



Annual Report 2021

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

NGO No CAC/IT/No 21690

Preamble

Hope for a better future for our children was the principle behind the creation of House of Mercy Children's Home Lagos, Nigeria (HOM), and it is the principle that guides our actions.

Although we focus mainly on outreach to children who are living and working on the streets, on dumpsites or in other high-risk contexts, we also target extremely marginalised communities characterised by lack of education, poverty, hunger, child begging and exploitation.

At HOM, we strive to draw attention to the plight of marginalised communities in Nigeria. With increased migration and displacement due to terrorism and conflict, the number of marginalised communities continues to increase.

It is our fervent hope and expectation that our programmes will serve as templates for replication which can be used by policy makers and government officials to effectively address the growing trend of marginalised populations and ensure equity and fairness in the distribution of national resources.

We also hope that our programmes will serve as a catalyst to encourage others across the nation to take similar measures to ease the plight of those who are less fortunate and make our society a better and safer place for children.

In 2021, despite challenges in the context of COVID-19, we continued to focus on our five programme areas: Child Hunger, Child Education, Child Homelessness, Family Preservation and Reunification and Child Advocacy and Child Protection.

Our Annual Report details the impact our work has had over the year 2021, outlining our achievements and most importantly showcasing how our support has helped children and families as well as 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 2021 is also available on our website.



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Our Year in Review

Our Programmes and Projects

“Since the launch of our Child Feeding Programme (Mobile Kitchen) designed to alleviate the suffering caused by hunger and malnutrition fifteen years ago, we have provided over 700,000 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 10,000 destitute families, people with disabilities and the elderly in Lagos State, Oyo State and Ogun State in Nigeria.”

Child Feeding Programme



A great number of children across the nation continue to suffer from child hunger related to household food insecurity. This lack of access to proper nutrition affects a child in more ways than one. Aside from the physical effects which include weight loss and weakened immune systems, hunger also causes psychological and mental damage.

Since the launch of our Child Feeding Programme (Mobile Kitchen) designed to alleviate the suffering caused by hunger and malnutrition fifteen years ago, we have provided over 700,000 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 10,000 destitute families, people with disabilities and the elderly in Lagos State, Oyo State and Ogun State in Nigeria.

Often missed is the relationship between poverty and food insecurity. A two-way link exists between poverty and food insecurity, creating a vicious cycle with each fuelling the other. Food insecurity produces conditions of poverty by reducing the economic potential of the population and likewise, poverty reinforces hunger by increasing the risk of food insecurity.

In 2020, in an attempt to tackle not only the symptoms of food insecurity but also the root causes in Nigeria and in Africa as a whole, we published a video featuring 76 resources by African authors, academics and experts in English, French and Portuguese focused on providing practical solutions to meeting the food security needs of all Africans.

The video titled [Food Security in Africa](#) which was launched on Africa Day for Food and Nutrition Security, October 30, 2020 is available on our YouTube channel.

On [World Food Day](#), October 16, 2021, a global day to increase awareness and action to alleviate hunger, we distributed food items to over 300 vulnerable children and destitute families.

A playlist of our yearly 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



At House of Mercy Children's Home, Lagos, Nigeria (HOM), we offer safe and loving family-style homes for children who have experienced neglect, abuse and complex trauma in their childhood.

From humble beginnings we have stayed true to our mission and have helped to protect children (orphaned, abandoned, unable to be cared for by their parents, living in squats or on the street, etc.) threatened by abuse, exploitation and neglect.

While some of the 82 children who have passed through our children's home since we opened our doors in 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.

We understand that no two children are alike and as such, all our solutions are child-centred and completely bespoke to the unique needs of each child in our care.

We provide high-quality care for our children which includes healthy meals and snacks, comfortable sleeping quarters, clothing, books and educational materials, educational and skill training opportunities and recreational activities.

Caring for children in a home is a complex and professional task so training for our staff is continuous and covers all key areas that are pertinent to the role. Training also ensures that staff are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our children.

In 2021, we welcomed 5 children (3 girls and 2 boys) into our children's home and 4 children were reunited with their families through our [Family Preservation and Reunification Programme](#).

One of the boys we welcomed into our Children's Home when we opened our doors in March 2011 gained admission to Lagos State University, Department of Education in 2021. Here is what he had to say:

If not for House of Mercy Children's Home, Lagos, Nigeria (HOM), I don't know what situation or type of life I would be living now. I am very grateful for your help right from the first day till now.

Our children are precious, and every moment spent providing them with the resources and support that prepares them for a bright and productive future is invaluable.

A playlist of [School Holiday Events](#) providing a glimpse into 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.

"If not for House of Mercy Children's Home, Lagos, Nigeria (HOM), I don't know what situation or type of life I would be living now. I am very grateful for your help right from the first day till now." ~ A., HOM ward & undergraduate at Lagos State University.

Child Education Programme

The number of children who are not enrolled in or who are forced to drop out of school because of poverty continues to rise year-on-year.

Our strategy of offering education sponsorship to children from impoverished families is intended to halt or reverse this trend.

Education Sponsorship Programme: On Children's Day - Nigeria, May 27, 2021, we launched an Education Sponsorship Programme for children from impoverished families in Ogun state. We also distributed food items, clothes, shoes and school supplies to over 300 poor and disadvantaged children. The video of our [Ogun State Education Sponsorship Programme](#) is available on our YouTube channel.

Mother Tongue Education: Based on our experience providing mother tongue literacy programmes for unschooled child beggars, children from nomadic commu-

nities and other marginalised children, we recognise that children learn best in their mother tongue. As such, we strive to promote mother tongue education as well as the translation of books in the fields of applied sciences, technology, social sciences, arts and literature into Nigerian languages.

On International Mother Language Day, February 21, 2020, we launched 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.

The [Mother Tongue Education](#) video features a collection of 35 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.

Digital Literacy: Another issue that deserves attention is the importance of Digital Literacy, an essential 21st century skill necessary to participate fully in society. At HOM, we strive to promote digital literacy skills for students while stressing the importance of Digital Literacy in Education. A [video](#) showing our efforts along those lines was published in August 2021 and it is available on our YouTube channel.

World Teachers' Day: Without teachers, there would be no education. On World Teachers' Day, October 5, 2021, we published a video paying tribute to all teachers whose passion and commitment to their profession and their students make such a vital contribution to our society. The [World Teachers' Day](#) tribute is available on our YouTube channel.



Children's Library: 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.

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

Child Mental Health



Many people feel that mental illness is rare, something that only happens to people with life situations very different from their own, and that it will never affect them. Studies of the epidemiology of mental illness, however, indicate that this is far from true.

Mental illness is not uncommon among children and adolescents. Unfortunately, the social stigma and discrimination associated with mental illness stops people from trying to get the help they need.

Our strategy at House of Mercy Children's Home Lagos, Nigeria (HOM) is to decrease this stigma by educating the public that mental illnesses, rather than being character flaws or personal weakness, are caused by a variety of risk factors including genetics; exposure to toxins, lead and tobacco smoke; living in a stressful environment; living in poverty; and exposure to violence, severe parental discord, child abuse and neglect and childhood trauma.

Youth Depression and Suicide: In 2021, we noted with grave concern the continuing increase in the number of depression and even suicides cases among young people. It is a sad commentary that so many of our youth with such great potential have come to the point of desperation and cannot find a way out other than to throw away the gift of life and end it all.

Periodic bouts of depression are troubling, deep, dark valleys in the journey of life, but experience and encouragement from fellow travellers show us that this is a normal part of human life. For youth, however, they may not yet have had the life experience or may not have found trusted friends or loved ones who might advise them that difficult situations do not last forever.

The nature of mental illness and its attached stigma may make those with a mental health illness feel unable to reach out or obtain help. In some cases, they may simply be unaware of available resources or how to get help. Therefore, the onus falls on those in a position to intervene.

In 2020, we published 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, apartheid

and racism to the specific mental health needs of children, youth, women, and families.

Historical Trauma: An important aspect of mental health which is often overlooked is the devastating effect of historical trauma and the psychological, physical, social and cultural aftermath of slavery, colonialism, apartheid, cultural imperialism and neo-colonialism on people of African descent.

Even today, generations of African people remember the trauma they suffered from acts of slavery, colonialism and apartheid. These have created generations upon generations of African people with a legacy of pain, a lack of self-worth, a sense of shame and deculturalisation often resulting in family breakdowns, addiction, despair and suicide.

And sadly, just like victims of abuse often become abusers, people of African descent who have suffered so much oppression, violence, subjugation and injustice for centuries, even millennia, at the hands of foreign invaders and colonisers often go on to act out and perpetuate the cycle of dysfunction and violence ignited by their oppressors.

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

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

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

“An important aspect of mental health which is often overlooked is the devastating effect of historical trauma and the psychological, physical, social and cultural aftermath of slavery, colonialism, apartheid, cultural imperialism and neo-colonialism on people of African descent.”

