bible written in the early Ethiopian language of Ge'ez which was found in Abba Garima Monastery is the oldest and most complete Bible on Earth. It was written centuries before the Greek and Latin Bibles.
- The ancient Ethiopian Bible predates the translation of the Bible commissioned in 1611 by King James (born James Charles Stuart who was described as swarthy or Negro) by well over 800 years. The Garima Bible contains 81-88 books compared to 66. Radiocarbon dating analysis dated Garima 2 as originating from 390 CE - 570 CE and Garima 1 from 530 CE - 660 CE. As a whole, books written in the Ge'ez language and on parchment are numerous.

Thirdly, the original and earliest depictions of Jesus the Christ, the disciples and apostles in the Catacombs of Rome portray them as Black-skinned. Jesus the Christ was not depicted as white until around the 4th century A.D.

- Historical accounts, including the Bible itself, describe the Biblical Hebrews and the great majority of key personalities in the Bible as Black people who were often mistaken for Ethiopians and Egyptians who were also Black people.
- In the same manner that the Caucasians falsified African history by erasing the history of [Black-skinned Africans](#), hiding ancient and original maps and white-washing all of history, Caucasians also twisted the Bible and distorted the message of Christianity to suit their own purposes and to justify the inhumane act of chattel slavery, massacring, dehumanising, plundering, oppressing, brutalising, lynching and enslaving Black people as a whole.
- Furthermore, through false and misleading propaganda, Caucasians created a false image of a “god” who looked liked them, whitewashed Bible characters and repackaged Christianity as a tool of oppression designed to assert white supremacy, slavery, conquest, genocide and colonialism. Racism and discrimination are perpetuated through their governmental, religious, economical, political and educational systems even till date.

Yet the Black-skinned people, who are now subject to unimaginable atrocities in various parts of the world because of their Black skin, are the very people who gave the world its arts, sciences, language, and the civil and religious systems that still govern the world today.

We believe in the end, the truth will prevail over the lie that envelops this world and justice will be served.

"We may not all be on the same page in terms of religion since Black people in Africa and in the Diaspora are composed of populations with different belief systems but one thing that unites us all is our shared experience of historical trauma and the psychological, physical, social and cultural aftermath of slavery, colonialism and post colonialism."

In 2020, we published a video titled '[Justice and Reparations](#)' featuring 51 resources in English, French and Portuguese by African, African-American, Afro-Brazilian, Guyanese, Martiniquan, Barbadian, Trinidadian, Afro-Iraqi historians, researchers, experts and writers addressing the nexus between racism, slavery and religion and advocating for justice and reparations for victims of the Arab-led slavery of Africans, the Transatlantic Slave Trade, colonialism and apartheid.

Our 'Justice and Reparations' video is the cry of millions and millions of victims and survivors of the Arab-led slavery of Africans, the Transatlantic Slave Trade, the Herero and Nama genocide in Namibia, the genocide in the Congo Free State, conquest, colonialism and apartheid who are demanding justice and reparations.

We may not all be on the same page in terms of religion since Black people in Africa and in the Diaspora are composed of populations with different belief systems but one thing that unites us all is our shared experience of historical trauma and the psychological, physical, social and cultural aftermath of slavery, colonialism and post colonialism.

Caution is in order when it comes to religion. In today's world, where the credibility of religion and the integrity of religious leaders are questionable, discernment is needed in order to avoid being led astray by charlatans. Distressed and impoverished children, women and populations in Africa are an easy prey to paedophiles, impostors and tricksters who pass themselves off as being missionaries, religious aid workers, religious leaders, sellers of recovery and other illusory miracles.

There has to be a certain level of religious literacy and critical thinking within our communities otherwise impoverished and vulnerable people will continue to be exploited by people who wish to misuse religion for commercial or political ends and for nefarious purposes.

Religious fanaticism has always been used to keep people in willing subjection to those in power and makes people easily manipulated by corrupt politicians and religious zealots.

When all is said and done, the questions we must ask ourselves as Africans are:

- What is the practical usefulness of religion in our society and its relevance in addressing urgent matters such as ill-treatment and abuse of children, persistent hunger, rising poverty, youth unemployment, insecurity and social disruption?
- What is the general usefulness of religion in our society and its significance in addressing the situation of vulnerable groups such as orphans, street children, child beggars, widows, the elderly, the disabled, refugees, internally displaced people and other disadvantaged groups?

These are the key questions addressed in our [World Religion Day](#) video.

Our [World Religion Day](#) and [Justice and Reparations](#) videos are both available on our YouTube channel.

50th Anniversary of the Biafran War: January 15

January 15, 2020 marked the 50th anniversary since the end of the Nigerian-Biafran Civil War in 1970 but the passage of time has not dimmed the memory of that horrific war.

Although the coup d'état of January 15, 1966 was the immediate cause of the civil war, the historical roots of the Nigerian-Biafran Civil War are traceable to the colonial divide-and-rule strategies that abound in many countries of Africa where different ethnic groups and cultures live in nations whose borders were arbitrarily laid down during the Berlin Conference of 1884 in the interests of colonial invaders.

In other words, the civil war was a particularly alarming manifestation of the complex, painful and evil legacy of colonialism and imperialism. By 1900, most of southern Nigeria had fallen to the British while the Sokoto Caliphate came under full British control in 1906 and was renamed the Northern Protectorate. The British united the two territories but the unification created a fragmented identity for Nigeria a nation composed of over 250 ethnic groups with a presumed Muslim-north versus a Christian-south, the problematic implications of which would reverberate during the civil war.

