



Outreaching to Orphans 2009

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<http://www.africancentreforcommunity.com>

<http://community.eldis.org/falcazo>

<http://www.youtube.com/user/AfricanCentreforCom>

<http://twitter.com/positveglobe>

<http://www.facebook.com/arreymbongayaivo>



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Authors note

This document seeks to highlight activities of my organization with collaboration from Limbe Botanic Garden on the 18th of July 2009. On this day, my organization African Centre for Community and Development organized “Outreaching to orphans 2009”. The event was characterized by a visit to Save the Children Alliance Orphanage in Bota Limbe. We brought gifts to the orphanage and it was the first time orphans received gifts individually as well. Another important highlight of the programme was a Tree Planting Event that saw me, the Head of Administration for Limbe Botanic Garden Mr. Joseph Mbelle, the orphanage administration, orphans and the musicians we took to play at the orphanage plant fruit trees at their new site near the Red Cross office on the road to Karata Camp, Limbe, Cameroon. This was aimed at improving the diets of the children; bring income to the orphanage in the future and our modest attempt to green a small part of our globe for more carbon trapping and a healthier world. It was also our move to mainstream the children into today’s debates and worries about their environment especially climate change and global warming.

This document may also incidentally argue forthrightly for the need to organize development and charitable based activities from local resources in Africa sometimes. Granted Africa is poor (Hall and Midgley, 2004) but helping is a concept that goes beyond being poor. It is outreaching to others despite little or no resources so as to improve their desperate conditions and add a pigment of more wellbeing to the corpus of communal life.

The aim of helping others without the traditional funding from overseas, incidentally reiterates the lapses of donor and charitable organizations in identifying positive institutions and individuals who are sworn to improving the lives of millions of vulnerable peoples in their communities but who many times lack the resources or connections to be recognized from outside. Interventions to help others are today affected by the following issues:

- Conditionalities to access funding which is also vital in screening best candidates for funding is sometimes too tight, restrictive and modeled to suit the donors or charities’ interests without priority to the substrate of the projects to be sponsored.

- More so, donors seem to have forgotten that cronyism and patronage are embedded in many Sub-Saharan countries (Arrey, 2008). These systems tend to mutate the collaborative agenda advocated by scholars like (Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002) to governance where in partnerships or politico-economic networks are grounded on people or institutional relations to central governments, elites, tribes or regions. The inference is that donors and charities may simply be sponsoring corrupt individuals and institutions in poor countries and are misguided by these stakeholders capacity to package their activities to continually do so as with other contemporary instruments including SWAPS, Direct Budget Support, General Budget Support (Thomas 1985; RLAC, 2002). An example of recent mistakes includes the sex for food scandal in West Africa (<http://www.savethechildren.org/publications/liberia-exploitation-v4.pdf>).

Funding institutions might have recently acted unknowingly too as deterrents to new development initiatives in Third World countries and Africa. The reasons for this assertion include the following points:

- The fact that they sponsor corrupt pseudo-development stakeholders has led to mistrust from legitimate stakeholders in development. The latter have been discouraged to come up with new ideas as their good projects are usually rejected with electronic responses like “Your projects were good but our entries were very competitive this year. We encourage you to try again”. Not only do some people know their projects ought to be the best and are of the maximum interest of fighting poverty and improving wellbeing, they also are witnesses to the fact that donor and charitable institutions end up sponsoring unconcerned, interest-based candidates with mediocre projects.
- Their insistence on experienced individuals or institutions is arguably positive in achieving a more efficient use of their funds. However, how then do new organizations and individuals get experienced without ever being funded? Donors in many ways neglect to take into consideration that these individuals in the first place are operating in many cases undemocratic systems founded on “mutated patronage” (Arrey, 2008) hence it is almost an impossibility for their voices or

projects to be heard domestically or for these schemes to have reached the sponsor's table in the first place if they didn't possess capacities and capabilities.