Children with Disabilities



Children may be born with a disability or develop one as a result of disease, abuse, or an injury as evidenced by the number of children who are victims of shootings, bombings, and explosions in conflict affected areas in Nigeria and across Africa.

Increasing awareness of the particular challenges facing children with disabilities remained high on our agenda in 2021.

Studies reveal that disabled children are 3.8 times more likely to be neglected or physically abused, 3.1 times more likely to be sexually abused and 3.9 times more likely to be emotionally abused. In addition, 31% of disabled children suffer abuse compared with 9% of the non-disabled child population.

In some cultures, children with disabilities are excluded from participating in society since they may be viewed as a source of shame, or unworthy of care and protection.

Clearly, much more needs to be done to protect children with disabilities from harm. Specific child protection and welfare requirements need to be included in relevant child protection legislation, policy and plans to protect all children, including those with disabilities. This will go a long way to address some of the important challenges that children with disabilities face in Nigeria.

Our video on Disability Awareness features some of our actions of solidarity with children with disabilities and it 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.

“May your works inspire multitudes to unite and eradicate child suffering.”
~ Anonymous Donor, January 4, 2021

Child Protection



Every day across the nation and in Africa, children are being physically, emotionally and sexually abused by those who are charged with their care and who are duty-bound to protect them.

We are even more appalled, distressed and disgusted by alarming reports of sexual and physical abuse of children by religious and cult leaders under the guise of religion.

Each and every one of us, needs to take action however small it may seem. We believe that together we can shift the paradigm from silence and inaction to prevention, protection, awareness and accountability.

The exploitation of children and acts of violence committed against them can never be justified and must, always and in all situations, be condemned.

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

- [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.

We also work tirelessly to secure visibility for children threatened by exploitation, abuse, trafficking and violence and remind governments and the public at large of their crucial role in protecting children from all forms of abuse and exploitation, especially sexual abuse, as laid down in Articles 19 and 34 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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.

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 in English and French on our [video gallery](#) and on our [YouTube channel](#).

On November 25, 2021, International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women & Girls, we launched a video titled [Stop violence against Girls](#) to sensitise and mobilise communities to take concrete action against the abuse and exploitation of girls such as school kidnappings, abduction of children and attacks against schools, forced domestic servitude, child marriage, child prostitution, child pornography, child trafficking, traditional harmful practices and sexual violence during armed conflict. The video is available on our [YouTube channel](#).

The challenge of keeping children safe and protecting the vulnerable cannot be overcome by any single organisation, group or individual. We encourage others to join us in influencing mindsets, attitudes and behaviours by sharing these videos with their families, friends and colleagues. By raising awareness, we can help stop child abuse and neglect before they start. **#OurActionsCount**

Ultimately, it is the collective pressure and action by all actors in society - individuals, households, communities, child protection practitioners, local NGOs, civil society (women's groups, youth groups, faith-based groups) and the corporate sector - that will enhance the protection of children and alleviate their physical and psychological suffering.

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 to ensure that comprehensive protection systems that prevent abuse and support children are put in place and that effective legal frameworks that will end impunity for crimes against children are implemented.

Oftentimes, what is missing is not the systems or laws, but the implementation and the will to enforce these systems rigorously and consistently. We need sustained and consistent political will, resulting in real action and practical steps to safeguard children.

Humanitarian Assistance and Advocacy

“In 2021, we enabled about 200 internally displaced women (IDP women) to create savings groups for the purpose of income-generating activities, based on an ancient African method of group savings which is still widely practised today in Africa.”

Humanitarian Assistance: IDPs in Northeast Nigeria



For the eighth consecutive year, we continued to step up our efforts to provide much needed assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs) experiencing severe hardship in the Northeast region of Nigeria.

In 2021, we enabled about 200 internally displaced women (IDP women) to create savings groups based on an ancient African method of group savings which is still widely practised today in Africa.

Depending on the region, the African group savings is known under many different names, including Ajo in Yoruba, Adashe in Hausa, Esusu in Ibo, Susu in Ghana, Chiperegani in Malawi, Iqub in Ethiopia, Chilemba in Zimbabwe, Nago in Côte d'Ivoire, Jojuma in Togo, Tontine in Mali, Senegal, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo etc.; and Esu and Susu in Afro-descendant communities in the Bahamas, North

America and worldwide.

Individuals, including roadside mechanics, artisans, food vendors, traders in local markets and others who rarely qualify for a bank loan, depend on the savings group for their starting capital to finance a purchase or investment, or to start income-generating activities.

Savings groups have proven to be an effective means of empowering refugees and displaced people and enabling them to access savings without having a national ID, proof of residence or collateral.

Savings groups have also transformed marginalised communities across Africa, mobilising local savings which provide members with a means to respond to the crises that affect them and their communities, cope with emergencies, help to manage household cash-flow, build a capital base and, significantly, re-build social networks, solidarity and trust.

Our goal is to ensure that each IDP woman is able to benefit from the savings groups initiative and start an income-generating activity to provide for basic needs.

In 2021, we also provided hundreds of vulnerable children and families with clothing and shoes for all seasons.

In December 2021, we published a [video](#) highlighting some of our most recent solidarity activities in support of children, families and communities in the Northeast region of Nigeria 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 [YouTube Channel](#). The [playlist](#) aims to raise awareness about the plight, courage and resilience of IDPs, refugees, returnees and host communities in Northeast Nigeria.

Humanitarian Advocacy: The Lake Chad Basin Food Crisis



The Lake Chad Basin crisis is a textbook example of how conflict and hunger are closely linked. More than two million people have been forced to flee their homes in search of safety and have moved into areas where shelter, food and water are scarce. It is estimated that about 10.7 million people are in need across the region and 4.5 million people are severely food insecure.

Although the catalyst for the Lake Chad Basin food crisis is the conflict in Northeast Nigeria - which has spilled across borders into Cameroon, Niger and Chad, - the roots of the crisis go much deeper.

For decades, large parts of the Lake Chad Basin, as well as the broader Sahel region, have existed in a state of vulnerability. This has been exacerbated by five major food and nutrition crises in 2002, 2005, 2008, 2010 and 2012, each of which has eroded the assets of people at community and household levels and made it more difficult for them to cope.

Beyond the massive numbers of children, women and men displaced by the conflict, markets have been disrupted, so have new crops, fisheries and cattle gathering, while basic services in the area are more fragile than ever.

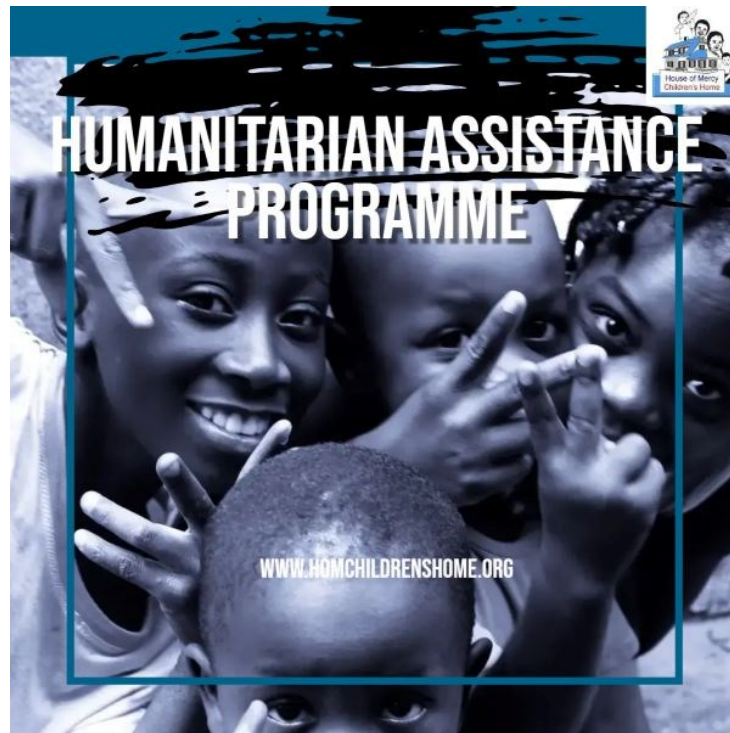
These recurrent food and nutrition crises raise three questions which need to be addressed:

1. Is the framework for analysing and understanding food economies and food crises still appropriate?
2. Do the responses to these crises facilitate people's resilience and build their capacity to withstand future shocks?
3. What food prospects do vulnerable households have and what solutions do development policies offer?

On Africa Day for Food and Nutrition Security, October 30, 2021, we published a video titled [Lake Chad Basin Food Crisis](#) calling attention to the tragic plight of millions of children, women and men in the Lake Chad region who suffer from chronic hunger and malnutrition. The video is available on our [YouTube channel](#).

*"On Africa Day for Food and Nutrition Security, October 30, 2021, we published a video titled **Lake Chad Basin Food Crisis** calling attention to the tragic plight of millions of children, women and men in the Lake Chad region who suffer from chronic hunger and malnutrition."*

Humanitarian Assistance Programme - Africa



In 2021, on the humanitarian front, we provided assistance to extremely vulnerable children and families that have suffered the trauma of war, exile and violence by working alongside outstanding grassroots organisations and individuals in Northeast Nigeria and Democratic Republic of Congo.