A strong correlation between civil wars and interference or manipulation by external powers has been observed in the majority of the civil wars and secessionist wars in Africa since the late 20th century. And the Nigerian-Biafran Civil War was no exception as Great Britain and the Soviet Union openly sided with the Federal Government of Nigeria while France and Israel supported Biafra for economic reasons. The trend continues even today as external powers continue to interfere in Africa, whether directly, using political or military power or by arranging things so that they can develop their own raw materials for their own companies and retain access to them.

The Biafran War which brought its cohort of misery, destruction and widespread displacement of people to neighbouring countries ended on January 15, 1970 with millions of deaths, casualties and displaced persons recorded.

The traumatic effects of the three-year war (July 1967 to January 15, 1970), is evident in persistent ethnic animosities and distrust that continue to shape the narrative of Nigerian identity and our nation's future.

It is very important to emphasize that the real source and the genesis of the problem is not ethnicity but bad leadership. When the British invaders were exiting Nigeria, they set one ethnic group against another so that we would fight amongst ourselves instead of fighting against them. Unfortunately, our leaders inherited that ability to mislead and create dissension among Nigerians.

The memory of the victims and the great injustices that were committed must inspire our daily thoughts as Nigerians and enable us to assert our differences and disagreements without recourse to violence; and work together with conscious resolve to transform the age-old culture of conflict and war into a culture of co-operation and peace; and ensure that current generations do not suffer the horrors of war experienced by previous generations.

While we may come from different ethnic, tribal, cultural, linguistic and religious groups, it is our commitment to peace, justice, security, human solidarity and sovereignty that serves as guiding values for our nation Nigeria and unites us as a people.

Since our inception in 2006, we have worked tirelessly to serve needy and vulnerable children regardless of tribe, ethnicity, cultural identity or religion. We also promote mother tongue language education by providing learning programmes for out-of-school children, nomadic and marginalised children in their mother tongue language.

World Water Day: March 22

In many African nations, lack of access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation systems (sewage collection and treatment) still pose a significant health challenge. Also, populations destabilized by armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters are very susceptible to illness and death from waterborne diseases.

On World Water Day, March 22, 2020 we published a video featuring illustrated picture books for children on Child Hygiene and Sanitation in English, French and Portuguese.

The aim was two-fold: to strengthen the capacity of African communities to improve hygiene and sanitation practices and help parents better manage the health of their children; and, in parallel, prevent the spread of the coronavirus which broke out in Wuhan, China at the end of 2019.

The [World Water Day](#) video is available on our YouTube channel.

“Considering their energy, creativity and networking capacity, African youth have the potential to actively influence and shape the political agenda and also participate in social and economic development and in the building of Africa.”

International Workers' Day: May 1

The empowerment of youth and the promotion of their potential as creative actors of societal development have always been a matter of close attention and concern to us at HOM.

Considering their energy, creativity and networking capacity, African youth have the potential to actively influence and shape the political agenda and also participate in social and economic development and in the building of Africa.

Unfortunately youth unemployment levels are shockingly high across Africa and the accompanying desperation has made countless African youth to flee chronic hunger, planned misery, extreme poverty and galloping unemployment in their home countries in pursuit of a ‘better’ life in Europe.

On their way, many have perished in deserts or drowned in the Mediterranean, while others have been sold as slaves in Libya. Those who succeed in getting to their country of destination often face racism and xenophobic violence, are used as scapegoats, forced to live in inhuman conditions without residency permits and are shamefully exploited. Yet these brutalities do not deter African youth who are trying to escape the hopelessness of endless poverty.

Although the youth unemployment situation appears insurmountable, solutions are possible. Indeed, African citizens in different nations of Africa, working together with unemployed youth, have already taken the initiative to develop their own innovative solutions to improve the quality of education and vocational training, prepare young people for the work force, expand access to financial services for entrepreneurs and small businesses and connect job seekers to dignified and fulfilling work.

On International Workers' Day, we decided to tackle one of the greatest social challenges facing youth in Africa today - youth unemployment. We published a list of 19 resources by African authors and experts in English, French and Portuguese focused on providing creative solutions to youth unemployment and related challenges.

The video titled ‘[Youth Unemployment in Africa](#)’ is available on our YouTube channel.

Africa Day: May 25

On Africa Day, we published a video featuring 331 books by African authors, academics, experts and practitioners in English, French and Portuguese addressing the root causes of the challenges faced by the African continent and its people and providing practical solutions to each of the challenges.

The 331 resources cover the following 24 topics: Children at risk, African Youth, Health & Epidemics, Mental Health, Africa's Odious Debts, Capital Flight from Africa, Development Aid, Monetary Sovereignty, Good Governance, Military Sovereignty, Coups and Assassinations, Arms Trafficking, Terrorism, Human Trafficking, Conflict Resolution, Peacekeeping, African Institutions, African Elections, Fight against Corruption, Afro-Chinese Relations, Cybersecurity, The Fair Trade Scandal, Law and Justice and Pan Africanism.

It is our duty as citizens to continue to call attention to these challenges and to the solutions already being devised which will help palliate in some cases, and eradicate in others, the ills to which we are prey today. And it is the duty of politicians to heed us and take appropriate action.

The video titled 'Africa's Blueprint for Action' is available on our [Video Gallery](#) and on our [YouTube channel](#).

"Given the fact that communal child rearing is part of our heritage, is it not a sad fact and a terrible indictment on all of us that atrocities such as childhood sexual abuse, child trafficking, kidnappings and ritual killings are making some of our communities dangerous places to raise children?"