- Conditionalities that are attainable are a reasonable endeavour but when they are too far reaching they are only grounds for exterminating bright ideas. Some donors use identification of important stakeholders in certain projects as the litmus test of their productivity. In systems where in the municipal council for instance or individuals can be bribed to accept being in a collaborative agenda with an unproductive individual or institution, such a tool only embeds poverty by allowing cronies and line ministries to access funds that will never reach marginal segments of society. In such a situation the unproductive become too powerful and can pay for the services of even experts to write successful progress and donor reports in situations where weak structures, lack of will and deceit are the principal tools of accessing funds and that projects are constantly failing as with Africa (Gow and Morss, 1988).

Therefore donor countries and charitable organizations must engage in stringent measures for their money to be accountable or for the projects they invest in to be sustainable.

Some of the best tools for donors can be;

- Firstly they must reconsider the fundamental reasons for aid. Aid or charity that does not aim to improve or empower communities for their betterment and wellbeing should be redefined. Strategic disruptions of stable societies due to interest-based funding are counter-reproductive if they do not put people first and cannot guarantee the security of marginalized sub-populations as well. Intervention designs by both donor countries and charities must be screened from conception to implementation by important institutions like donor parliaments, CBOs, active citizenry etc to better access to funds by rightful stakeholders.
- Donor countries and charitable organizations should have regional offices in poor countries or fund individuals or organizations to identify best areas for funding or to give best perspectives of intervention environments. Working with local resources facilitates ownerships and also reduces the chances of elite or governmental capture of donations for political ends.

- More so interventions should have a processual dimension. This calls for learning (Bond, 1999, Toner and Franks, 2006) as an unavoidable necessity in the design of sustainable projects that will be flexible and not too time –bound in an evolatory industrial, market and political context like Africa or the Third World.
- Besides, the little attempts to contact resource persons in Africa are ineffective. They are ineffective because they are masked as adverts or spam mails to persons and institutions. Today’s cyber revolution demands that interested institutions can contact and verify about people and organizations directly by email or via online telephone numbers with proposals for development. Funding institutions must thus allocate as part of their sponsorship budget, instruments to isolate positive individuals and institutions in the environments they seek to engage in.
- More so, donors, charities etc must move from contemporary mechanisms that suggest that seeding ideas for sponsorship or individual or institutional support is free. The inference is that online sharing or data collection as much as it is helping development management, might be difficult to reach its climax as development stakeholders world wide who are educated and smart active citizens by their rights also question what good are their contributions online when donor institutions including those that host them never consider their ideas, institutions or them for their sponsorship programmes, scholarships or jobs. Thus this somewhat marred process in the selection criteria by donors must be revised to make interventions more inclusive, responsive and sustainable.
- Case to case analyses of environments is also necessary in designing more holistic instruments. Both Community driven development and sustainable livelihoods approaches could be needed in some contexts while just one tool could be better in others. Projects could be the best inroad in other areas just like fresh men or new institutions could be the best inroads in societies historically monopolized by hierarchical and some unprogressive cultures including mutated patronage (Arrey, 2008).

Therefore, “Outreaching to Orphans, 2009” has justified that goodwill initiatives do many times originate in Africa despite her marginalities. It has demonstrated that

organizations operate in the Third World many times without funding and that African Centre for Community and Development is willing and capable in facilitating outreaches to poor sub-populations in Africa and Cameroon in particular. More so, it is a clarion call for future collaborative agendas or sponsorship from donor countries, good-will individuals and charities with this organization in order to better livelihoods within its areas of operation. To understand how best to work with us redefine aid to its true meaning, support marginal sub-populations without strong political or interest-based undertones, facilitate capacity building and bottom-top approaches and processes among positive individuals in Cameroon, Africa and the Third World. Unreachable conditionalities incidentally embed patronage and are primarily a contradiction especially in Africa pregnant with weak structures and institutions as well as chronic vertical and horizontal inequalities. Finally supporting our drive to making “Outreaching to Orphans” a yearly event will be an indelible human effort and stride towards mainstreaming orphans into today’s debates like poverty, fighting climate change etc and improving wellbeing in Cameroon and possibly Africa.