We cannot forget the tragic plight of millions of people including children, orphans, women, the sick, the elderly and people with disabilities in the Great Lakes Region, Uganda, Sudan, South Sudan, Angola, Ethiopia and other conflict and post-conflict zones.

The disastrous humanitarian, economic, social and environmental consequences include poverty, misery and disease, refugees within and outside the country and overseas, the search for greener pastures which leads to brain drain, clandestine migration and human trafficking, wars and blood shed, often by proxy, the atrocity of child soldiers and unspeakable violence against women.

The geographical reach of our humanitarian assistance and advocacy work covers the following regions:

- [Northeast Nigeria](#) (Borno, Adamawa and Yobe States).
- [Democratic Republic of Congo](#)
- [Horn of Africa](#) (Northern Ethiopia)
- [The Sahel](#) (Burkina Faso, Far North region of Cameroon, Chad, Mali, Niger)
- [Central African Republic](#) and
- [Ebola affected nations](#) (Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea)

At HOM, we strive to meet the immediate needs of children, women and populations affected by humanitarian crisis and complex, protracted, conflict-related emergencies in a way that also addresses the underlying causes of people's vulnerability.

“Countless African women have steered the course of our history, and their stories are ones of steadfast determination. We applaud and commend the innumerable women in nations across Africa for the key roles they play, not only, in strengthening and building their communities, but also for the return of peace and security in their communities. We salute their courage and commitment to working for a better and more peaceful continent.”

We work in direct partnership with local communities and local NGOs and support locally-led initiatives to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to vulnerable populations in need through shelter, nutrition, health-care, sanitation, education and empowerment actions.

By working with grass-roots organisations that are deeply embedded in the creative processes of societal change and 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 more effectively 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.

African Women: Every day across Africa, a large number of women work tirelessly in very difficult circumstances to improve their livelihoods and the prospects for their children; while many are courageously helping their communities build their capacity to deal with the social issues of education, health care, economic opportunities etc.; yet others are boldly striving to build peace and solidarity in their communities as they continue to challenge impunity for violence against children and women.

On March 8, 2019, we celebrated [International Women's Day](#) by showcasing the ground-breaking work being done by some of our partners in Democratic Republic of Congo. The video is available on our [YouTube channel](#).

African Youth: Given the difficult employment situation that our young people face today, in addition to the pressures to which they are exposed to, like organised crime, cyber-crime, extremism, violence, drugs and other societal pressures, we commend and applaud the efforts of youth across Africa who are working to develop and design solutions for current pressing social and political issues.

We sincerely hope that they will carry on with this important work and that they will do even better, far better, than preceding generations.

On International Workers' Day, May 1, 2020, we published a video featuring 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.

“Given the difficult employment situation that our young people face today, in addition to the pressures to which they are exposed to, like organised crime, cyber-crime, extremism, violence, drugs and other societal pressures, we commend and applaud the efforts of youth across Africa who are working to develop and design solutions for current pressing social and political issues. We sincerely hope that they will carry on with this important work and that they will do even better, far better, than preceding generations.”

The Dark Side of Foreign Charities, International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) and Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs)

There is an African proverb which says: “Beware of the naked man who offers you clothes”. In other words, be wary of those who give with an ulterior motive because accepting the offer will make one indebted to them forever.

On the whole, there are organisations in Africa doing a good job and we commend the hard work and effort of these organisations. However, we would be extraordinarily naive to think that the myriad of foreign charities, INGOs and NPOs are really working in the best interests of Africans.

There is a thin line between humanitarian aid and disguised colonisation. Our observations and those of our dedicated partners on the ground in Africa and in our target geographies reveal that many current practices and attitudes used by foreign charities, INGOs and NPOs are derived from the colonial-era and reinforce colonial dynamics and beliefs such as the ‘white saviour industrial complex’ - a term coined by Teju Cole, a Nigerian writer, photographer, and art historian which refers to a complex where a white person provides help to non-white people in a self-serving manner.

The supposedly apolitical stance of these organisations, whereby they strive to meet community needs without addressing underlying political causes, mirrors the way that colonial invaders would organise humanitarian aid for indigenous populations ravaged by neo-colonialism and suffering as a consequence of living under colonial invasion and control.

Indeed, it might not be too much of a stretch to say that modern-day humanitarian aid, development and peace-building systems are a repackaging of colonialism. Colonisation put the colonial powers in a vantage position with the colonised and as African countries regained their independence, structures were put in place by the colonisers to perpetuate this vantage position.

“There is a thin line between humanitarian aid and disguised colonisation.”

In a continuation of colonial dynamics, aid, development and peace-building concepts and practices are not designed with local approaches to knowledge and context-specific understandings of development, humanitarian aid and peace-building. They are mostly developed far from the communities where the work will eventually take place and are tailored to what the funders needs, not what the communities or beneficiaries need, and they do not adequately reflect local realities and perspectives.

New revelations come to light every day about the crimes and abuses committed by certain foreign charities, INGOs and NPOs:

- Horror stories abound of sexual exploitation and abuse of children and unprotected and vulnerable populations by humanitarian and peacekeeping personnel,
- And then there are reports of unscrupulous organisations that have no compunction in exploiting the extreme poverty of the populations of certain African countries and organising the abduction of children from their families in order to offer them for adoption by couples unable to find children for adoption in their own countries,
- Furthermore, some organisations are known to peddle toxic ideologies often in exchange for (pseudo-) humanitarian aid, development aid, technical and financial assistance.
- A significant number of reports have revealed that some foreign charities, INGOs and NPOs are used as a front or cover for mercenary activities or illicit activities such as the transfer of arms and ammunition, ivory tusks etc.

“This jaundiced vision of Africa that neo-colonialism seeks to impose is not that of a heroic continent struggling under unfavourable conditions to regain its full political independence and full exercise of its political, territorial and monetary sovereignty; but an image of a land of endless struggle dependent on the West to save it.”

- Compromised organisations also use the cover of humanitarian work to avoid detection by providing logistical support to and serving as a conduit for moving funds to terrorists in insecure and conflict-affected areas, where terrorist groups may be present or seek to operate.
- Yet other foreign charities, INGOs and NPOs, particularly child sponsorship ones, resort to stereotypical images of dirty children, buzzing flies, begging eyes, and bloated bellies to pull at heartstrings and garner donations.

This jaundiced vision of Africa that neo-colonialism seeks to impose is neither that of a strong and resilient people freed from the chains of slavery, colonialism, apartheid, nor that of a heroic continent struggling under unfavourable conditions to regain its full political independence and full exercise of its political, territorial and monetary sovereignty; but an image of a land of endless struggle dependent on the West to save it. This dehumanised imagery of Africans exists in the shared imagination of the humanitarian aid system and it promotes racism and perpetuates western superiority, paternalism and dominance.

Reports presented by western observers, governments and journalists on the state of the peoples on the African continent serve political expediencies and conceal what is to blame: capitalist production methods and the brutal imperialist interventions by former colonial invaders and other imperialist states and organisations who prey on African countries and plunder their wealth-producing sources, which all results in hunger and the impoverishment of millions of people.

As mentioned previously, the solutions proposed and implemented by western aid organisations are, for the most part, hot air diverting attention away from the truth, because meeting the people's needs is incompatible with the supreme principle of capitalist development and the pursuit of profit. For every euro or dollar that the West gives, thousands are diverted in return from African countries. Sadly enough, these issues are rarely broached in mainstream media.

Given the dominance and proliferation of foreign charities, INGOs and NPOs in Africa, it is worth asking whether these organisations allow African governments to shirk their responsibilities towards their citizens. Under different regimes, by dint of broken promises, governing parties in African countries have lost their credibility and people's trust. African governments are too detached from the realities experienced by their fellow citizens, from the public interest and the future of the next generations. By selling out or being "puppets" working for former colonial invaders and by not investing in universally accessible, high quality, basic social services, African governments deliberately deprive themselves of the means to ensure social equity and protection for their citizens, especially the most vulnerable ones.

The improvement of the living conditions and livelihood security of the peoples of African countries will not be achieved through western developmental aid, but through resistance to imperialist intervention, the quest for equal international relations and the struggle for a different developmental approach based on the genuine needs of the people.

The bottom line is that it is our responsibility, as Africans, to solve our own problems. We should not delude ourselves into thinking that foreign countries, international organisations or the myriad of foreign charities, INGOs and NPOs will solve our problems for us. History has proved this time and again.

It is we, the peoples of Africa, who must decide our own fate.

Africans United for Peace Campaign



How can we prevent conflict and reduce the risk and prevalence of civil and tribal wars, if we do not address their root causes? Only when the cause of a disease is identified, can a cure be found to eradicate it.

In Africa, interests linked to natural resources plundering, oil supplies and arms trafficking have fuelled civil wars. As often happens in this type of conflict, most of the victims are children, women, the sick, the elderly and people with disabilities.