Day of the African Child: June 16

Since millennia, child rearing has been a communal effort in many African communities with the responsibility shared between the parents, guardians and secondary caregivers like grandparents, other relatives and close neighbours.

Given the fact that communal child rearing is part of our heritage, is it not a sad fact and a terrible indictment on all of us that atrocities such as childhood sexual abuse, child trafficking, kidnappings and ritual killings are making some of our communities dangerous places to raise children?

We are deeply concerned with the shifting of ancient landmarks and convinced of the need to protect the fundamental values that dignify us as human beings.

The ethical heritage is becoming increasingly important inasmuch as the values we hand down to future generations will serve as their landmarks and the moral anchors that will enable them to continue to build the Africa of tomorrow.

Archaic as it might seem, it is essential that we preserve and restore the African spirit of collectivism, goodness and solidarity and find ways to ensure that our [children](#) can live in a safe environment, free from criminal threat to their lives and personal safety.

On the Day of the African Child, we published a video titled '[Our Children, Our Future](#)' aimed at advocating for positive role models and raising awareness about the important role that adults and communities play in supporting the holistic development of children and young people.

For better or for worse, we are shaping Africa's future by how we raise and support children and youth, especially those who are facing challenges. Together we can give our children hope for a just and secure future where their lives and their identities will be respected globally.

Africa Day for Food and Nutrition Security: October 30

The inability of Africa's agriculture to match the needs of its growing population not only keeps millions of people hungry but it also compels the continent to spend billions of dollars on food imports annually.

On Africa Day for Food and Nutrition Security, October 30, we published a video featuring 76 resources in English, French and Portuguese by African authors, academics and experts focused on providing practical solutions to meeting the food security needs of all Africans.

The video titled '[Food Security in Africa](#)' is available on our YouTube channel.

"On Africa Day for Food and Nutrition Security, we published a video featuring 76 resources in English, French and Portuguese by African authors, academics and experts focused on providing practical solutions to meeting the food security needs of all Africans."

Challenges Encountered

COVID-19 Crisis

Even in the midst of a pandemic, some things never change.

During the epidemic which broke out in Wuhan, China and spread throughout the world causing a pandemic, we were appalled and deeply disturbed by the extent of global anti-Black racism, police violence against innocent Black children, women and men, racially based crimes, vigilante killings and modern-day lynching of Black people.

It is sad to see that the world has not changed much since ancient times and ancient injustices and discriminations are still there: from Africans living in Guangzhou, China having their passports confiscated and being evicted from their homes and hotels with families with young children forced to sleep on the streets and being refused service in shops and hospitals; to an Arab in Lebanon putting a Nigerian woman up for sale at the price of \$1,000 with her passport posted on the 'Buy and Sell in Lebanon' social media site; to French doctors suggesting on a live television broadcast that trials of a potential COVID-19 vaccine should first take place in Africa and the list goes on and on.

The attitude of the French doctors suggesting that trials of a potential COVID-19 vaccine should first take place in Africa shone a spotlight on the extent to which Black people are used exclusively as guinea pigs in dangerous experiments by various medical projects and also echoes a long, cruel and tragic history of medical experimentation and sterilisation in Africa, where African politicians and government leaders have colluded with pharmaceutical companies often based in Europe or the United States to conduct trials on unsuspecting Africans.

As the African proverb goes, if there is no enemy within, the enemy outside can do us no harm. Marcus Garvey (1887-1940), a Jamaican political activist, publisher, journalist, entrepreneur and orator who developed a 'Back to Africa' programme and argued the case for reparations for the crimes of slavery and colonialism in 1919, echoed the same sentiment when he said:

For us to examine ourselves thoroughly as a people we will find that we have more traitors than leaders, because nearly everyone who essays to lead the race at this time does so by first establishing himself as the pet of some philanthropist of another race, to whom he will go and debase his race in the worst form, humiliate his own manhood, and thereby win the sympathy of the 'great benefactor', who will dictate to him what he should do in leadership of the Negro race. These leaders tell us how good Mr. So and So is, how many good friends we have in the opposite race, and that if we leave everything to them all will work out well.

- In Kano, Nigeria, in 1996, Pfizer performed a trial of an experimental drug trovafloxacin on 200 children. The drug was tested on children without their parents' informed consent, patients were unaware of the experiment, and the trial was not approved in advance by an ethical review committee. Out of 200 children that were enrolled in the trial, eleven died - five receiving trovafloxacin and six receiving the existing treatment ceftriaxone. Others suffered brain damage and paralysis.
- In Zimbabwe, in the 1990s, over 17,000 HIV-positive women were tested without informed consent in trials for the anti-retroviral drug AZT funded by the World Health Organization, United States' Centers for Disease Control and the National Institutes of Health resulting in the death of some of the women during the clinical trials.
- In Uganda, between 1997 and 2003, Boehringer Ingelheim and the United States' National Institutes of Health carried out clinical trials on women with the anti-transmission drug Nevirapine. The women experienced thousands of side effects and serious adverse reactions but these symptoms went unreported and testing was allowed to continue, resulting in the also unreported deaths of 14 women.
- In Cameroon, between 2004 and 2005, 400 sex workers participated in Tenofovir trials on HIV transmission sponsored by Gilead, the United States' Centers for Disease Control and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The women participating in the trial were not informed about the risks and only English information was given to mostly French speaking test subjects. Five women became HIV-infected while enrolled in the Tenofovir-study and no antiretrovirals (ARVs) were provided for test subjects infected during the trial.