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Left top: Arrey Mbongaya Ivo (author) with matron of Save the Children Alliance Orphanage, Mrs Josephine Ngale. Right Top: Orphans rejoice with their colourful gifts from African Centre for Community and Development as part of project “Outreaching to Orphans 2009”

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Left above: Orphans of Save the Children Alliance sing with visitors from African Centre for Community and Development. Right: Musician Eugene Banjo Oluwa and other artists sings to the kids a special number for the occasion “so a make a change”

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The Event: “Outreaching to Orphans 2009”

The event; “Outreaching to Orphans 2009” took place on the 18th of July in Limbe Cameroon. It was organized by African Centre for Community and Development with collaboration from over 100 years old Limbe Botanic Garden and Fako-based musicians. It entailed the visit of the Director of African Centre for Community and Development Mr. Arrey Mbongaya Ivo and the Head of Administration at the Limbe Botanic Garden Mr. Joseph Mbelle visit the Save the Children Alliance Orphanage in Bota, Limbe.

They and their team of musicians and other development stakeholders were welcomed by the proprietor and Matron of the Orphanage Mrs. Josephine Ngale as well as the Orphanage manager Pastor Anthony.

Arrey Mbongaya Ivo and his team then engaged in a fruit tree planting campaign at the new site of the orphanage (yet to be constructed) near the Red Cross Office on the road to Karata Camp in the West Coast of Limbe.

Orphans, musicians and every one present joined African Centre for Community and Development and Limbe Botanic Garden plant guavas, oranges, apples, Grapes, shade trees etc as a way of empowering the orphanage with food security and also of greening their institution to meet challenges like fighting poverty, climate change and global warming.

Then there was a talk on the importance trees by Mr. Mbelle Joseph of Limbe Botanic Garden and on outreaching, human dignity and equality by Mr. Arrey Mbongaya Ivo in order to assert orphans despite their marginalities as important segments of any given population.

The musicians (Eugene Banjo, Matilo Njielo etc) played to the orphans a special number composed for the occasion titled “so change the world” and many other songs including “Heal the world” and “We are the world” by Michael Jackson to highlight naturally the theme of the event. Among the gifts presented to the institution and the children were crayons, drawing books, (to boost their creative dynamisms) balls, tooth brushes, washing and bathing soaps, bags of rice, cartons of tomatoes, bags of salt etc.

Madam Josephine Ngale thanked Mr. Arrey Mbongaya Ivo accompanied by his wife Henrietta and prayed for the whole team that visited Save the Children Alliance. She hoped that the event will spread to other vulnerable orphanages in the country for as she added it was the first time that gifts were given individually to the orphans and not as a group as with other occasions and helpers. She also cried out for sponsors in their bid to move and construct at their new site near Karata and stated that Save the Children Alliance Bota is not in any way affiliated to bodies with similar names in other parts of world. Her naming of the orphanage she stated was based on a biblical verse and inspiration. Finally she called for world wide support for Arrey Mbongaya Ivo

and his partners in order to make “Outreaching to orphans” a permanent and sustainable event in the lives of Orphans in Cameroon or even Africa.

Despite the heaviest of rains, African Centre for Community and Development, Limbe Botanic Garden, orphans and a plethora of Fako-based musicians went out to plant trees for prosperity and posterity and to bring gifts and musical sunshine to children denied of parents’ warmth without their wills, at Save the Children Alliance in Bota, Cameroon.

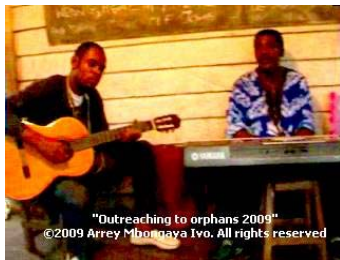
More pictures of “Outreaching to Orphans 2009”



Far Left: Director of African Centre for Community and Development Arrey Mbongaya Ivo gives gifts to orphans at Save the Children Alliance Orphanage.
Left: Head of Administration of Limbe Botanic Garden Joseph Mbelle talks to the kids on the importance of trees and other issues like climate change and Global warming.



Far Left: Henrietta the wife of Arrey Mbongaya Ivo pampers a n orphan child.
Left: Arrey Mbongaya Ivo talks to the kids about “outreaching, human equality and dignity”. He stated that their importance was a root reason for his organization visiting them in the first place



Far Left: Musicians Eugene Banjo Olua and Matilo Njielo animate the orphanage as part of “Outreaching to orphans 2009”.
Left: Orphans sing special songs to welcome Arrey Mbongaya Ivo and his team. Their songs were moving and very coordinated.