Whatever may be the responsibility of foreign interests, there is always the shameful and tragic collusion of the local leaders: ruthless politicians who betray and sell out their nations and unprincipled business people who collude with rapacious multi-nationals, arms dealers and traffickers.

One of the saddest and tragic realities we have seen in conflict zones across Africa is the profound trauma and prolonged suffering of children exposed to armed conflict.

Childhood indoctrination into prejudice, hatred and the ways of terrorism, recruitment by armed groups and widespread violence, including killing and maiming, sexual violence, abduction and other grave crimes in war-affected countries, is daily life for thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of children. Children also suffer from the indirect impact of war, such as the loss of their families and homes, hunger and various diseases.

At House of Mercy Children's Home, Lagos, Nigeria (HOM), we have always consistently rejected and condemned in the strongest possible terms the various forms of violence committed against children in armed conflict.

We think of all the innocent people who lost their lives, all those who have suffered the trauma of war, exile and violence, and all those who have been caught up in the fear and horror of living through a lifetime of war and are still suffering today.

We, the peoples of Africa, raise our voices to the four points of the compass and manifest our preoccupation and indignation before so many injustices, in vogue now for centuries against our peoples.

And we say: "Enough!" We say "No" to foreign nations allowing their own companies, in their scramble to corner markets and sources of raw materials, to contribute to the destabilisation and destruction of African countries. We say "No" again and again to these foreign countries tolerating the destruction of the environment by industrial and commercial practices that they would not allow on their own territory.

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“In zones of conflict where people experience daily the ravages of war, too little attention is paid to reporting by the media and the role of journalists in inciting hatred and violence or promoting peace, dialogue and reconciliation.”

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](#).

It is "We the peoples of Africa" who must work together aggressively to overcome the ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic barriers in our quest for justice and peace.

In zones of conflict where people experience daily the ravages of war, too little attention is paid to reporting by the media and the role of journalists in inciting hatred and violence or promoting peace, dialogue and reconciliation.

All mass media users must bear in mind that the mainstream media is a form of mind control designed to control the narrative and thereby influence people's thinking in a direct or subliminal fashion.

Hence the need for conflict-sensitive journalism. When media professionals working within the African media sector exercise their moral conscience and demonstrate professional ethics by disseminating objectively analysed information and reporting on conflict situations with objectivity and sensitivity, it contributes to ending or lessening the violence and promoting peace. Such coverage can complement reporting by the international media that concentrates on disinformation, dramatic and negative events while ignoring the real root causes of conflicts, wars and organised massacres on the continent of Africa.

We implore Nigerian and African media organisations to support the efforts to promote understanding and mutual solidarity and protect children and youth from exposure to content that may exacerbate violence and crime, particularly content depicting and glorifying acts of violence against children and women. **#OurActionsCount**

In the same breath, we commend the extraordinary efforts and dedication of credible African media entities who tackle important issues that few mainstream media outlets address and, most importantly, through the perspective of Africans.

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African Renaissance Initiative

Poverty persists in Africa, not because the resources and technology required to eliminate it are not available, but rather because of powerful globalizing forces that do not allow for the African people to develop their capabilities and pursue their well-being.

That is why, while attempting to mitigate the impact of engineered poverty on our beneficiaries through our [programmes](#), we also consider it a matter of social justice to address the root causes of the problems of Africa and propose suitable and efficient solutions.

We also aim to strengthen the capacity of people and communities, especially the most marginalised, to participate in development activities and to influence the social, economic, and political structures that affect their lives. Only in this way can they forge and change their own destinies and that of their local communities.

In 2018, we launched our [Africa Wake Up](#) campaign against poverty and injustice.

The Africa Wake Up Campaign culminated in the establishment of our [African Renaissance](#) initiative in 2020.

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Videos in our African Renaissance initiative include:

[Africa's Blueprint for Action](#) 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. The 331 resources cover the following 24 topics: Africa's Odious Debts, Capital Flight from Africa, Development Aid, Monetary Sovereignty, African Youth, Good Governance, Children at risk, Health & Epidemics, Mental Health, 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.

[Mental Health and Wellness Resources](#) featuring a comprehensive list of 134 Mental Health and Wellness 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.

[Food Security in Africa](#) 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.

[Mother Tongue Education](#) featuring a collection of 35 books by African academics and experts advocating and presenting guidelines for the use of African languages for the education of Africans.

[**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.

[**Stop Child Abuse**](#) 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.

[**Youth unemployment in Africa**](#) featuring 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.

[**Infection Prevention and Control**](#) 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.

[**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, apartheid and colonialism who are demanding justice and reparations.

We continue to be inspired by the African-led, operated and staffed organisations as well as the dynamic, positive community leaders and individuals in Nigeria and all across Africa doing a commendable job for development, conflict prevention, peacebuilding and reconciliation, defense of the rights of the child and of women, education and skills training in the digital age and combating poverty and diseases like HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, Ebola, COVID-19 and other issues. We salute and applaud their efforts and encourage them to sustain their commitment.

At great cost and sacrifice our forebears assumed their responsibility for the present and the future of the new generations by helping free the African continent from the shackles of slavery, colonialism and apartheid. We are humbled by the magnitude of their sacrifice and inspired by the depths of their resolve.

Now, more than ever, we need to act boldly and decisively on behalf of our children, our grandchildren and the unborn who are threatened by engineered poverty, structural violence and injustice. **#OurActionsCount**

If we fulfil our responsibility in this respect, we shall leave behind us a legacy of hope and peace, freedom and prosperity, safety and stability so that the individuals who will come after us will have the capacity to continue building this continent in the future.

We owe nothing less to our children, our children's children and future generations.

The [**African Renaissance Initiative**](#) playlist is available on our YouTube channel.

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Breaking the Conspiracy of Silence

There is a saying in Zulu that “keeping silent about a great secret is like sitting on a scorpion”. The time has certainly come for everyone to speak with a clear voice, the voice of conscience.

“The more we abandon the accurate teaching of our own history, the more ground we yield to those who would use psychological warfare and gaslighting to distort historical facts and create their own myths of the past.”

Commemorative Events

Every year, we commemorate [Events](#) to promote historical awareness.

Addressing the deep-rooted causes of problems in Africa also presupposes shedding light on the historical background of the African continent.

This is not an easy exercise but failing to do so will make it difficult to apply that knowledge to address critical problems. The knowledge of history is, without a doubt, an excellent source of solutions to the political, economic, financial and social problems facing Africans today.

The more we abandon the accurate teaching of our own history, the more ground we yield to those who would use psychological warfare and gaslighting to distort historical facts and create their own myths of the past.

“Africans have always been and remain natural-born linguists, great scholars and avid readers and we take this opportunity to encourage everyone to pick up some of the books in our History Corner and our African Renaissance playlist and promote these great authors.”

World Book and Copyright Day: April 23

For nearly two millennia, the history of Black people has been modified and falsified and a distorted version of African history has been taught especially through the education system, through religious institutions and through movies.

On World Book and Copyright Day, April 23, 2021, a day aimed to raise public awareness of books and to promote reading, we paid tribute to the renowned African, Haitian, African-American, Jamaican and Guyanese authors for the vital role they played in the restoration of the true history of the Black race.

Not only did these geographers, archaeologists, philosophers, historians, linguists, literary people and sociologists study artefacts in-depth, but they also went in the field to trace their true origins, their true history and did everything possible to make the truth known. **#TheTruthWillSetUsFree**

Africans have always been and remain natural-born linguists, great scholars and avid readers and we take this opportunity to encourage everyone to pick up some of the books in our [History Corner](#) and our [African Renaissance](#) playlist and promote these great authors.

Most of the books are available in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese.

World Day for International Justice: July 17

Civil rights champion Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968) delivered a powerful speech at National Cathedral, Washington, D.C. on March 31, 1968 just days before his assassination in Memphis with this resonant line:

We shall overcome because the arc of the moral universe is long but it bends toward justice.

But the question remains as to whether the arc of the moral universe bends toward justice or towards injustice.

Slavery may have been about the sale and subjugation of Africans, but its impact was felt throughout the entire African continent. The waters of the Atlantic Ocean are said to remain dark and murky with the blood of our ancestors stolen from all along the western coast, as far south as the windy coast of Namibia and all the way to the dry shores of the Sahara Desert. Whenever the enslaved Africans revolted or became seasick, or in any way disobeyed their captors, they were dumped into the icy Atlantic Ocean.

Shipping manifests indicate that prior to 1650, slave voyages most often originated in Senegambia and West Central Africa in locations now known as the Democratic Republic of Congo and Angola. Although West Central Africa remained a primary embarkation region throughout the slave trading period from 1650 to 1850, these voyages originated with increasing frequency at ports in the Bight of Benin and the Bight of Biafra, in locations now known as Benin, Nigeria, Cameroon, and Gabon.