Unfortunately, deceptive research practice is still alive and well in Africa. These cases listed above are just a couple out of numerous reports of medical experimentation and unethical clinical testing on unsuspecting and vulnerable Africans. The scale of the problem is unknown, because it cannot be estimated how many unethical clinical trials in African nations escape public attention and therefore remain unnoticed.

For wronged research subjects retribution seems unattainable and even when it is possible, monetary compensation would be a mere pittance compared to the money being made by big pharmaceutical companies.

"The attitude of the French doctors suggesting that trials of a potential COVID-19 vaccine should first take place in Africa shone a spotlight on the extent to which Black people are used exclusively as guinea pigs in dangerous experiments by various medical projects."

“Historically as Africans, we have been subjected to centuries of colonial depredation and the continued plundering of our continent's natural wealth and resources. Let us remember the lessons of our history and ensure that history does not repeat itself by guarding against Africa's great genetic diversity becoming yet another resource that is plundered and exploited for the profit of foreign nations.”

Another alarming trend worth mentioning is the increase in the commercialisation of African DNA samples by big pharmaceutical companies.

- During the 2014 Ebola epidemic, doctors and researchers from around the world took more than 269,000 blood samples from patients in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia to foreign laboratories including Public Health England. None of the patients gave consent for them to be used for research and African researchers in those countries were denied access to the samples that in many cases they themselves collected.
- In 2019, whistleblowers revealed that the Wellcome Sanger Institute in the United Kingdom planned to commercialize a genetics array based on DNA samples obtained in 12 diverse African populations including Ethiopia, Uganda, Namibia, and South Africa. Not only did the Institute violate the terms of agreements for using the DNA samples but it also attempted to commercialise the products of the research without patient consent.

Historically as Africans, we have been subjected to centuries of colonial depredation and the continued plundering of our continent's natural wealth and resources. Let us remember the lessons of our history and ensure that history does not repeat itself by guarding against Africa's great genetic diversity becoming yet another resource that is plundered and exploited for the profit of foreign nations.

Halting this trend will also require African Governments to support African-led, operated and staffed initiatives. There are hundreds of thousands of African scientists and medical researchers across the continent, working quietly and efficiently to implement solutions to address public health crises, including those relating to HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other epidemics and they need to be encouraged and incentivised to go further.

This is why it is all the more essential for us as Black/Melanated people to:

- promote our own African Medical Research Institutes and Centres for Health and Epidemics,
- develop a holistic approach to medicine and healthcare based on our melanin content, our unique biochemical structure and genetic makeup,
- continue to create our own medication from natural, non pharmaceutical sources - such as herbs, homeopathy and flower remedies - that can decalcify the pineal gland and do not chemically bind with or alter the melanin molecule.

“This is why it is all the more essential for us as Black/Melanated people to promote our own African Medical Research Institutes and Centres for Health and Epidemics.”

“The COVID-19 crisis is a stark reminder of the cruel reality of child poverty in many so-called Third World African nations with abundant resources of oil, diamonds, gold, minerals, timber, etc. yet thousands of children and families live in poverty and thousands and thousands of children go to bed hungry.”

COVID-19: Impact and Recommendations

The first case of COVID-19 was reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) in December 2019 and in January 2020, the WHO declared the COVID-19 outbreak a public health emergency of international concern and subsequently in March 2020 as a pandemic.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, we monitored the situation extremely closely through our own assessment missions and those of our partners present in the field in different African nations.

Our analysis of the impact of the pandemic on the condition of the people in each country revealed the extreme hardship and suffering faced by children in poor families and those living in vulnerable communities across Africa.

The devastating effects of population lockdowns, introduced to forestall the spread of coronavirus, on poor families who were already dependent on casual, low paid, or unstable work including street hawkers, vulcanizers, mechanics, and workers in roadside workshops and whose livelihoods could not be kept through 'working from home arrangements' pushed more people into poverty and further escalated their suffering.

Poor urban populations whose living arrangements limited compliance with social distancing struggled to observe ideal hygiene behaviours due to limited access to water, soap and proper sanitation facilities and to an overall lack of awareness or misinformation on safe behaviours.

Additional family stresses related to the pandemic including quarantine, confinement and anxieties over health and finances increased the risk of child abuse, maltreatment and domestic violence.

The Coronavirus lockdowns also heightened the risk of online child sexual exploitation as children with internet access spent more time online due to school shutdowns making them more vulnerable to online predators.

Child refugees, migrants, and internally displaced children living in overcrowded camps, informal reception centres or squatter settlements and children detained in the justice system and immigration detention centres as well as those who were being held in psychiatric institutions where basic COVID-19 prevention measures such as frequent hand-washing and social distancing were nearly impossible were also disproportionately affected by the pandemic.

For many children, the pandemic also meant limited or no education, or falling further behind their peers. Although the focus turned to distant learning programmes and making material available on online platforms for continuity of learning, many schools did not have the technology and equipment to provide access to quality distance education during the school closures caused by COVID-19.

The COVID-19 crisis is a stark reminder of the cruel reality of child poverty in many so-called Third World African nations with abundant resources of oil, diamonds, gold, minerals, timber, etc. yet thousands of children and families live in poverty and thousands and thousands of children go to bed hungry.

“For many children, the pandemic also meant limited or no education, or falling further behind their peers.”