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Far Left: The banner of "Outreaching to orphans 2009" hangs below the sign post of the orphanage.

Left: Arrey Mbongaya Ivo talks to the orphanage about their mission for the day. Seated next to him is Mrs. Ngale Josephine, the matron of Save the Children Alliance, Bota Limbe.



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Far Left: Mrs. Henrietta Arrey and other visitors are welcomed by Matron Mrs. Josephine Ngale.

Left: Musicians poised to entertain the children. Their collaboration added flare and warmth to the occasion. It is also the first time Fako-based artists are mobilised by an organization to play for vulnerable orphans.



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Far Left: Cheerful orphans at their reception hall.

Left: Isaac, an orphan boy carries his fruit tree for the planting exercise



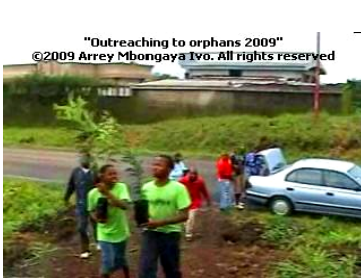
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Far Left: The Matron Enroute to greening Save the Children Alliance.

Left: Each orphan was entitled to at least a tree to plant. They cheerfully match on a mission to cleaning our environment launched by African Centre for Community and Development in this part of the world.



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Far Left: The children Enroute to greening Save the Children Alliance's new site.

Left: Eugene Banjo Olua (musician) and Pastor Anthony the manager of the orphanage stride with their trees to be planted. These trees will green the orphanage, improve children's diet and bring incomes to the institution in future.



Far Left: Arrey Mbongaya Ivo will be greening doubly.
Left: Joseph Mbelle from Limbe Botanic Garden follows Ivo's footsteps.
Collaboration between African Centre for Community and Development and Limbe Botanic Garden led to better design and implementation of the project.



Far Left: Arrey Mbongaya Ivo and Mrs Josephine Ngale sow a tree.
Left: Pastor Anthony plants a tree while Arrey Mbongaya Ivo stoops by.



Far Left: Eugene Banjo Olua helps a boy plant his tree.
Left: Matilo Njielo helps orphan girl plant her apple tree. She preferred planting an apple tree to an orange tree. Her reasons were granted by the organizer.



Far Left: Patrick from a local drivers' synergy helps another orphan boy green their world.
Left: Caroline is proud of her high grade Grape fruit tree. These trees were nursed at Limbe Botanic Garden and a pilot nursery of African Centre for Community and Development



Far Left: There were some July rains but the planters were happy to continue.
Left: An orphan girl succeeds in her planting endeavour. Tree planting was welcomed happily by most kids of the orphanage. Other kids may also be dying to plant if there are more projects for them



Far Left: Planters carry on while a baby clings on the back of her Matron mother.
Left: Arrey Mbongaya Ivo and other planters wash their hands after their green work.



Far Left: Ground being prepared for planting trees by Patrick. Diggers are not easy to swing though.
Left: Arrey Mbongaya Ivo interviews orphanage Manager Anthony. He was so delighted by the gesture from African Centre for Community and Development.



Far Left: Joseph Mbelle of Limbe Botanic Garden interviewed by Arrey Mbongaya Ivo
Left: Arrey Mbongaya Ivo helps the Matron with machete handling.

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Arrey Mbongaya Ivo on giving:

“To give and share goes beyond being rich. It comes from a deep sense to improve wellbeing despite not being rich or wealthy. In this state giving becomes not forcibly an obligation but a moral necessity”

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Pictures of Biodiversity in the area.

Arrey Mbongaya Ivo (Director of African Centre for Community and Development) in his yet to be launched Forest ecotourism project. The project is aimed at constructing tenements for forest lovers to observe nature, research on tropical plant and animal varieties, domestic endangered species like Gnetum as well as produce food and animals. Interested Partners and funding institutions should [contact Ivo](#) via contacts above.

N/B This acquired Forest land with an all year-flowing river is situated around the Tropical Rain Forest belt in the Idenau region on the West Coast of Limbe. This project may also be a dynamic effort to conserve forest land lost to commercial farming at appalling rate in the region.

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