For nearly five centuries, millions of Africans, children, women and men, were transformed into human cargoes, transported across the Atlantic and forced to work in inhuman conditions of horror, deprivation and violence. They were seized in wars and raids, sold from one trader to another, imprisoned in forts and loaded onto ships that took them across the Atlantic.

“The waters of the Atlantic Ocean are said to remain dark and murky with the blood of our ancestors stolen from all along the western coast, as far south as the windy coast of Namibia and all the way to the dry shores of the Sahara Desert.”

For centuries, the Transatlantic Slave Trade inflicted unspeakable dehumanisation. Millions perished from the long march in Africa, the Middle Passage across the Atlantic and conditions at the other end. On their arrival in the new world, the survivors were put in camps where they were tortured into obedience. They worked in plantations and other places in harsh working conditions. Not knowing anything but hard labour and inhuman treatment, many died without ever seeing either their homeland or their families again. Their labour helped build prosperous societies in which they had no rights and no say.

Not only were terrorised Africans bought and sold as if tradable property, but enslaved African girls and women were often compelled to have children and those children, regardless of how they came into being, were very often taken away from their parents and sold as property too.

“To this day, Africa is still nursing the wounds of slavery. It is an undisputed fact that the Transatlantic slave trade destroyed the people who were forced into servitude. But, even worse, the powerful backers of the Transatlantic Slave Trade returned to Africa to unleash upon those remaining behind an unequalled kind of oppression, driven by greed and expansionism, which manifested itself as a colonial system that left Africa impoverished for centuries and up till today.”

When importation of enslaved Africans was outlawed, slave owners turned to forced mating on slave breeding farms whose function was to produce as many enslaved Africans as possible for the sale and distribution throughout the South to meet their needs. Two of the largest breeding farms were located in Richmond, Virginia, and the Maryland Eastern-Shore. America was a slave-breeding society from colonial times through emancipation. The population of enslaved Africans of the breeding farm was mostly women and children not old enough to be sold, and a limited number of men whose job was to impregnate as many enslaved women as possible. The enslaved Africans were often given hoods or bags over their heads to keep them from knowing who they were having forced sex with. It could be someone they know, perhaps a niece, aunt, sister, or their own mother. The breeders only wanted a child that could be sold.

To this day, Africa is still nursing the wounds of slavery. It is an undisputed fact that the Transatlantic slave trade destroyed the people who were forced into servitude. But, even worse, the powerful backers of the Transatlantic Slave Trade returned to Africa to unleash upon those remaining behind an unequalled kind of oppression, exploitation and domination driven by greed and expansionism, which manifested itself as a colonial system that left Africa impoverished for centuries and up till today.

It is now neo-colonialism and the setting up of puppet regimes that is perpetuating the domination and exploitation of African countries.

“To this day, white people commonly repeat the argument that Africans sold other Africans into slavery. This defence purports to offer a twisted alibi for the white slave makers and slave traders who created the market for enslaved Africans, acquired them in Africa, transported them to the American continent under conditions that killed as much as 20% of the “cargo,” and then sold the survivors.”

During a speech on January 8, 1961, William Branham, a European American and founder of the religious movement known as Branhamism, made an incisive statement about his race:

Wherever the white man goes, sin goes with him. The white man is the greatest murderer and the greatest assassin of all the peoples of the earth. He is the renegade of all races.

Michael Bradley, another European American, reiterated this statement in his 1978 book, *The Iceman Inheritance*:

...I will attempt to show that racism itself is a predisposition of but one race of Mankind - the white race. Nuclear war, environmental pollution, resource rape ... all are primary threats to our survival, and all are the result of peculiarly Caucasoid behavior, Caucasoid values, Caucasoid psychology. It is in the sphere of ‘abnormal’ violence that we Caucasoids excel among races.... There is no way to avoid the truth. The problem with the world is white men.

To this day, white people commonly repeat the argument that Africans sold other Africans into slavery. This defence purports to offer a twisted alibi for the white slave makers and slave traders who created the market for enslaved Africans, acquired them in Africa, transported them to the American continent under conditions that killed as much as 20% of the “cargo,” and then sold the survivors.

There is a cognitive dissonance between reality and rhetoric. It is time for white people to stop gaslighting and crafting rhetoric and deal with slavery and its repercussions honestly.

The slave trade, the legacy of slavery and colonialism are at the heart of the profound social and economic inequality, hatred, bigotry, racism and prejudice which continues to have an impact, whether direct or psychological, on people of African descent throughout the world.

In his 1973 song, “The Price of Peace”, Jimmy Cliff, the Jamaican reggae superstar and talented lyricist, reflected the anguish of the culturally colonised and the oppressed, void of nationalism and culture:

"You stole my history,
Destroyed my culture,
Cut out my tongue,
So I can't communicate.
Then you mediate
And separate,
Hide my whole way of life,
So myself I should hate."

“The past cannot be changed and there is nothing we can do today that will take away the sufferings of the past, but yesterday's injustices must be corrected.”

The European invaders and slave-owners have been reluctant to recognise the full extent of the damage caused by the ruthless exploitation of human beings and natural resources in Africa. And yet, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to hide the historical fact that there is a direct link between the Transatlantic Slave Trade, colonial subjugation and the prosperity of the West.

- 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.
- The Transatlantic Slave Trade contributed enormously to increase the concentration of capital available to the rich merchants who were to become the first bankers of the West.
- The financial and economic importance of the Transatlantic Slave Trade can be felt in Europe’s main commercial centres: Lisbon, Seville, Antwerp, Bruges, Nantes, etc. From these cities, the proceeds from the Transatlantic Slave Trade by land and maritime routes benefited even the economies of Germany, Scandinavia, Poland, the Baltic countries, Russia and other States that did not own colonies.
- Without colonial trade, the major economic changes of the mercantilist era would have been impossible. Cotton, wood dye and cabinet wood, silk, spices, indigo, coffee, tobacco, precious metals, etc., proved decisive for an industrial revolution whose historical scope transcended the boundaries of the nations of the colonial invaders.
- To compound matters, this horrifying legacy continues today through the actions of the descendants of the perpetrators of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. The Charter of Imperialism which was drawn up in Washington during the “Transatlantic Slave Trade”, negotiated at the “Berlin conference in 1885” while the Western nations divided and shared Africa; and renegotiated in Yalta at the time of division of the world in two blocks after the Second World War and during the creation of the League of Nations - the predecessor of the United Nations - is still being implemented today in African countries that were colonised by the European invaders.

“It has been argued that no country that engaged in the Transatlantic Slave Trade could justifiably claim to support human rights without first offering an official apology and atonement in the form of reparation.”

The Catholic Church and other religious institutions that sanctioned the enslavement and subjugation of African people; countries that engaged in the Transatlantic Slave Trade, the subjugation of the African people and the usurpation of their land; and nations that were developed on the blood, sweat and tears of enslaved Africans have a moral obligation to make right those crimes against humanity.

It has been argued that no country that engaged in the Transatlantic Slave Trade could justifiably claim to support human rights without first offering an official apology and atonement in the form of reparation. It is further believed that only under such circumstances can the descendants of enslaved persons truly forgive and move forward in the world. From the perspective of the descendants of enslaved persons, these two matters will remain crucial because of the indignity, suffering and haunting legacies they live with because of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery.

Coming to terms with history is always essential, but particularly crucial in cases of massive atrocities and human rights violations. According to international law, and more particularly that elaborated since the judgement of the Nuremberg Tribunal and in the work of the International Law Commission, crimes against humanity also include gross actions against any civilian population, whether in the context of an armed conflict or outside it. Impunity for these crimes denies human beings any possibility of living in a world based on justice, peace, freedom and democracy.

The past cannot be changed and there is nothing we can do today that will take away the sufferings of the past, but yesterday's injustices must be corrected.

Justice and Reparations: 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, the Herero and Nama genocide in Namibia, the genocide in the Congo Free State, conquest, apartheid and colonialism. The [Justice and Reparations](#) video is available on our YouTube channel.

Today, we still hear in our human consciousness the loud echo of the voices of children, women and men howling in horror and despair before being shoved down into the hold of ships or colonial jails, slaughtered in the Herero and Nama genocide in Namibia and the genocide in the Congo Free State and banished during the colonial and apartheid era.

These were crimes against the humanity of our forefathers and foremothers and we can never allow their tragedy to be forgotten. **#WeWillNeverForget**

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#WeWillNeverForget

The Haitian Revolution: January 1, 1804



The Haitian Revolution, the largest and most successful rebellion of enslaved Africans in the Western Hemisphere, constitutes a landmark in the history of abolition of slavery. It precipitated the end of slavery not only in Saint-Domingue but also in all French colonies.

These trailblazers of freedom, who were forcibly and violently transported from West Africa and Central Africa and enslaved, rose up as pioneers in the defense of human rights. They initiated the rebellion in 1791 and by 1804 they had succeeded in defeating Napoleon's armies, thus ending not just slavery but French control over the colony.

On January 1, 1804, after over a decade of fighting against French enslavement and colonisation, the French colony of Saint-Domingue became the Independent Republic of Haiti.