“As Africans, we have always had a deeply humane dedication to helping the less fortunate especially children, the poor, the voiceless and the defenceless. This display of solidarity was particularly evident during the COVID-19 crisis.”

As children, families and communities struggle to cope with the devastating impacts of COVID-19, which are expected to result in significant economic contraction, employment impacts, and a likely increase in poverty, critical investment in the welfare of children and other vulnerable groups in society has taken on a new urgency.

This pandemic has clearly demonstrated the urgent need to address entrenched issues of child poverty and establish strong and viable social protection systems to protect those already living in poverty and to prevent yet more people being pushed into a life of poverty.

We appeal to African government leaders, politicians and decision-makers to establish effective and efficient social protection systems for poor and vulnerable populations so that when another crisis hits - be it another virus, an economic recession, or a climate-related catastrophe - African nations can respond appropriately and ensure that the most vulnerable in society, children, those with disabilities and the elderly are protected.

African-wide Solidarity Actions

Africa is home to some of the most welcoming, industrious, caring, compassionate and resourceful people one is ever likely to meet. As Africans, we have always had a deeply humane dedication to helping the less fortunate especially children, the poor, the voiceless and the defenceless. This display of solidarity was particularly evident during the COVID-19 crisis.

We would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the silent heroes and all the local grassroots organisations, community organisations and African-led organisations that provided humanitarian assistance to children and families in need in the different African nations during the COVID-19 crisis, and to their personnel for their dedication and courage. We are also grateful to the donors whose support and generosity enabled these organisations to provide assistance to populations in need.

We would also like to extend this tribute to all our compatriots and fellow Africans, many of whom went through country lockdowns with no water, no electricity and no food in cramped conditions, for their courage, resilience and calm decency in the face of adversity. Africans are resilient and have always found incredible ways of coping with extremely difficult situations, and they continue to do so every day, not giving up hope for a better future.

We also pay tribute to the health care workers who went to work throughout the pandemic, despite the risk to themselves and their families, to care for others.

The tremendous solidarity Africans showed during the COVID-19 global health crisis is a prime example of what we can accomplish when we work together to address the challenges facing our continent. Only together can we properly address the difficult challenges facing Africans today and make our continent safer and better.

“The tremendous solidarity Africans showed during the COVID-19 global health crisis is a prime example of what we can accomplish when we work together to address the challenges facing our continent.”

HOM's COVID-19 Response Plan

“As part of our COVID-19 Response Plan at HOM, we worked to support efforts to prevent the spread of the virus and curb the immediate impacts on the most vulnerable. We also strived to mitigate the impact of the containment measures by supporting the continuity of our charitable programmes for vulnerable children.”

Since the first case of COVID-19 in Nigeria was confirmed - an Italian man who arrived in Lagos from Milan - on February 27, 2020, many actions were taken by the authorities to inform citizens and prevent the virus from spreading in Nigeria.

As part of our COVID-19 Response Plan at House of Mercy Children's Home, Lagos, Nigeria (HOM), we worked to support efforts to prevent the spread of the virus and curb the immediate impacts on the most vulnerable. We also strived to mitigate the impact of the containment measures by supporting the continuity of our charitable programmes for vulnerable children.

Some of the actions we took in response to the COVID-19 outbreak included:

- [Child Protection](#): Given the heightened risk of child abuse and domestic violence during lockdowns, we intensified our advocacy for child protection and pursued our awareness-raising efforts.
- [Mental Health and Wellness](#): We published a video featuring a comprehensive list of 134 Mental Health and Wellness Resources in English, French and Portuguese designed to help children, teenagers, adults and families cope with the emotional stress and psychological trauma associated with the pandemic.
- [Infection Prevention and Control](#): We published a video featuring illustrated posters of 4 moments for hand-washing in English, French and Portuguese to raise awareness about the importance of hand-washing with soap and water as one of the most effective and affordable health interventions.
- [COVID-19 Relief](#): We distributed washable and reusable cloth face masks, hygiene supplies, shoes, clothing and food items to hundreds of vulnerable children and destitute families during the pandemic.

Our deepest sympathy and condolences go to the families of those who lost loved ones. We also extend our deep appreciation and admiration to all the unsung heroes who died trying to save the lives of others.

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Financial Overview

With the continued generosity of our donors, House of Mercy Children's Home, Lagos, Nigeria (HOM) once again saw strong financial performance during financial year 2020.

In spite of the COVID-19 pandemic, we continued to advance towards our vision assisting many vulnerable children and destitute families in more regions and across more service areas.

Remaining a sustainable organisation is essential. We are committed to helping as many children as possible today while ensuring that we have the funds available to help tomorrow's children and our strategy reflects this position. Our 2021 Strategic Plan looks at strategies to increase not only public awareness of our programmes but also to increase the support that will flow from this raised awareness.

Copies of our [Financial Statements](#) are available on our website. These documents reflect how we support and sustain our mission through responsible financial management.

House of Mercy Children's Home, Lagos, Nigeria (HOM) is funded entirely by the voluntary contributions of individuals, companies and foundations. All donations, large and small, regular and occasional, make a huge difference in the lives of the children we serve.

House of Mercy Children's Home, Lagos, Nigeria (HOM) [cautions](#) the public to beware of donation scams to personal bank accounts of fraudsters and money transfer scams (Western Union, MoneyGram etc.) implying association with House of Mercy Children's Home, Lagos, Nigeria (HOM). Our official email address is **contact@homchildrenshome.org** and we do not communicate with our supporters with any other email address. Neither do we send messages to random people on social media platforms or on digital hangouts requesting for donations.

*“House of Mercy Children's Home, Lagos, Nigeria (HOM) cautions the public to beware of donation scams to personal bank accounts of fraudsters and money transfer scams (Western Union, MoneyGram etc.) implying association with HOM. Our official email address is **contact@homchildrenshome.org** and we do not communicate with our supporters with any other email address. Neither do we send messages to random people on social media platforms or on digital hangouts requesting for donation.”*

2021 Goals



House of Mercy Children's Home Lagos, Nigeria (HOM) was established in 2006 to protect, help and assist socially disadvantaged children such as street children, child beggars, disabled, abused and neglected children.

We are constantly striving to improve the lives of most vulnerable and disadvantaged children and provide them with a better and brighter future.

Our 2021 strategy sets out an ambition to do more on the following fronts:

1. [Reduction of child hunger and malnutrition through provision and distribution of free nutritious meals](#)
2. [Education through school sponsorship including girls' empowerment and literacy projects](#)
3. [Family preservation and reunification through reintegration of children into family and community-based care](#)
4. [Reduction of child homelessness through provision of family-based residential home](#)
5. [Child protection and advocacy by engaging the public and decision-makers through online and offline campaign actions, as well as effective private lobbying.](#)
6. [Humanitarian assistance programmes for children and families in crisis across Africa](#)

We are determined in the months ahead, to continue and redouble our efforts on our

- [Africa Wake Up](#) campaign and,
- [Africans United for Peace](#) campaign.

That way we can kill two birds with one stone. On the one hand promoting healing and recovery from the historical trauma and oppression that we have lived with for generations, and on the other hand engaging in the process of the decolonisation of our minds.

As our strategy and activities evolve, we will continue to highlight our progress on our [website](#).

African Renaissance

Dr. Chancellor Williams (1893–1992), an African-American sociologist, historian and writer in his book 'The Destruction of Black Civilization: Great Issues of a Race From 4500 B.C. to 2000 A.D.' explained why Black Africans - the first builders of civilization in the cradle of world civilization and the inventors of mathematics, writing, sciences, engineering, medicine, religion, fine arts and the builders of the great pyramids - were toppled.

In his thought-provoking book, Dr. Williams pointed out that the greatest conquest of the foreign invaders and destroyers was not the capture of whatever the Africans had of human worth; their land and all their wealth therein or the enslavement of the African people; the greatest conquest was the capture of the minds of the African people.

In the concluding chapter of his book, Dr. Williams made the following pertinent comment:

...Although the African people may continue their present course of weakness on into the future with thousands of un-unified organizations, powerless and, therefore forever dependent like half-men and half-women unable to use their own brains, although this tragic situation may continue into an uncertain future, we say, it can never be said again that such a hopeless situation persists because no member of the race or any group has ever studied the principal problems and the obstacles to their solutions based on history, and then offered an overall plan as one of the possible lines of march out of the morass. For there have been a number of plans.

Bleak as the current reality is, at House of Mercy Children's Home, Lagos, Nigeria (HOM), we envision:

- The resurgence of a peaceful, vibrant, prosperous and united Anglophone, Francophone and Lusophone Africa, rich in its mother tongue languages, cultural diversity, history and arts,
- A unified Africa with a strong Pan-African Army triumphant over psychological warfare, neo-colonialism, mercenary activities, puppet regimes, colonial tax, colonial currency, misrule, oppression, and development aid,
- A unified continent-wide strategy for an elaborate industrial infrastructure using Africa's abundant hydroelectric, solar and uranium resources to process the continent's raw materials,
- A coherent African system of extremely well-developed road, rail, air and water transport networks,
- A cohesive continent where the knowledge and the skills of its people are its foremost resource,
- A continent-wide promotion of peace, security, justice, prosperity and a better life for all children, women and men, irrespective of their ethnicity, mother tongue language, religion, age, abilities or disabilities and
- A strong and free African continent united in solidarity with people of African descent living in the Diaspora; speaking with one voice in defense of the dignity and the human rights of Africans or Black people in the Diaspora.

Our vision seeks, not a nostalgic return to African civilizations prior to invasion and destruction by the foreign invaders and colonisers; but an advance of African political, social, economic, health, cultural, educational, scientific and technological development to a much greater degree.

Toward the realisation of this vision, we have compiled a playlist titled [African Renaissance](#) featuring a comprehensive list of resources in English, French and Portuguese providing tangible solutions to the challenges facing Nigerians and Africans as a whole. The African Renaissance playlist is available on our [YouTube channel](#).

History Corner

The purpose and intent of any colonial education is to attempt to completely destroy a people's belief in their heritage, mother tongue, unity, original names, and ultimately in themselves by providing the colonised people with a fabricated history about themselves.

At House of Mercy Children's Home, Lagos, Nigeria (HOM), we are very enthusiastic about sharing stories of Africa's history and we have created a [History Corner](#) designed to correct misperceptions and misinformation being spread about Black people and African history.

The deceptions and lies are so deeply ingrained in the psyche of our people and it would be tragic if we continued to allow a generation of Africans to remain unaware of their own history.

It is our fervent hope and expectation that the study of African civilisations and Africa's major contributions to the world will be included in the school curriculum in African countries so that children of African descent can know that their ancestors - Black Africans - are at the genesis of ancient civilizations and the human story.

Videos in our History Corner include:

[African Library](#) featuring a selection of 29 must-read books on African History by renowned African, Haitian, African-American, Jamaican and Guyanese historians, sociologists, researchers, experts and authors.