More than 300 years after Christopher Columbus landed in Hispaniola, destroyed its native population and introduced the barbaric and horrendous practice of the legal trafficking in human cargo, the island witnessed the birth of the independent Republic of Haiti.

The Haitian Declaration of Independence simply stated,

We have dared to be free, let us be thus by ourselves and for ourselves.

Upon declaring independence, Haiti claimed a singular place in world history by becoming the first modern Black Republic in the world and the first independent nation in the Caribbean.

The Haitian Revolution was transformative on a global scale. It highlighted the horrors, atrocities and tragic abuses of slavery; disrupted the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, the inhumane traffic in human beings from Africa to European colonies and countries in the Americas; and offered a powerful example of collective action and hope of emancipation for enslaved people around the world.

Haitians accomplished what many people thought was impossible. Inspired by the courage and the bravery of the Haitians, colonised nations began to seek for independence. Haiti was a leading force in the liberation of many Latin American countries including Venezuela, Colombia, Panama, Ecuador and Peru. Haiti also provided assistance to Greece in its fight for independence.

“The Haitian Revolution, the largest and most successful rebellion of enslaved Africans in the Western Hemisphere, constitutes a landmark in the history of abolition of slavery. It precipitated the end of slavery not only in Saint-Domingue but also in all French colonies.

These trailblazers of freedom, who were forcibly and violently transported from West Africa and Central Africa and enslaved, initiated the rebellion in 1791 and by 1804 they had succeeded in defeating Napoleon’s armies.”

Haiti's early history is characterised by remarkable economic output. On the eve of the Haitian Revolution, Saint Domingue had become the most lucrative colony on earth. Its economy was built by the labour of about 800,000 enslaved African men and women who worked the vast plantations, and it was the world's leading producer of sugar and coffee and among the global leaders in indigo, cacao and cotton.

Yet today Haiti, cradle of the liberation struggles against slavery and colonialism in the American continent and the first independent republic in Latin America and the Caribbean, is considered the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.

Why or how did things evolve this way?

Haitians have a proverb, “Dèyè mòn gen mon” which means behind the mountain there are mountains.

For the Haitians those mountains or challenges have come by way of the “independence debt” to French slave owners, foreign-led coups and occupations, corrupt and oppressive puppet regimes, protracted socio-political crisis, deteriorating economic conditions, rising food insecurity and malnutrition, waterborne disease outbreaks, the Haitian-Dominican migration situation and high vulnerability to natural disasters.

- On the night that spanned August 22 and 23, 1791, under the brilliant military leadership of Toussaint Louverture, enslaved Africans in the French colony of Saint-Domingue started the Haitian Revolution. Gifted with natural military genius, Toussaint Louverture organised an effective guerrilla war against the island's colonial population. Toussaint Louverture was eventually imprisoned and died in France, but his successors continued the revolution until 1804 and fought and inflicted a crushing defeat on Napoleon’s armies.
- During the wars that comprised the Haitian Revolution from 1791 to 1803, white enslavers fled Saint-Domingue to other islands in the Caribbean and to North America namely Louisiana and South Carolina, taking with them the Africans they had enslaved. Their stories and the news from the revolt made the white enslavers pass new "black codes".
- Women were instrumental at every level in the time preceding and during the Haitian Revolution. Their participation included that of spies, nurses as well as active involvement in combat. Some of these legendary women include: Suzanne Bélair known as Sanité Bélair, Marie Sainte Dédée Bazile, Marie-Louise Coidavid, Catherine Flon, Cécile Fatiman, Marie-Claire Heureuse Félicité, Marie-Jeanne Lamartinière, Suzanne Simone Baptiste Louverture and Victoria Montou.

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“Le Nèg Mawon (translated Black Maroon in English and Nègre Marron in French) is a formidably powerful symbol that commemorates the landmark Haitian revolution. The statue was created by Albert Mangonès (1917-2002), a renowned Haitian architect, sculptor, and founder of the Haitian Institute for the Protection of National Heritage (ISPAN) in 1968.”

- Haitians claimed their independence in a heroic and Herculean 13-year war against France, Britain and Spain.
- On January 1, 1804, Jean-Jacques Dessalines declared the nation independent and renamed it Haiti. Haiti thus emerged as the first modern Black Republic in the world.
- Le Nèg Mawon (translated Black Maroon in English and Nègre Marron in French) is a formidably powerful symbol that commemorates the landmark Haitian revolution. The statue was created by Albert Mangonès (1917-2002), a renowned Haitian architect, sculptor, and founder of the Haitian Institute for the Protection of National Heritage (ISPAN) in 1968. Le Nèg Mawon is shown with the left leg extended with a broken shackle at the ankle denoting the hard-fought freedom; a machete in the right hand showing the strength to fight; and a conch shell, which was often used as a trumpet to assemble people, at the lips. What makes Le Nèg Mawon even more significant is the fact that it survived the tragic and devastating earthquake of January 12, 2010 completely intact. Even as major buildings like the presidential palace crumbled all around it, Le Nèg Mawon stood firm and emerged unscathed - just like the Haitian people have continued to remain strong, resilient and unbreakable in the face of adversity for centuries.
- Haiti was surrounded by hostile slave colonies and Haiti created the first haven of freedom for enslaved Africans who escaped on the continent. Jean-Jacques Dessalines, the first leader of independent Haiti, stipulated in the 1805 Constitution that any African who set foot on Haitian soil would automatically gain freedom, citizenship, shelter, and the protection of the Haitian State.
- Haiti's independence was viewed as a threat by all slave-owning countries including the United States. In October 1779, a force of more than 500 Haitian soldiers, les Chasseurs-Volontaires de Saint-Domingue fought in the Battle of Savannah in coastal Georgia, played a significant role in the Revolutionary War and provided support to the founding of the United States. Yet there was no sign of gratitude from the United States for the Savannah heroism. When Haiti successfully defeated the French in 1804, the slave-owning United States refused to recognise its sovereignty for many years because it regarded the free Black Republic as a threat. Instead, the United States supported the French against the Haitians and have been hostile or, at best, indifferent to their Caribbean neighbours during most of their history. Americans also continued to enslave Negroes six decades after Haitian independence.
- Independent Haiti faced diplomatic and economic isolation. The slave-owning West took France's side against Haiti and no foreign nation recognised Haiti's sovereignty or established diplomatic relations with her.

“What makes Le Nèg Mawon even more significant is the fact that it survived the tragic and devastating earthquake of January 12, 2010 completely intact. Even as major buildings like the presidential palace crumbled all around it, Le Nèg Mawon stood firm and emerged unscathed - just like the Haitian people have continued to remain strong, resilient and unbreakable in the face of adversity for centuries.”

“The 'independence debt' illegitimately forced a people who had won their independence in a successful revolution to pay again for the freedom. Over the years, this repayment of the 'independence debt' to their former slave owners, along with foreign-led coups and occupations, left the Haitian economy crippled and impoverished.”

- In 1825, twenty-one years after winning its independence against all odds, French enslavers demanded compensation and Charles X demanded Haiti pay an "independence debt" of 150m gold francs, 10 times Haiti's annual revenue. Thus Haiti, a republic formed and led by Black people who had revolted against the institution of slavery, had little choice but to accede to France's reparation demands, which were delivered in 1825 to Port-au-Prince by a fleet of heavily armed warships threatening to re-invade and re-enslave the Haitian State.
- Haiti's hand was forced and she began paying enormous “reparations” to the French slaveholders it had overthrown. Furthermore, France demanded to buy all Haitian products at a 50% discount. For over a century, Haiti was required to finance the debt, through loans from French and American banks that levied draconian taxes and interests on the loans.
- By complying with an ultimatum that amounted to extortion, Haiti gained immunity from French military invasion, relief from political and economic isolation and a crippling debt that took 122 years to pay off. Thanks to voluntary contributions from Haiti's citizens, most of whom were desperately poor, that debt was finally settled in 1947. But decades of making regular payments had rendered the Haitian government chronically insolvent, helping to create a pervasive climate of instability from which the country still has not recovered.
- When Haitians declared their independence on January 1, 1804, they had every right to claim reparations from the colonisers who had built an empire on more than a century of stolen labour. France was, however, convinced that it was the Haitians who had stolen the property of slave owners by refusing to continue working for free.
- "The 'independence debt' illegitimately forced a people who had won their independence in a successful revolution to pay again for the freedom.
- The 'independence debt' was illegal in 1825 since slavery was technically outlawed when the original demand for compensation was made.
- In 2004, a lawsuit launched by Haiti to demand repayment of the money France had extorted from Haiti was abandoned when France backed the overthrow of the government.
- To this day, France has refused to pay Haiti back the money it illegally demanded for over a century.
- Over the years, this repayment of 'independence debt' to their former slave owners, along with foreign-led coups and occupations, left the Haitian economy crippled and impoverished.

“The tragedy of Haiti is a history of isolation, ostracism, and interventions. It is also a history of betrayal by an unscrupulous ruling class more interested in conspicuous consumption and personal wealth than nation building. At the same time, it is a history of demands for freedom, human rights, and human dignity, not only for Haitians, but also for all citizens of African descent.”

“To our Haitian brothers and sisters, we say: “Dèyè mòn, se espwa” meaning behind the mountain there is hope. The fact that hope of the Haitians was crushed but not destroyed despite centuries of oppression, political instability and economic hardship is an immense tribute to their spirit and resilience and their desire to control their own destiny.”

- Haiti is one of the clearest examples of the disastrous consequences of colonialism and neo-colonialism, of the unjust and exclusionary international order, and of the continued interventionism characterising its history.
- The tragedy of Haiti is a history of isolation, ostracism, and interventions. It is also a history of betrayal by an unscrupulous ruling class more interested in conspicuous consumption and personal wealth than nation building. At the same time, it is a history of demands for freedom, human rights, and human dignity, not only for Haitians, but also for all citizens of African descent.

To our Haitian brothers and sisters, we say: “Dèyè mòn, se espwa” meaning behind the mountain there is hope.

Through the Haitian Revolution, Toussaint L’Ouverture, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, Alexandre Pétion, Henri Christophe and many other Haitian pioneers of freedom inspired antislavery movements and action around the world and became a beacon of hope and freedom to millions of African children, women and men during one of the darkest periods in our history. Still today, Haiti remains a source of inspiration and a torch-bearer to all.

The fact that hope of the Haitians was crushed but not destroyed despite centuries of oppression, political instability and economic hardship is an immense tribute to their spirit and resilience and their desire to control their own destiny.

Though the mountains remaining in Haiti are enormous and often seem almost impossible to overcome, there is hope for a stronger economy providing sustainable jobs; hope for better infrastructure on every level; hope for investment in education, health care, water and sanitation, electricity, and transportation; hope for political stability and a government that truly works for its own people.

Solidarity with Haitian Children: On June 10, 2021, Children's Day in Haiti, we extended a hand of solidarity to Haitian children by organising a Child Feeding Programme. The video titled [Solidarity with Haitian Children](#) is available on our YouTube channel.

Transatlantic Slave Trade: In an effort to honour the sacrifices made by our forefathers and foremothers who fought so valiantly for the abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade (the successful Haitian revolution of 1804 and the countless shipboard insurrections and revolts against enslavement including the Maroons) and to honour the memory of the millions of unknown souls who suffered, died and have now been lost to history, we published a video titled [Transatlantic Slave Trade](#) on International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition, August 23, 2019. **#WeWillNeverForget**

The [Transatlantic Slave Trade](#) video is available on our YouTube channel.

We also have a blog on the Haitian revolution and the birth of the Republic of Ayiti which is available in [English](#), [French](#) and [Portuguese](#).

“On June 10, 2021, Children's Day in Haiti, we extended a hand of solidarity to Haitian children by organising a Child Feeding Programme. The video titled Solidarity with Haitian Children is available on our YouTube channel.”

Challenges Encountered

The Epidemic of Missing African Children



Every year, we monitor issues relating to the security and well-being of the children across Africa and work closely with African-led organisations to promote child survival and child protection.

Our website, our social media posts and many of our resources are available in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese so that they can be accessible to English-speaking, French-speaking, Spanish-speaking and Portuguese-speaking Africans throughout Africa and in the Diaspora.

Since 2019, we have focused much of our advocacy efforts on the issue of trafficking of African children. As part of our awareness-raising efforts, we launched a video titled [Child Migrants](#) to sound the alarm about the tragic situation of child victims of trafficking and also to mobilise action from African governments and other stakeholders to address this tragedy. The [Child Migrants](#) video is available in English, French and Portuguese on our YouTube channel.

Human trafficking is an exceptionally dangerous type of criminal activity that has been growing in recent years and has reached alarming levels, representing the third largest source of revenue after weapons and drugs trafficking.

While it is impossible to truly know the full scope and impact of this problem at the Nigerian or African-wide level and difficult to find precise figures, we do know that women and children are the primary victims although men are not immune to this crime.

An environment of unrest and conflict heightens the risk of abduction, sexual violence and exploitation of children, thus making child refugees and migrants, particularly unaccompanied children, more vulnerable to trafficking.

Criminals trafficking children target victims from extremely poor households, dysfunctional families or those who are abandoned with no parental care. Unfortunately, those looking for help are often those who are the most vulnerable to being taken advantage of by predators with sinister motives.

Human trafficking manifests itself in the form of illegal adoption, sexual exploitation, forced domestic labour, forced begging by children and petty crime, forced criminal activities such as drug trafficking, forced marriages and forced organ harvesting.

Human trafficking also exists in the world of sport. An increasing number of professional sports clubs' resort to attracting ever younger players from Africa, for the obvious reason that they pay very little, if anything, for them.

“Since 2019, we have focused much of our advocacy efforts on the issue of trafficking of African children. As part of our awareness-raising efforts, we launched a video titled Child Migrants to sound the alarm about the tragic situation of child victims of trafficking and also to mobilise action from African governments and other stakeholders to address this tragedy.”

Broad cultural acceptance of child labour also serves as a fertile ground for traffickers. It is easier to exploit youngsters when people are accustomed to sending their children to work away from home. Child victims of trafficking for forced labour are exploited across a range of economic sectors, including agriculture, construction, fishing industry, mining, street trading and domestic servitude. The sad reality is that parents and siblings are sometimes accomplices in child trafficking.

A set of interrelated "push" and "pull" factors contribute to human trafficking. "Push" factors include extreme poverty, unemployment, lack of education, inadequate social programmes, gender-based inequality, corruption, war and conflict situations, and political unrest in countries of origin. "Pull" factors include the perceived financial rewards of cheap, exploitative labour practices in some economic sectors. Victims may also be 'pulled' into trafficking through the promise of money and what is portrayed as or believed to be a better life.

Trafficking in organs, like trafficking in human beings or drugs, is demand driven. Human traffickers would not succeed if the host states did not have such a large demand for women and children to exploit primarily through sex tourism.

Criminals engaged in trafficking range from organised criminal groups to individuals operating on their own or in small groups on an opportunistic basis. Strategies used by traffickers include:

- Fraudulent individuals posing as football agents target young African players and lure them abroad with false promises of trials at top foreign football clubs. These young boys leave behind their friends and families and spend large amounts of money on visas, passports and airfares to chase their dreams. In reality, there is often no club waiting for them abroad and they are either abandoned on arrival or subjected to slavery, prostitution, and drug dealing.
- Some trafficking operations are organised as recruiting agencies typically used by potential migrants seeking work abroad. These agencies are found in a range of economic sectors, including construction, fishing, agriculture, manufacturing, or cleaning.
- Small scale recruiters apply the same methods in poor rural communities. These traffickers approach families in extreme poverty, convince them to send their children to work, advance funds to buy the tools for labour, and put the families in perpetual debt bondage with their children trapped in exploitation.
- Disguised as private employment agencies recruiting domestic workers for rich households in the Middle East and other parts of the world, human traffickers promise potential victims' jobs as waitresses or nannies and the women are subsequently forced into sexually exploitative situations upon arrival in the country of destination.
- Traffickers have kept pace with technology, becoming adept at using the internet for their trafficking operations. Operating as marriage, modelling and job agencies, they post advertisements and wait for potential victims to respond, often using advertisements for modelling jobs, high-paying or prestigious jobs. The women are then required to submit explicit images, before being told they were being recruited for sexual exploitation and blackmailed with the pictures.
- The internet is also used to advertise the sale of organs harvested from victims of human trafficking.

“We often feel crushed by the weight and complexity of problems like child and human trafficking but increasingly the solutions are local and individual. We encourage others to join us in this important fight to prevent children and women from falling prey to this terrifying reality.” #OurActionsCount

- There are also increasing reports of female perpetrators of trafficking who are at the same time victims of human trafficking. Traffickers not only earn a profit by sexually exploiting their female victims, but also make their female victims recruit new victims.
- Human trafficking intersects with violence against children, domestic violence, and intimate partner violence in multiple ways. Violence at home is a demonstrated 'push factor,' making individuals vulnerable to trafficking. Studies continue to reveal that most girls and women who are victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation were subjected to multiple forms of abuse and violence prior to being trafficked.

The reality of these crimes and the severity of their impact call for a collaborative effort. While no single group - be it African governments, NGOs, community groups, law enforcement and individuals - can deal effectively with the problem on its own, together we can combat all forms of child and human trafficking at local, state, national and international levels.