[African History](#) a compilation featuring historical documents and pictures that offer glimpses back to the very beginnings of the human race, as well as several historiographies about specific periods in Africa's history.

[Nigeria: 9000BC - October 2013](#) spotlighting little-known moments and facts about Nigeria as far back as 9000BC.

[African Rulers in Defence of Sovereignty](#) paying homage to the brave and fearless African Kings, Queens, Chiefs, Spiritual Leaders, Authorities and the countless others who stood their ground firmly against imperialism, colonialism, slavery, foreign occupation and apartheid.

[The Arab-Led Slavery of Africans](#) honouring the memory of the victims, the resisters and the survivors of the Arab-Led Slavery of Africans, a period spanning 14 Centuries of Slavery and involving 17 million Victims which predates the Atlantic Slave Trade of the West by about a millennium.

[The Transatlantic Slave Trade](#) honouring the memory of the victims, the resisters and the survivors of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, a period of slavery marked by a series of unspeakable crimes and serious human rights violations which have been recognised but which have never formed the subject of any redress and reparations to the victims or the descendants of enslaved persons.

[Homage to African Revolutionaries and Freedom Fighters](#) honouring the memory of all the sung and unsung African heroes and heroines and nameless campaigners for the freedom and independence of African nations for their sacrifices for Africa and their willingness to ensure a brighter future for the African people.

[Day of the African Child](#) spotlighting children from different African countries in their traditional costumes. The Day of the African Child is commemorated every year on June 16 in remembrance of the 1976 uprisings in Soweto, South Africa when a protest by Black school children against apartheid-inspired education resulted in the public killing of the unarmed young protesters by white policemen.

[Justice and Reparations](#) featuring 51 resources addressing the nexus between racism, slavery and religion and advocating for justice and reparations for victims of the Arab-led slavery of Africans, the Transatlantic Slave Trade, the Herero and Nama genocide in Namibia, the genocide in the Congo Free State, colonialism and apartheid.

Acknowledgements

In the course of our work, we have seen the worst that human beings can do to each other, and we have also seen, and been inspired by the greatest courage, generosity, kindness and incomparable goodness.

Our activities have brought us into contact with some truly exceptional people with extraordinary spirits and each and every year we are overwhelmed by the tremendous generosity shown by our Donors, Supporters and Friends and this year was no exception.

The amazing level of support we received during the COVID-19 pandemic, in spite of obvious challenges to individuals as well as institutions, was inspiring and laudable.

We would like to express our heartfelt appreciation and thank you to new and recurring Donors, Supporters and Friends for their incredible generosity, trust and magnanimous support which made our hopes of serving more children in need in 2020 a reality.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts to all those named here and those who wish to remain anonymous. We could not do this without the support of amazing people like all of you!

Our Deepest Thanks to the following Individuals:

Ms. Kehinde Orishayomi - ₦45 804	Mrs. Raymon - ₦3 000
Mr. Olanrewaju Lateef - ₦115 000	Ms. Gbemisola Ramon - ₦14 000
Mr./Ms. Oluwaseun Amusa - ₦14 500	Mr./Ms. Ajibola Thomas - ₦5 000
Mr. Toritseju Ereku - ₦59 000	Mr. Temitope Okunlola - ₦200 000
Mr. Austin Redemi - ₦405 000	Mr. Solomon Alabi - ₦2 000
Mr. Antony Sebiagbo - ₦52 000	Mr. Ugochukwu Ezech - ₦3 000
Mr. Yusuf Babajide - ₦31 500	Ms. Toni Oluwabiyi - ₦16 000
Mrs. Kehinde Olaleye-Akib - ₦100 000	Mr. Femi Olufowobi - ₦4 000
Mr. Oseikhuemen Ogun - ₦90 000	Mr. & Mrs. Chrysanthus Obafemi Adegbola - ₦300 000
Mr. Victor Akinbamijo - ₦443 821	Mr. Uche Akwarandu - ₦25 000
Ms. Blessing Okai - ₦5 000	Mr. Emmanuel Akpunku - ₦20 000
Ms. Adaeze Montserrat - Food & Miscellaneous items	Ms. Folashade Fakeye - ₦10 000
Prince Okpube - ₦10 000	Ms. Bola Ilemobayo - ₦14 000
Ms. Tayo Olayinka - ₦90 000	Mr. Kingsley - ₦50 000
Mr. Olumide Adeyemi - ₦50 000	Ms. Amanda Oka - ₦100 000
Ms. Joan Ordu - ₦1 000	Mr. Olufemi Shobo - ₦17 000
Ms. Folashade Burkman - ₦57 500	Ms. Toyin Ilesanmi - ₦2 000
Mr. Richard Blaksley - ₦45 304	Ms. Oluwatomilola Olakiigbe - ₦25 000
Mr. Kayode Ayanlakin - ₦10 000	Mr. Iwuchukwu Nnadi - ₦5 000