We often feel crushed by the weight and complexity of problems like child and human trafficking but increasingly the solutions are local and individual. We encourage others to join us in this important fight to prevent children and women from falling prey to this terrifying reality. **#OurActionsCount**

Some of the ways we can stop trafficking or prevent it from happening include:

- **Taking community action to keep children safe:** For many people, the reality of trafficking in their community is difficult to comprehend, let alone confront. We must be aware that human trafficking is happening in our communities and confront the issue by hosting conversations with community members; addressing the significant vulnerability of children and youth to exploitation and human trafficking and taking action in our communities to stop it.
- **Safeguarding children through prevention education:** In areas with a high incidence of crime involving trafficking in children, it is important to organise awareness-raising activities to combat this phenomenon and raise awareness among students, teachers, school authorities, religious institutions, parents and the public of the means and methods used by traffickers; the risk that children may fall victims of trafficking networks; and how to identify and report cases of suspected child and human trafficking to appropriate authorities.
- **Registering births:** Also, alarming is the fact that a considerable number of children in African countries remain unregistered. These children, along with those living on the streets, can easily fall victim to child traffickers.
- **Investing in effective child protection systems:** Effective child protection systems have a fundamental role to play in preventing child trafficking. Many children had experienced deprivation, violence and abuse prior to being trafficked and would not have fallen victim to trafficking had education and social service professionals and law enforcement officials recognised early signs of risk and responded in a timely and appropriate manner.

“An environment of unrest and conflict heightens the risk of abduction, sexual violence and exploitation of children, thus making child refugees and migrants, particularly unaccompanied children, more vulnerable to trafficking.”

- **Combating domestic violence and child abuse:** Understanding that domestic violence and child abuse at home may become 'push factors' that cause children and women to become vulnerable to trafficking is key. It is extremely important to adopt measures to prevent and combat child abuse, domestic violence and other forms of violence, including bullying in schools, from early detection to aid to victims to refuge places to support victims. Other steps that can be taken to combat domestic violence and ensure that perpetrators are prosecuted and appropriately punished include training for judges, prosecutors, police and health officers and training for social workers and others who may be involved in cases of child trafficking.
- **Becoming a mentor to a young person or someone in need:** Traffickers often target children who are going through a difficult time or those who lack strong support systems.
- **Creating women support groups:** Another preventive measure is the establishment of neighbourhood groups or support groups that will bring women who are victims of violence together to share their experiences and solutions, network, break the silence on violence, and gain practical tools and new skills for improving their lives.
- **Vetting foreign humanitarian and religious organisations:** It is essential to carefully scrutinise the services being offered to our people by foreign charities, international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) and non-profit organisations (NPOs) and enact laws and policies to protect African children from foreigners who seek to traffic children under the guise of aid, relief work, charity, missionary work or adoption.
- **Protecting children from harm online:** The Internet can be a dangerous place for the unwary, but children and teenagers are especially vulnerable. From cyber predators to online child sexual abuse to Dark web transactions and currencies that can make it easier to conceal trafficking and other illegal activities that harm children. Protecting children on the internet is a matter of awareness, knowing what dangers lurk and teaching children to keep themselves safe online.
- **Providing the necessary specialised training to law enforcement officers and prosecutors:** It is essential to strengthen the capacity of national and local authorities, as well as civil society organisations, to prevent human trafficking, prosecute traffickers and protect and assist victims of trafficking.
- **Strengthening cross-border cooperation:** Since trafficking in human beings remains largely international in scope, it is critical for African nations to strengthen cross-border cooperation and work out comprehensive methods of prevention, uncovering paedophile rings, protecting and assisting the victims and bringing the traffickers effectively to justice.
- **Launching national awareness-raising campaigns involving the media:** Finally, the media plays an enormous role in shaping perceptions and guiding the public conversation about human trafficking. Although mainstream media is targeted at the general public, it can also have considerable influence over decision-makers and other opinion-makers who respond directly to articles in certain newspapers or certain programmes on the television and radio, particularly if they are aware of that media's influence over public opinion.

We commend those who have already shown their commitment to ending this heinous crime for their hard work and dedication in preventing child trafficking; rescuing missing and exploited children; removing children from exploitative situations; ensuring that these children are able to continue their development in a safe environment; and bringing perpetrators of such crimes to justice. **OurActionsCount**

"We commend those who have already shown their commitment to ending this heinous crime for their hard work and dedication in preventing child trafficking."

Financial Overview

“Despite 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.”

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 2021.

Despite 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 2022 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 donations.”*

2022 Goals



From the very start of what has been an extraordinary adventure, the main source of motivation for us at House of Mercy Children's Home Lagos, Nigeria (HOM) has been the desire to improve the lives of most vulnerable and disadvantaged children and provide them with a better and brighter future.

Drawing on over 15 years of field experience in the area of children's welfare, we support children without parental care and impoverished families in difficult living conditions through services in children and orphans support; education and vocational training; nutrition and supply of non-food items and emergency relief. We also advocate for the survival, development, protection and well-being of children.

Looking ahead to 2022, we intend to pursue our mission with even greater enthusiasm and determination, for the greater benefit of our beneficiaries. Our 2022 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 and advocacy programmes for children and families in crisis across Africa](#)

In addition, we will continue to seek opportunities to partner with local partners (village elders, grassroots communities, women's groups, youth groups, faith-based groups, members of displaced communities and local NGOs) who share our values and our ethical commitments.

We will also continue to push forward with our [African Renaissance](#) initiative. At HOM, we envision a time when every African child, youth, woman and man is able to complete their education, engage in livelihoods that will enhance their economic prospects, participate fully in both private and public decision-making, and can invest in themselves, their families and their communities.

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

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. **#TheTruthWillSetUsFree**

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.

"It is our fervent hope and expectation that the study of the true history of Africa will be included in the school curriculum in African countries."

Acknowledgements

2021 marked the fifteenth anniversary of House of Mercy Children's Home, Lagos, Nigeria (HOM).

When we started out fifteen years ago, the idea of reaching out to and rehabilitating street children, child scavengers and other children at risk prompted a good many wry smiles. At the time, many regarded the idea of such a project as completely unrealistic, a kind of unattainable goal. What is more, the stars were not aligned, indeed, there was the possibility that we might not see any stars at all.

By dint of perseverance and the extraordinary support from Donors, Supporters and Friends, we have fought many battles and have overcome many obstacles.

Every year we continue to be inspired by the outpouring of goodwill from new and recurring Donors, Supporters and Friends. People like you are a reminder that kindness does exist in this very troubled world of ours.

We are profoundly grateful to each and every person, - individuals, corporations and foundations - who each year express their confidence in us by making substantial donations.

Our 2021 Annual Report represents the success of our programmes and activities, none of which would be possible without people like you who have generously supported our work during the year.

We are deeply thankful to all those named here and those who wish to remain anonymous for their generosity and support which enabled us to reach many more disadvantaged and vulnerable children in 2021.

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 Ms. Olufunke Olukoga - ₦50 000
 Mr. Kolade Ogunnowo - ₦50 000
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 Ms. Oluwatosin Ogundola - ₦5 000
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 Ms. Taiwo Fadope - ₦4 000
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Deep Cleaning Nigeria Limited - Fumigation of our Children's Home/Sanitation and Disinfection	Youth Group, Daystar Christian Centre - ₦50 000, chairs and food items
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Super Intl Travels Limited - ₦245 000	Bristow Helicopters Nigeria Limited - Food items & toiletries
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Hilton Hotel Lagos - Slippers	Deluxe Residences Limited - ₦200 000, Food items & toiletries
Chrio Foundation - ₦150 000 & Food items	H.E. Mrs. Bolanle Ambode - Baked food items
Sanctuary of Wonders Intl' Ministry - ₦15 000	Institute of Corporate & Public Sector Professionals - ₦20 000
Cosmo Worldwide Intl Services - ₦89 770	Lagos State Government - Food items
Nordic Degrees - ₦600 000	
Gracit Technological Foundation - Computer devices	
Love of Christ Chapel Intl Ministries - ₦100 000	

We wish to pay a special tribute to our [Partners](#) on the ground and in the field across Africa whose experience and knowledge of the real needs of their local communities and the economic and social factors contribute to the success of our programmes and initiatives. They accomplish their mission conscientiously, in sometimes difficult conditions and life-threatening situations and we thank them wholeheartedly for all their efforts.

Last, but certainly not least, we would like to express our sincere appreciation to our Staff for their continued loyalty, support, and dedication in pursuit of our mission.

We would also like to applaud the extraordinary job done by our Coordinator. Her motivation, expertise and dedication to our cause have contributed greatly to improve our services and reach, and ultimately, better serve more children in need.

George Washington Carver (c. 1864-1943), a distinguished African-American Scientist, Botanist, Educator and Inventor who invented more than 300 uses for peanut, 100 uses for sweet potato and made important discoveries on crop rotation and fertilisation, once said:

No individual has any right to come into the world and go out of it without leaving behind him distinct and legitimate reasons for having passed through it.

For us at House of Mercy Children's Home Lagos, Nigeria (HOM), one of those reasons is to make a significant difference in and lasting impact on the lives of the children we serve.

Thank you all for being a part of our journey, we could not have done it without you. Here's to the next 15 years!
#ThankYouAll

With Deepest Gratitude,

B. Awoyinfa

Bunmi Awoyinfa



House of Mercy Children's Home Lagos, Nigeria

La Maison de la Misericorde

Casa de la Misericordia



Our Motto is "[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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