Mr. Michael Ogunrinde - ₦130 000	Mr. Richard Agidigbia - Food items
Mr. Benson Iwuji - ₦20 000	Mr. Femi Adamolekun - ₦2 000
Mr. Joshua Ojo - ₦50 000	Ms. Clementina Ekwuonu - ₦10 000
Ms. Tolulope Falola - ₦75 000	Mr. Gbenga Adejorin - ₦15 000
Mrs. Adewuyi - ₦55 801	Ms. Olabisi Omotoye - ₦10 000
Mr. Taiwo Akinlade - ₦150 022	Ms. Stella-Maris Akanmu - ₦100 000
Ms. Olufunke Olukoga - ₦400 000	Ms. Helen Onyeokoro - ₦10 000
Ms. Adetola Adeniyi - ₦20 000 and food items	Ms. Augusta Ikedi - Fundraiser
Mr. Hanson Abara - ₦4 000	Mr. Joseph Omiette - ₦70 000
Ms. Sonia Obanua - ₦11 000	Mr. John Osagie - ₦10 000
Mr. Ayoade Olayinka - ₦55 000	Ms. Oreoluwa Aremo - ₦15 000
Mr. Folorunsho Banire - ₦20 000	Mr. Andrew Nwaukwu - ₦4 000
Mr. Adetunji Adebawale - ₦20 000	Ms. Stella Famakinwa - ₦20 000
Ms. Folake Omakeju - ₦3 000	Mr. Oluwatobi Kusimo - ₦10 000
Mr. Elijah Oladeji - ₦20 000	Mr. Ukechukwu Frank - ₦20 000
Mr. Ayotunde Falola - ₦20 000	Ms. Chinenye Olaoye - ₦15 000
Mr. Temitope Okunlola - ₦200 000	Ms. Bolanle Opadokun - ₦5 000
Ms. Elizabeth Timayi - Educational books	Mrs. Ezinne Ezedum - ₦5 000
Ms. Juliet Omoze - ₦15 000	Ms. Bamitola Oboh - ₦6 300
Ms. Yetunde Opeloyeru - ₦20 000	Mr. Michael Ekene - ₦5 100
Ms. Olajumoke Afolabi - ₦1 000	Mr. Busuyi Famobio - ₦5 000
Mr. David Aloba - ₦5 000	Ms. Grace Negedu - ₦10 000
Mr. Ayobami Ajeleke - ₦2 500	Ms. Priscilia Moses - ₦11 000
Mr. Akposha Ejoro - ₦30 000	Ms. Adenike Oyind - ₦40 000
Ms. Oluwakemi Ikusagba - ₦1000	Mr. David Ayomide - ₦10 000
Ms. Veronica Ogboi - ₦5 000	Mr. Olalekan Idris - ₦3 000
Mr. Samuel Ogoh - ₦100 000	Mrs. Kemi Aromasodu - Food items
Mr. Lanre Adebayo - ₦5 000	Mr. Babatunde Oladipo - ₦5 000
Mr. & Mrs. Chukwuemeka Aimalohi Obi - ₦290 800	Ms. Anthonia I. Oni - ₦30 000
Mr. Daniel Eze - ₦20 000	Ms. Zoussi Ley - Christmas Party & Gifts
Ms. Ngozi Ogunmilua - ₦10 000	Ms. Amarachi Igwe - ₦10 000
	Mr. Gilbert Udeorji - ₦3 000

Our Most Sincere Thanks to the following Corporations, Foundations & Institutions:

Deep Cleaning Nigeria Limited - Fumigation of our Children's Home/Sanitation and Disinfection coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Church of Pentecost Anglican Church - ₦30 000

Anazid Nigeria Limited - ₦15 000

Super Intl Travels Limited - ₦45 000

Helps for All International Foundation - ₦100 000

Lagos Continental Hotel/Mr. Richard Blaksley - ₦300,000

Lagos State Government Safety and Environmental Commission (LAGSEC) – Miscellaneous items

El Gibhor Ventures - ₦5 000

Printistence Limited - ₦10 000

Lemonytouch Events - Christmas Party & Gifts

Digital Play Nigeria Limited - ₦50 000

Titus Owoeye Foundation - ₦125 000

Rite Food Limited - Food items

La Roche Leadership Foundation - Food items and Toiletries

Nestlé Nigeria PLC - Food items

Power Gift Ministries Worldwide - ₦20 000

Lagos State Government Kick against Indiscipline - Food Items and gas cylinders

Our Lagos Community Group - Food items

Opram Nigeria Limited - ₦20 000

Capricorn Digital Limited - ₦8 000

Hope for Women Empowerment - Socks and Shoes

Bounty Givers - Food items, Toiletries and Writing Materials

Finally - but certainly not least - we want to extend our appreciation to all our dedicated employees and team members, who demonstrate their commitment every day by putting their heart into making a difference in the communities we serve. A very Special Thanks to our Coordinator for services way beyond the call of duty and for the competence and diplomacy with which she handled activities during the COVID-19 pandemic, which was a very delicate and difficult period. We are genuinely grateful to all our team members and employees for their enthusiasm, motivation and unwavering commitment in executing our mission.

We live in challenging and uncertain times but like the tortoise in the classic fable by Aesop (c. 620-560 B.C.), the legendary African fabulist and storyteller, we shall continue to slowly but tirelessly take step after step because we know the best days are yet ahead for the children we serve.

As we move forward, caring as we do for our most vulnerable children, we are truly grateful for your dedication and steadfast belief in the great things we know we can accomplish together.

With Deepest Gratitude and Best Wishes

B. Awoyinfa

Bunmi Awoyinfa



House of Mercy Children's Home Lagos, Nigeria



La Maison de la Misericorde

Casa de la Misericordia



Touching Lives, One Child at a Time!

Founded in October 2006, House of Mercy Children's Home Lagos, Nigeria (HOM) is a grassroots NGO focusing on child hunger, child poverty, child homelessness, child illiteracy, child advocacy as well as emergency aid to children in crisis across Africa.

Questions, comments or feedback? Get in touch with us.

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